

Airbnb to pay hosts \$250 mn for COVID-19 cancellations

March 31 2020



Airbnb will pay hosts 25 percent of what they would typically be due if someone booked between March 14, 2020 and May 31, 2020 cancels the stay due to COVID-19

Airbnb on Monday said it is devoting \$250 million to help would-be

hosts survive financial losses from refunds given to guests who cancelled travel plans due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The move came as an olive branch of sorts extended to Airbnb hosts blindsided by the [home](#)-sharing platform's decision several weeks ago to give full refunds to guests who cancelled reservations in order to stay home, as [health officials](#) and governments have urged.

"Please know this decision was not a business decision, but based on protecting [public health](#)," said Airbnb co-founder and chief Brian Chesky.

"While I believe we did the right thing in prioritizing health and safety, I'm sorry that we communicated this decision to guests without consulting you—like partners should."

Airbnb will pay hosts 25 percent of what they would typically be due if someone booked between March 14 and May 31 cancels the stay due to COVID-19.

Travelers who cancel Airbnb reservations made for that period are promised complete refunds or credit for future stays.

"We know this is just a little bit, but a little bit can go a long way at this time," a seemingly contrite Chesky said while discussing Airbnb's latest steps in a live video stream from his home.

Airbnb also created a \$10 million relief fund for experienced and highly rated "superhosts" who need help paying their mortgage or rent due to the coronavirus's devastating effect on the travel industry.

Airbnb employees started the fund with a million dollars, and the two co-founders contributed the remaining \$9 million, according to the

company.

Airbnb is also adding a feature to its platform that will let people send money to support hosts they bonded with during stays.

"This storm, no matter how bad it is, it is going to end," Chesky said.

"When it is over, on the other side, people are going to be waiting to get out of their homes. And when they do get out of their homes, they are going to explore the world, and stay with you."

About 50,000 Airbnb hosts have volunteered to make their homes available to [health care workers](#), relief providers, and first responders combating the coronavirus pandemic, according to Chesky.

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