

# THE OCEANIC STANDARD



COVID-19 Plastic-Free  
Reopening Guidelines

**LIVE EVENTS +  
PROFESSIONAL SPORTS**

[www.oceanic.global/oceanic-standard](http://www.oceanic.global/oceanic-standard)

# THE OCEANIC STANDARD

**The Oceanic Standard (TOS)** is a set of free, research-backed industry guides for adopting sustainable practices that meet both business and environmental needs, developed in partnership with Oceanic Global's board of scientific advisors.

TOS provides businesses with tools to eliminate single-use plastics from their operations and to implement responsible waste management practices. It connects businesses directly to TOS-approved sustainable vendors for cost-effective alternatives to products that threaten our planet, and offers buying deals wherever possible.



RESEARCH-BACKED



FREE RESOURCES



SUSTAINABLE VENDORS



BUYING DEALS



SOLUTION ORIENTED



RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION



MARKETING COLLATERAL

## TOS SAMPLE PARTNERS



Sandals

CITIBANK

marie claire

BULLEIT BOURBON



splash

SPRINGER NATURE

MMOSER ASSOCIATES

UROK



DJ AWARDS

HEART

## TOS COVID-19 REOPENING GUIDELINES: LIVE EVENTS + PROFESSIONAL SPORTS

With COVID-19, our world is evolving rapidly, but the need to live in harmony with our environment has not changed. As we face a global pandemic, we are seeing the rollback and reversal of environmental progress. Articles outlining an increase in demand for plastic ([Businesswire, May 2020](#)) and lobbying from the plastic industry have become concerning ([Plastics Industry Association, March 2020](#)). Maintaining the health and safety of your associates and guests needs to remain the primary priority, but throughout this guide you will find sustainable solutions that address the needs presented by COVID-19.

### PRIORITIZING HEALTH AND SAFETY DOESN'T NEED TO COME AT A COST TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Created in consultation with a coalition of public health experts and industry leaders with a compilation of existing research and resources from public health authorities, food safety experts, governments, research institutes and leading organizations, this resource is an addition to Oceanic Global's broader COVID-19 Plastic-Free Reopening Guidelines. This resource focuses on best practices to achieve both hygiene and sustainability for live events and the professional sports industry globally by eliminating unnecessary single-use plastics and improving waste management.

*\*The latest update of this edition was made on November 12th, 2020.*



## INDEX

### 1. THE TRUTH

3

COVID-19 Fact Sheet

COVID-19 Regulation Database

COVID-19 Plastic-Free Reopening Guidelines

### 2. FOODSERVICE OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

5

STEP1: Procurement

- Bar & Venue-Managed Items
- F+B Vendors / Concessions

STEP 2: Optimizing Waste Management

STEP 3: Guest Experience & Fan Engagement Communication

### 3. ADDITIONAL PARTNER RESOURCES + GUIDANCE

13

#### Tips on using this guide:

- All additional resources are hyperlinked and indicated with an “” icon
- All vendors are hyperlinked and indicated with an “” icon.

## CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS

This guide was compiled with the support of over 50 contributors, some include:



#### Special thank you to:

Arax-Rae Van Buren, Letter Grade Consulting, SUpR, Herve Houdre, Ella Horn, and Rachel Gates

## 1. THE TRUTH

---

**Information about COVID-19 is highly variable and still being discovered.**

Oceanic Global has compiled a literature review of the most recent knowledge from leading global authorities, research institutes, and experts. We share the latest available information about COVID-19 to inform best operational practices that promote both human and environmental health.

Please see our existing resources below, which contain information about how the virus spreads, how governments around the world have responded, and how reusables are often the safest option.

- [Oceanic Global COVID-19 Fact Sheet](#)
- [Oceanic Global COVID-19 Regulation Database](#)
- [Oceanic Global COVID-19 Plastic-Free Reopening Guidelines](#)
  - **Staff Safety & PPE**
  - **Material Sourcing**
  - **Cleaning Protocols**
  - **Guest Experience Touchpoints**
  - **Waste Management: Food Donation | Composting | Recycling**

Even in the face of a global recession and pandemic, consumer demand for businesses to demonstrate sustainable practices and planetary stewardship has only increased. People want to support businesses that embody their beliefs and are willing to pay more.

- 57% adults globally want businesses to focus on sustainability and the environment more in 2021 ([Sourcing Journal](#)).
- Companies abiding by social or environmental standards showed higher operational performance ([Morgan Stanley](#)).
- Millennials and Gen Z are willing to pay more for sustainable products and services.

**Some key highlights include:**

## HOW DOES COVID-19 SPREAD? ARE REUSABLES SAFE?

- A **statement** signed by over 125 virologists, epidemiologists, and health experts from 18 different countries endorses that reusables are safe.  
“Based on the best available science and guidance from public health professionals, **it is clear that reusable systems can be used safely by employing basic hygiene.**”
  - The **CDC** states that transmission of COVID-19 from surface contact **has never been documented.**
  - **WHO Guidance for Food Businesses** & **WHO Guidance for the Accommodation Sector** makes no recommendation to use disposable items other than cleaning products.
- 👉 Additional information on the safety of reusables [HERE](#) (Source: Sierra Club), [HERE](#) (Source: Upstream), [HERE](#) (Source: Surfrider), [HERE](#) (Source: Post-Landfill Action Network), and [HERE](#) (Source: Grist).

## WHAT WILL PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19?

- Coronaviruses can be effectively inactivated on a surface within 1 minute, with the use of standard disinfectant procedures. ([Chin et al., 2020](#))  
Food-contact approved disinfectants containing 62-71% ethanol, 0.5% hydrogen peroxide or 0.1% sodium hypochlorite have been shown to work ([Kampf et al., 2020](#)).
- UV radiation treatments deactivate coronaviruses ([Penn State, June 2020](#)).

## HOW LONG DOES COVID-19 LIVE ON VARIOUS SURFACES?

According to recent studies, COVID-19 can live on plastic for up to 3-7 days ([Doremalen et al., 2020](#), [Carraturo et al., 2020](#), [Chin et al., 2020](#))! This is a longer estimate than the data suggest for paper, cardboard, glass and ceramic.

## 2. FOODSERVICE OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

---

Below are a set of recommended operational practices for foodservice in live events and the professional sports industry that will provide sustainable solutions for the new industry standard as businesses reopen from the COVID-19 pandemic. Please refer to [COVID-19 Plastic-Free Reopening Guidelines](#) for Staff Safety & PPE, Material Sourcing, Cleaning Protocols, additional Guest Experience Touchpoints and Waste Management details on Food Donation, Composting and Recycling.

### STEP 1: MATERIAL SOURCING

#### BAR AND VENUE-MANAGED ITEMS

**Reusables are still the best and safest options** across the board if **paired with proper hygiene and disinfection protocols**. We have identified the following items as some of the most challenging items to procure safely and sustainably and have worked with TOS vendors to offer the below suggestions.

## Cups:

Single-use plastic cups (especially ‘cold’ cups) pose the greatest challenge to achieving plastic-free operations, especially now with additional considerations to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Reusable cups are a solution, and precautions need to be in place for this to be a successful initiative, particularly in large-scale settings.

- Implement best practices to sanitize reusable containers alongside **contactless drop-off systems**.

- This can be as simple as having a bin with signage so guests can return cups without having to place them on the bar or hand them over the counter.

- 👉 [UseYourOwn \(UYO\)](#) in New Zealand released [videos on best practices](#) for contactless drop-off and pouring.

- Work with a professional reusable cup company that will manage the collection and washing logistics to ensure that cups meet **high standards of hygiene**. The below vendors offer a **new cup with every beverage to eliminate the risk from refilling cups**.

- 👉 The Sustainable Events Alliance has a working group focused on a [Global Reusables at Events Hygiene Project](#) spearheaded by BetterCup (Australia) to develop a global reusable hygiene standard.

### Recommended reusable cup vendors include:

- 🛒 [r.Cup](#) (US)

- 🛒 [CupZero](#) (US)

- 🛒 [Green Goblet](#) (UK)

- 🛒 [BetterCup](#) (Australia)

- 🛒 [Dream Zero](#) (UK)

- 🛒 [Festival Cup](#) (Germany)

- 🛒 [Cupko](#) (Canada)

- 🛒 [EnviroCup](#) (US)

- 🛒 [B-Alternative](#) (Global)

- 🛒 [Bottless](#) (UK)

- 🛒 [Stack-Cup](#) (US)

- 🛒 [Meu Copo Ecu](#) (US)

- 🛒 [SAVRCup](#) (US)

- 🛒 [Ecoverre](#) (US)

- 🛒 [WISE](#) (Australia)

- 🛒 [Globelet](#) (Global) is testing the cleaning capability of standard dishwashers, and building their own custom washing system at a higher standard.

- In the case that reusables are not possible based on local regulations or company policy, we recommend **disposable options that are compatible with local waste management infrastructure**. Consult our [Greenwashing Guide](#) for additional clarity. Recommended options can range from materials such as aluminum, palm leaf, wood, bamboo, paper, agricultural waste, and other fiber depending on available waste management infrastructure.

- 🛒 [Ball](#) (US) has an aluminum cup solution. Aluminum is nearly infinitely and 100% recyclable and recycling infrastructure for aluminum is widely available globally because there is a high value for the material. Their cups are also reusable and can be treated as such.

- 🛒 [Katom](#) (US) offers a pinewood solution.

- 🛒 [Solublue](#) (UK) provides single-use cups that dissolve in water.

## Bottles

Single-use plastic water bottles are another major hurdle to achieving plastic-free operations, also considering the reliance on this revenue stream. The reusable options below are still highly feasible and should be considered.

- Provide **filtered water or refill stations**.

- If guests are asking to refill water bottles at the bar, have bartenders offer the guest water in a reusable glass that the guest can use to fill their bottle. That cup would then be considered dirty.

-  [WET Global](#) (Global) in partnership with the [Water Smart Foundation](#) offers water filtration and refill stations for venues and live events.

-  [Event Water Solutions](#) (Global) redesigned their system to be contactless with sensor taps and sneeze guards. Sensors turn off water flow if bottles comes close to the faucet. [See Video](#) for demonstration.

-  [US Pure Water](#) (US) now offer touchless technology with motion sensors or foot taps.

-  [Flowater](#) (US) introduced foot pedals for touch-free filling and soft-touch buttons are easy to sanitize, all components are medical-grade. [See Video](#) for demonstration.

-  [O'Land Fill & Wash Stations](#) (Canada) is developing [new water stations](#) to be touchless, including hand washing service as complement to water refill.

-  [Elkay](#) (Global) has contactless refill stations.

-  [Sestra Systems](#) (US) has touchless dispensers for beverages as well as condiments and hand sanitizer.

- Work with a **professional reusable water bottle system** company that will manage the logistics and washing.

-  [Bottless](#) (HK) - provides a user-pay system for water refills.

-  [Globelet](#) (Global) - also offers a reusable bottle system.

- In the case that reusables are not possible based on local regulations or company policy, please choose disposable options that are compatible with local waste management infrastructure. Consult our [Greenwashing Guide](#) for additional clarity.

-  [Ugly Drinks](#) (US & UK) - 'OCEANIC' code for discount

-  [Open Water](#) (US) - 'OCEANIC' code for discount

-  [Agua NEA](#) (Spain) - 'OCEANIC' code for discount

-  [Life Water](#) (UK)

-  [Liquid Death](#) (US)

-  [Enjoy Water](#) (Australia)

-  [Wallaby Water](#) (Australia)

-  [Ever & Ever](#) (US)

## Dishware

Depending on venue operations, this may or may not be relevant. In the case that the venue/event is providing and managing dishware for a catered event or other, opt for reusables where possible.

- **For venues:** invest in dishwashing and storage infrastructure on-site. Recent studies have shown that coronaviruses are susceptible to traditional heat treatments, such as cooking at 158°F / 70°C ([Carraturo et al., 2020](#)). [Switzerland](#) and [Germany](#) include guidance to maintain dishwashers at a minimum of 60°C.
- Rent reusable dishware from local suppliers. This market is new but growing, explore what is available near you.

 [We Use](#) (HK)

 [ECC](#) (HK)

 [Keko Box](#) (US)

- In the case that reusables are not possible based on local regulations or company policy, please choose **disposable options that are compatible with local waste management infrastructure**. Consult our [Greenwashing Guide](#) for additional clarity. Recommendations range from materials such as aluminum, palm leaf, wood, bamboo, paper, agricultural waste, and other fiber depending on available waste management infrastructure. See sample recommended vendors in [COVID-19 Plastic-Free Reopening Guidelines for Restaurants + Hotels](#) in addition to a few featured below.

 [Avani](#) (Indonesia)

 [Better Earth](#) (US)

 [Restaurantware](#) (US)

 [World Centric](#) (Global)

 [Greenman Packaging](#) (UK)

 [Biofutura](#) (UK)

 [Pack n Wood](#) (Spain)

 [Palucart](#) (Italy)

 [Simplex Trading](#) (Barbados)

 [BioPak](#) (Australia)

 [Ecoware](#) (India)

 [Simply Soluble](#) (Global)

## Straws

There are many questions regarding whether straws are required to be individually wrapped according to COVID-19 guidelines. However, in our research, we have come across no regulations that require this. Regardless, there are many sustainable alternatives to single-use plastic straws as outlined below.

- As a first choice, opt to sell reusable straws and encourage your customers to bring their own to use.
- Reduce the number of straws you provide by only offering them upon request. This will save money while reducing your plastic footprint.
- If disposable straws are required, sample vendors for approved sustainable alternatives include:

🛒 [Aardvark Straws](#) (US) - 'OCEANIC' code for 50% discount

🛒 [Bali Boo](#) (Global) - higher quality bamboo product for specialty drinks or for lounge/suite use.

🛒 [Eightysix Straws](#) (US) - 'OCEANIC' code for discount

🛒 [Greenmotive](#) (Spain) - 'OCEANIC' code for discount

🛒 [Holy City Straw Company](#) (US & Canada) - 'OCEANIC' code for 10% discount or wholesale options

🛒 [Loliware](#) (US) - 'OCEANIC' code for discount

🛒 [Straw-by-Straw](#) (Netherlands) - 'OCEANIC' code for discount

## FOOD AND BEVERAGE VENDORS / CONCESSIONS

In recommendation with the above items, the best option for both hygiene and sustainability is reusables. If that is not an option for takeaway or other circumstances, choose disposable items compatible with local waste management infrastructure.

### For Concessions

The demand for individually wrapped cutlery has increased as guests are now hyper-sensitive to hygiene and safety.

- Opportunity to sell reusable cutlery kits in your gift shop or merchandise tent or encourage sponsors to choose those items for branded giveaways. Guests can then use their new cutlery sets at the concession stands or food trucks and have a memento to inspire sustainable lifestyle behavior change beyond the event or venue.

🛒 [Eco Marketing Solutions](#) (US) has an option with a bottle opener.

🛒 [Package Free Shop](#) (US) offers a higher quality bamboo option.

🛒 [Nosii](#) (Global)

🛒 [Upors Sunshine Life](#) (Global)

🛒 [Jueqi](#) (Global)

🛒 [Anthropologie](#) (US)

🛒 [To-Go Ware](#) (US)

- Contactless cutlery dispensers and individual cutlery dispensers are now increasingly available. If possible, use existing dispensers with wooden cutlery rather than single-use plastic cutlery.

- Sample wooden cutlery vendors below:

🛒 [Pack n Wood](#) (Global)

🛒 [Foodstiks](#) (US)

🛒 [Green Wood](#) (China)

🛒 [Verterra](#) sells Clickeat (US) - wholesale options available.

🛒 [IncrEdible Spoon](#) (US) has edible cutlery options.

🛒 [Eco Products](#) (US) has created a Cutlerease dispenser for their compostable plastic products. This is only a solution in a “closed system” setting such as a stadium or event with a closed boundary and there is complete sorting, separation and collection to a relevant commercial / industrial composting facility to treat that material.

- Condiments are another highly used touchpoint, so finding contactless solutions will be key.

🛒 [Sestra Systems](#) offers a touch-free bulk dispenser option that can be used for condiments!

## Working with External F+B vendors

- Create vendor guidelines to engage your vendors around your sustainability mission. Encourage vendors to meet certain criteria for approved sustainable foodservice items and provide recommended local solution-oriented suppliers they can source from. (Oceanic Global has an existing template and has created custom guidelines for professional sports and festival partners, reach out if interested: [theoceanicstandard@oceanic.global](mailto:theoceanicstandard@oceanic.global).)
- Another option is to provide specific items such as beverage containers and cutlery to ensure vendors will comply with your initiatives.

## STEP 2: OPTIMIZING WASTE MANAGEMENT

The pandemic has sparked an increase in waste production and waste workers have been working on the frontlines. It is more important than ever to reduce the amount of waste produced and to enhance waste management strategies to divert waste from landfills.

- Some key tips for a successful waste management plan:
  - The first step is to **designate an internal sustainability lead** responsible for overseeing the waste management strategy and implementation, working with all relevant team members and external waste management vendors.
  - **Always pair bins together** so that compost / recycling / landfill bins are adjacent to improve sorting and reduce contamination. If such bins are separated, guests will not travel to sort their waste especially in crowded or highly trafficked areas.
  - **Establish a “green team”** (can be volunteer by partnering with local nonprofits) responsible for gathering and sorting waste post-event for best practice (a certain degree of contamination is inevitable otherwise).
  - **Identify local waste management partners** you can trust to properly handle your recycling and/or compost.
    - 🛒 [RecycleGO](#) (US) has a blockchain traceability system for recyclables.
    - 🛒 [Rubicon](#) (US) will provide tracking and reporting for your different waste streams.
    - 🛒 [First Mile](#) (UK) & [Pale Green Dot](#) (UK) offer collection for commercial composting.
- Use clear signage to indicate the different bins for composting / recycling / landfill and identify which items go into each bins to educate guests and reduce contamination.
  - 🛒 [Recycle Across America/Recycle Across the World](#) offers standardized labeling for recycling, composting and waste bins. Consistent messaging is highly important right now. The [U.S. Foods](#) reopening guidelines include a point to “Ensure clarity of recycle, composting, and trash signage to avoid confusion, decrease dwell time and promote sanitation.”

## STEP 3: GUEST EXPERIENCE & FAN ENGAGEMENT COMMUNICATION

The current situation presents an opportunity to reset with purpose or #ReopenSustainably. Celebrate your initiatives and engage your community!

- Encourage guests/fans to bring their own reusable water bottles for refill if you have contactless and safe refill stations in place. Include messaging pre-event, on social media, as well as in signage on-site.
  - 👉 Encourage guests/fans to take part in the [#BYOBottle](#) campaign, a music industry effort to turn the tide on plastic pollution.
- Include clear signage and gamify best practices for all greening measures including reusables, recycling, plastic waste reduction, water refill stations, etc.

### Case Studies:

- ★ **Mercedes-Benz Stadium** grabs shots of fans recycling correctly and features them on the jumbotron during half-time as an exciting surprise!
- ★ **REVERB** offers the **ROCKNREFILL** program to combat single use plastic while fundraising, plus touring fan education villages.
- ★ **All At Once** incentivizes fan greening actions through a passport app, with reusable prizes and a chance to watch the show from the stage.

- Engage athletes or musicians in being ambassadors for sustainable initiatives by sharing best practices with their fans and encouraging them to take part.

- ★ **Jack Johnson** reduces plastic waste on tour, and encourages fans to make plastic free pledges via the [Capture Your Commitment](#) campaign.

- Pursue certifications or badges to recognize your achievements.
  - [The Oceanic Standard](#) (TOS) program offers a badge verification system to recognize efforts to reduce single-use plastics and improve waste management. Reach out to learn more: [theoceanicstandard@oceanic.global](mailto:theoceanicstandard@oceanic.global).

- ★ **Many teams & stadiums are already implementing the [WELL Health & Safety Guidelines](#):**

- **New York Yankees**
- **Indiana Pacers**
- **Philly 76ers**
- **Cleveland Cavaliers**

### 3. ADDITIONAL SUSTAINABILITY PARTNER RESOURCES + GUIDANCE

---

**Sustainable Sport Research Collective** - professional sports sustainability reopening guidelines.

**Julie's Bicycle** - resource hub and case studies for sustainable events, performing arts & touring.

**BYOBottle** - plastic free music industry resources and reusable vendor list.

**REVERB** - waste reduction, fan education, tour and venue greening resources.

**Green Nation** - Live Nation's sustainability commitments and actions.

**Volvo Ocean Race** - turning the tide on plastic waste at sporting events guidelines.

**Raw Foundation** - Making Waves Festival Edition guidelines.

**A Greener Festival** - compilation of resources for sustainable best practices in the music industry.

**WHO** - key planning recommendations for mass gatherings in the context of COVID-19.

**Event Safety Alliance** - COVID-19 reopening guidelines for events.

**UK Government Guidance** - for reopening of professional sports.