# BEST PRACTICES FOR PASSENGER FLIGHTS DURING COVID-19

**ACA**
**AIR CARE ALLIANCE**

The following suggestions for Best Practices are based upon current knowledge of COVID-19. They will undoubtedly change based upon new knowledge or conditions (such as availability of rapid testing). Whether the benefits to the patient outweigh the risks of contracting COVID-19 must be determined by the patient's physician(s) and this should be included in the organization's medical clearance documents. These suggestions also follow current guidelines employed by healthcare professionals to avoid COVID-19 exposure. There is no medical basis for taking more restrictive measures. Always follow CDC guidance for protecting yourself and others. Pilots should always exercise best judgment when making go/no-go decisions.

## For further information, please see:

Operational Considerations for Voluntary Pilot Organizations in Response to COVID-19
by Dr. H. Hunter Handsfield

Thoughts on Restarting VPO Passenger Carrying Operations
By Dr. Daniel Masys

Additional information and resources can be found here:
https://www.aircarealliance.org/covid-19-resources/

Find us @ www.aircarealliance.org
Follow us @ facebook.com/AirCareAlliancePBF/

## Suggested Organization Precautions

- Enhanced Passenger and Pilot screening
  - Exclusion of persons with symptoms consistent with COVID-19, including but not limited to cough, sneezing, chest congestion, shortness of breath, fever, and loss of taste or smell
  - Exclusion of persons with known exposure to a COVID-19-infected person within the preceding two weeks, including persons who have been notified of possible exposure through contact tracing
  - Exclusion of persons who have traveled recently to geographic areas with high infection rates, and others potentially at high risk

- Consider higher risk category or optionally exclude
  - Pilot or flight crew member who is unable to wear a protective mask during flight operations or finds them an unacceptable personal safety of flight issue (e.g., interference with eye glasses, ability to speak sufficiently clearly to be understood by ATC)
  - Aircraft with fewer than four seats or questionable ability to provide adequate air exchange
  - Passengers whose medical condition prevents them from complying with droplet transmission protections (e.g., inability to wear a surgical mask)

- **Obtain revised medical releases/physician's approvals** to include statement of essential travel considering risks to pilots and passengers

- Consider a risk stratification process and/or independent review for those pilots/passengers who fall into higher CDC risk categories.

- Limit the number of travelers to the extent possible

- Encourage flights in larger cabin aircraft where possible

- Obtain clear statements of accepted risk for volunteers and passengers
  - Consider revising liability waivers to include coronavirus risk

- Discourage anyone from travel who is not comfortable, feels at risk, or is unwilling to adhere to best practices for risk mitigation

## Suggested Pilot Precautions

### Pre Flight

➢ Disinfect all surfaces with alcohol wipes before starting your flight preparations
➢ Wash hands or use hand sanitizer by all occupants immediately before boarding
➢ Wear protective gloves when handling other persons' luggage or other personal equipment; or wash hands or apply sanitizer after such contact and prior to boarding
➢ Wear gloves when handling cargo
➢ Consider local or regional COVID-19 frequency when assessing risk
➢ Wear protective masks or other suitable face coverings when near passengers or ground personnel
➢ Optionally, pilots may consider adding temperature screening with a non-contact thermometer (temp over 100.4 F)

### In Flight

➢ Maximize air exchange in the cabin, to the extent compatible with aircraft limitations and passenger comfort
➢ Require all occupants to wear protective masks or other suitable face coverings
➢ Avoid direct personal contact between aircraft occupants, such as shaking hands, hugging or other physical contact
➢ Maintain physical distance to the extent possible and practical
➢ Consider use of CMF or NGF call sign for possible expeditious or helpful ATC handling

### Post Flight

➢ Wear protective masks or other suitable face coverings when near passengers or ground personnel
➢ During turn-around when pilots are in contact with ground personnel, wear a protective mask or face covering
➢ Clean potentially contaminated objects and surfaces with disinfectant wipes or solution, including headsets, seat belt buckles, arm rests, door handles, etc.
  ○ Consider new mic muffs for each passenger
➢
➢ Thorough post-flight debrief to organization