



April 29, 2020

Dear Industry Partners,

California's relative success navigating the coronavirus health crisis once again confirms what we all know: Californians are a resilient bunch -- staying home and safe, for the most part, and flattening the pandemic's curve as public health officials have hoped.

Gov. Newsom and his public health team have set out a methodical process for overcoming the health threat and phasing in the reopening of California's economy, including the travel and tourism industry.

As he described on his daily briefing earlier today, this phased process will take time, continues to have an uncertain timeline, and relies exclusively on the state meeting benchmarks on health and safety preparedness. Reopening businesses and returning to some semblance of normal activity will roll out in four stages.

Of particular note to Visit California and partners across the state:

- Phase one is now, and all industries should start making serious plans about how to retool workplaces and business practices to be safer.
- Phase two will come within weeks, and could include opening schools for the 2020-21 academic year in July — the heart of the family vacation period — to make up for lost classroom time this spring. It also could include reopening some parks, trails, and restaurants.
- Phase three is measured in months from now, and could allow some small gatherings, sporting events with no crowds, etc., and leisure travel.
- Phase four, which includes sporting events with live audiences, concerts and meetings in convention halls "will take some time," the governor said. Reaching that level will require a therapeutic response to the coronavirus.

Waiting out this pandemic and watching the economic projections grow grimmer – nine times worse than 9/11, a 50 percent cut in tourism jobs and visitor spending statewide – is difficult, even for an industry that has recovered from economic downturns, natural disasters and other crises. Watching other states open up before us isn't easy, either.

Still, we must trust in the government's ability to restore the economy and protect the health of Californians. And we must trust in our industry's ability to influence that process by providing constructive suggestions, best practices and detailed context about how we conduct business.

Isn't it possible, for instance, to configure convention space that abides by physical distancing concerns?



Aren't there protocols that would make drive-distance overnight trips safe?

These plans will continue to take shape, and Visit California will be monitoring closely. The governor's task force on recovery includes several tourism/hospitality champions, and there is a possibility there will be a tourism subcommittee.

Moreover, the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development asked for feedback at [this website](#). I encourage our industry to use this survey to provide feedback directly to the state government — our industry must make its voice heard.

As always, thank you for your support and resilience during this time.

Dream Big!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caroline Beteta".

Caroline Beteta
President & CEO
Visit California