



Marine Safety Information Bulletin

Commandant
U.S. Coast Guard
Inspections and Compliance Directorate
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COVID-19 Safety Requirements in the Maritime Transportation System: Change-5

Update

On April 18, 2022, the US District Court, Middle District of Florida, vacated the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) mandate for mask wear in airports, train stations, and other transportation hubs as well as on airplanes, buses, trains, and most other public conveyances in the United States, including vessels. Per this ruling, the CDC has declared that the mandate [is no longer in effect](#). Federal agencies are reviewing the court's decision. In the interim the Coast Guard will not enforce the directives requiring mask use on public transportation and in transportation hubs. CDC continues to recommend that people wear masks in indoor public transportation settings.

Vessel and sea port operators are encouraged to monitor the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/> for the most up to date guidance. The CDC has published an updated list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) that can be found at [Public Transportation](#). The Coast Guard has also published additional guidance that can be found at the [FAQ](#) web page.

Background

On January 29, 2021 The President issued Executive Order (13998), Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel requiring masks be worn on all “public maritime vessels, including ferries” to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19. The CDC issued a Federal order, [Requirement for Persons to Wear Masks while on Conveyances and at Transportation Hubs, 29JAN2021](#) (the Order) requiring all persons travelling on all commercial vessels to wear a mask. Additionally, Executive Order 13998 directs the Coast Guard to implement public health measures consistent with CDC guidelines at sea ports (e.g., passenger terminals, cargo handling facilities, and other shore side facilities that provide transportation of persons or cargo).

In accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 268, the Coast Guard is charged with assisting in enforcement of CDC quarantine orders. Operators of vessels and sea ports that fail to implement appropriate public health measures may be subject to civil or criminal penalties.

The Coast Guard has broad authority under 46 U.S.C. § 70002 to control the movement and operations of a vessel based on a hazardous condition. Vessels that have not implemented appropriate risk mitigations may be issued a Captain of the Port (COTP) order directing the vessel's movement and operations; failure to adhere to COTP orders may result in civil and/or criminal enforcement action.

Questions concerning this notice may be forwarded to Coast Guard Office of Commercial Vessel Compliance, at wearmask@uscg.mil.

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