



Marine Safety Information Bulletin

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COVID 19 - Actions for Vessels Arriving in U.S. Ports – Update (Change 6)

An outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to affect mariners and maritime commerce. Vessel arriving to or traveling between any U.S. port or place must follow reporting and infection control measures to maintain the safety of personnel onboard vessels as well as within the port.

Vessel Reporting Requirements:

Illness of a person onboard any vessel that may adversely affect the safety of a vessel or port facility is a hazardous condition per 33 C.F.R. § 160.216 and must be reported *immediately* to the U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port (COTP). Cases of persons who exhibit symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must be reported to the COTP. This requirement is separate and additional to any other required Coast Guard or Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reporting, and applies to vessels departing from or arriving to any port or place in the U.S., includes internal waters, the territorial seas, and deep water ports.

In addition to Coast Guard reporting requirements, 42 C.F.R. § 71.21 requires vessels destined for a U.S. port to report to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) any sick or deceased crew/passengers during 15 days prior to arrival at the U.S. port. Guidance to vessels to report deaths and illnesses to the CDC can be found at: [Cargo vessels and Cruise ships](#). U.S. flagged commercial vessels are also advised to report ill crewmembers in accordance with the requirements of each foreign port called upon. Furthermore, 42 C.F.R. § 70.4 states the master of any vessel or person in charge of any conveyance engaged in interstate traffic, on which a case or suspected case of a communicable disease develops shall, as soon as practicable, notify the local health authority at the next port of call, station, or stop, and shall take such measures to prevent the spread of the disease as the local health authority directs.

See [MSIB 06-20](#), “Vessel Reporting Requirements for Illness or Death”, for further information.

Vessel Control Actions:

Several Presidential Proclamation placed entry restrictions from persons arriving from or through the following countries: [Iran](#), [China \(excluding Hong Kong and Macau\)](#), the [European states within the Schengen Area \(Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany,](#)

[Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland\), United Kingdom \(excluding overseas territories outside of Europe\), the Republic of Ireland, the Federative Republic of Brazil, and the Republic of South Africa.](#)

Non-passenger Commercial Vessels:

- Non-passenger Commercial vessels that have been to the countries noted above or embarked crewmembers from the countries noted above within the last 14 days, with no sick crewmembers, will be permitted to enter the U.S. and conduct normal operations, provided they remain aboard the vessel except to conduct specific activities directly related to vessel cargo or provisioning operations. U.S. citizens or any other persons listed in Section 2 of Presidential Proclamation “[Proclamation on the Suspension of Entry as Immigrants and Non-Immigrants of Certain Additional Persons Who Pose a Risk of Transmitting Coronavirus Disease](#)”, for example crewmembers with a transit and/or crewmember visa, may be permitted to disembark the vessel to conduct vessel operations pier side or for the immediate and continuous transit through the U.S. to another country. When entering the U.S. all persons must be cleared by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and, if applicable, CDC. Crewmembers without the appropriate visas will need to be cleared for entry by CBP and, if applicable, CDC.
- Non-passenger commercial vessels that have been to the countries noted above or embarked crewmembers from the countries noted above within the last 14 days, and do have sick crewmembers must report the illness per the requirements found above, and should expect delays and need to work with local health and port officials prior to entry.

Passenger Vessels:

- The CDC issued a Conditional Sail Order on October 30, 2020 and maintains a [website](#) specific to cruise ships and the requirements that they are required to meet.

Onboard Precautions for COVID-19:

The CDC has updated their [Interim Guidance for Ships on Managing Suspected Coronavirus Disease 2019](#). This guidance includes measures to prevent infection in crew members, recommended PPE, cleaning and disinfection, how to manage sick passengers or crew.

Vessel owners and operators are encouraged to develop procedures to prevent, respond, and mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on board vessels. These plans should include the applicable aspects of the CDC guidance as well as any additional requirements of local health agencies.

Richard V. Timme, RDML, U. S. Coast Guard, Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy sends.