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Bureau Veritas Advised By Cleveland Clinic Announces The First Global Hygiene Standards To Reboot The World's Economy



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[ForbesLife](#)

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“For the economy to fully recover, people will have to be fully confident.” — U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell

There's a standard for everything these days. Worker safety. Food service. Seatbelts. Lawn mower emissions. Cultivating cannabis. Even how to give a massage or cut hair.

So with so much riding on the world economy re-opening while avoiding a second coronavirus infection surge, many businesses and policymakers are baffled by the lack of a uniform hygiene and health safety standard to lean on across hotels, restaurants, retail stores, bars, office spaces, factories, and schools that leverages our accumulated knowledge of virology, testing, and sanitization to help rebuild consumer confidence in the “new” normal.



The world economy is cautiously re-opening. The hygiene and health safety standards to do so ... [+]

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[Bureau Veritas](#), the world's oldest testing and certification company founded in 1828, in conjunction with [Cleveland Clinic](#), is finally answering that call, consolidating the currently fragmented global (and American) approach to re-opening—and, more importantly, the lack of specific protocols and guidelines

underpinning it—into a single uniform set of standards across businesses for hygiene control and health safety as companies slowly walk back into business.

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The new program announced today, “Restart Your Business With BV”, leverages the company’s global expertise in testing, inspection, and certification with Cleveland Clinic’s world-renowned medical knowledge and toxicology experience to help businesses restart safely while adhering to benchmark health, safety, cleaning, and hygiene guidelines that can be applied across industries.

Cleveland Clinic will serve as the program’s Chief Medical Director, while Bureau Veritas will oversee implementation, education, and compliance on the ground, including the creation of detailed Health Safety and Hygiene Guides, employee training, surface testing, product criteria, ongoing audits and monitoring, and the creation of a uniform certification program called the Safe Guard Hygiene Excellence Label.

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A woman wearing a protective mask buys food to take away at 'Hawaian Poke' restaurant, on May 18, ... [+]

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For most of us who just want to get back to normal—or as close to it as possible at this point—the intellectual canyon between Ph.D virology (we’ve all seen enough of Drs. Fauci and Birx on television) and basic consumer confidence is vast. Phrases like “certification protocols”, “compliance mechanisms”, and “operational audits” don’t really resonate with people who just want to go to the movies, grab a beer, or take their family to Disneyland again.

So transparency, traceability, and simple validation principles are where Bureau Veritas’ “Restart Your Business with BV” program begins, especially in the travel and hospitality sectors where what’s going on behind the curtain to keep guests

safe in the stealthy, undetected realms where pathogens ultimately spread is what consumers are concerned about most.

Unlike manufacturing and assembly line production, or commercial businesses like law or architectural firms—where work stations can be respaced 6’ apart and most people go home at night so extra deep cleans can be implemented—eating out, staying at a hotel, getting on an airplane, or grabbing a drink with friends is what “normalcy” looks like for most of the world. It’s also the most publicly visible and challenging part of the human economy to make normal again since nothing’s predictable, and every interaction and transaction is historically predicated on dense interpersonal contact.



Hospitality is one of the most difficult economic sectors to return to "normal" since everything is ... [+]

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So far, guidance for businesses like restaurant operators, bars, and hotels from the Centers For Disease Control (CDC) has favored broad principles over specific requirements and protocols, such as “Intensify cleaning, sanitization, disinfection, and ventilation”. The problem with this approach is that it leaves a lot up to interpretation. Does “intense cleaning” mean scrub harder and double the bleach? To beef up “ventilation” if I own a pizza joint do I just open the windows? How sanitized is “sanitized”?

Bureau Veritas' calculus with its new partnership with Cleveland Clinic is that if you can establish *actual* hygiene and health safety protocols with clear, measurable, and enforceable standards—and as a result restore broad-based consumer confidence in hospitality—you can do it anywhere, like schools and universities.

So what can consumers expect to see from Bureau Veritas new COVID-19 standards program as it begins to roll out this week?



REOPENING WITH CONFIDENCE

*5 Step Journey to rebuild trust;
reopening facilities with confidence*



1. BUILD A DETAILED HYGIENE GUIDE FOR THE PREVENTION OF COVID-19 RISK IN THE FACILITY.

- Specific guides by area and role in the facility are prepared
- Clients apply recommended guides and principles
- Develop guide in collaboration with key stakeholders as per corporate brand policies



2. CREATE COMMUNICATION/TRAINING KITS (e-LEARNING) FOR GOOD HYGIENE PRACTICES FOR ALL EMPLOYEES IN THE PROFESSION.

- BV trains employees via e-learning
- BV creates brand-specific web portal for employee training
- Employees must receive a passing grade in order to achieve certification



3. COMPLETE INITIAL AUDIT OF HYGIENE PROTOCOLS AND OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS INCLUDING SURFACE TESTING.

- BV will visit a predetermined number of sites in order to audit the implementation of the new Hygiene Guide
- Auditors will collect surface testing samples and BV labs publishes laboratory results to client

OR SCHEDULE NEW AUDIT ACCORDING TO CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

- Site to send evidence of correction such as documents or video



4. APPLY FOR EXCELLENCE IN HYGIENE CERTIFICATION (AND INSTALL CERTIFICATION LABEL).

- Each property can apply online for certification label
- Publish results to brand website to build consumer and client confidence
- Access to data and reporting (photos, documentary evidence)



5. CONTINUE ONGOING AUDITING AND TESTING IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH THE HYGIENE GUIDE AND CERTIFICATION

- Additional audits might include: Unscheduled site visits by a Bureau Veritas auditor, scheduled site visits, mystery shopper visits



RESTART YOUR BUSINESS WITH BV...

... is a suite of solutions to meet the needs of all sectors of the economy as they reopen for business. It addresses the risks specific to all places where people live and work, by training teams effectively on hygiene good practices and checking that protective measures are properly set up and implemented.

www.bvna.com



Shaping a World of Trust

Bureau Veritas just launched its "Restart Your Business With BV" global standards program with ... [+]

COURTESY OF BUREAU VERITAS

Hopefully nothing, Natalia Shuman, Executive Vice President and CEO of Bureau Veritas North America, tells me.

“I like to think of ‘Standards’ as the superhero that exists literally everywhere around us,” Shuman says. “They are a fundamental building block that touches all areas of our daily lives to ensure safety and quality. But you can’t see them. At the end of the day, we understand that all people want to trust that the food they eat, the products they buy, and the infrastructure they use like roads and bridges will always be safe. Standards allow us to do that.”

When it comes to re-opening the global economy, that invisibility is precisely the point if there’s any remote shot at “normalcy” again. Standardization by definition means consistency and establishes trust—in how rooms are cleaned, food is served, surfaces are disinfected, plates are washed, and air and water are filtered. The world has never needed that certainty more than it does right now.

“Organizations are facing tremendous challenges in supporting their employees and customers during this unprecedented health and economic crisis,” Shuman says. “Our goal is to be an objective third-party to ensure confidence in the ‘new normal’ and COVID-19 related hygiene and safety standards that are certified and audited, so that businesses can win back their clients' trust. The importance here is getting everyone on the same page.”



Ongoing audits, inspections, and compliance monitoring are at the core of Bureau Veritas' new ... [+]

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In their applicability across economic sectors, Bureau Veritas' standards are also intended to supplant the fragmented, quick-trigger solutions that many companies, including hotel and restaurant chains, have put into place without broad industry consensus. Last month, for example, Four Seasons announced a partnership with Johns Hopkins University to ramp up the hotel chain's hygiene and sanitization protocols. Marriott recently announced a "Global Cleanliness Council" that will develop new standards in its cleaning procedures, and Hilton just launched its new "Clean Stay" program in partnership with Lysol.

That all sounds great. But it's the automotive equivalent of every car maker implementing its own standards for airbags and emissions. Deconstructed, non-uniform standards are confusing to consumers. And will do little to jumpstart the economy if people don't feel that they can eat, shop, or stay safely at one location while potentially putting themselves or their family at risk at another.



Bureau Veritas' digital compliance ecosystem and technology allows for a uniform re-opening of the ... [+]

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That's where Bureau Veritas, advised by Cleveland Clinic's medical brain trust, saw an opportunity to launch a set of standards that was universally adoptable.

“It is critical to have a unified hygiene, health, and safety standard across businesses including restaurants, hotels, retail stores, office spaces, manufacturing, and schools as we re-build consumer confidence and restart the economy,” Shuman says. “Here in the United States, there’s been some progress. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) is already playing a very important role and people and businesses are attuned to what the CDC is doing, including social distancing measures, hand-washing protocols, and temporarily closing non-essential businesses. State governments also play a big role to set protocols locally. We’re even seeing associations, like in the hospitality industry, who are beginning to explore safety solutions for restarting operations in hotels. But not enough has been done to ensure we have a holistic, unified, and consistent approach to deploying COVID-19 related hygiene and safety standards overall. Right now, it is absolutely critical to act with urgency and to have a third-party independent eye who can guide the efforts of our governing and regulatory bodies fully in the context of the pandemic.”



Bureau Veritas' 'Restart Your Business With BV' establishes consistent, measurable, and accountable ... [+]

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Behind the scenes, some of the specific controls consumers (and employees) can expect from Bureau Veritas’ new program are rigorous standards for

transmission containment, surface cleanliness, and handwashing, specific protocols for disinfecting 'high-touch' surfaces and equipment sanitization, minimum hygiene requirements for public spaces, efficacy and quality benchmarks for products, and spacing and separation mandates between customers, employees, and products, such as face shields or Plexiglass between chefs and their food, much the same way OSHA requires hard hats on construction sites. It also means ongoing spot inspections, toxicology screens, and proof of compliance so you can't just deep clean once and get back to business as usual.

Other Bureau Veritas' requirements in the Restart Program require more operational sophistication, including establishing infectious exposure parameters, medical contingency plans, pandemic response measures, and contact tracing plans. In the short term, the program's standards are intended to minimize the potential for coronavirus infections in the first place as the economy begins to open up. But even more importantly in the longer term, it requires specific action plans if an outbreak occurs—which was one of the main reasons the virus became a pandemic in the first place.



Bureau Veritas' emergency management procedures and pandemic response infrastructure standards are ... [+]

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For Bureau Veritas, establishing the medical foundation to restore global consumer confidence across a wide sector on businesses on a global scale against a virus that's still poorly understood and spreading along a flattened, but not declining curve, with Cleveland Clinic's counsel has been no small task in less than two months. But urgency was everything.

"It is critical that we deploy strategies to mitigate the epidemiological spread of COVID-19 in our communities, particularly as businesses begin to reopen their operations as quickly as possible," says Mike Kessel, President and CEO of Cleveland Clinic Canada, who is advising on the Bureau Veritas program.

"Cleveland Clinic is proud to support Bureau Veritas as a Chief Medical Director. Our extensive experience in Medical Directorship Programs, health policy and skilled emergency management, in combination with Bureau Veritas' 192-year legacy in providing testing, inspection and certification services means we can work holistically as 'one global society' to fight the pandemic together."

Given the program's breadth and consistency, "Restart Your Business With BV" already has been adopted by two of the world's largest hospitality companies, Spain's Melia Hotels or France's Accor Hotels, which collectively operate more than 835,000 rooms in 140 countries across 5,400 properties between them. Other large multinational companies are expected to announce their adoption of Bureau Veritas' program this week.



Bureau Veritas' digital ecosystem and technology is built to give businesses the tools they need to ... [+]

COURTESY OF BUREAU VERITAS

Despite its seemingly temporary name, “Restart your Business with BV” isn’t intended to be a short-term fix to what most public health experts and scientists predict will be a long-term menace.

“Like it or not, we are facing a ‘new normal’ in society as we collectively navigate these next critical steps in our recovery,” says Shuman. “Just as airline safety forever changed after 9/11, we believe these standards are absolutely here to stay. We have to respond quickly—yes—but our collective societal solution to maintain the highest-quality standards of safety in the face of COVID-19 and other potential pandemics must be more than a temporary measure. Long-term it must be a cure.”



Getting back to the "new" normal never sounded so good

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For the rest of us who just want to grab a cocktail this weekend or plan a late summer vacation, the certainty of things like “hygiene excellence” and “sanitary compliance” probably never sounded so exciting. There’s nothing particularly sexy or heroic about the standards “superhero” you can’t see. But without them, and the science underpinning them, re-opening the economy would be even more confusing and fragmented than it already is.

“We’ve been in business for nearly 200 years,” says Shuman, “And our mission has always been to shape a world of trust with the work we do across nearly all aspects of life. It’s interesting that ‘truth’ is literally in our name. That’s what Bureau Veritas means: ‘bureau of truth.’ So truth, and by extension, integrity and trust, is in our DNA.”

After months of uncertainty for hundreds of millions of people it’s a great first step back to normal.