

# FONASBA COVID-19 BULLETIN



## AN UPDATE ON MEASURES BEING TAKEN TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 BY MERCHANT SHIPPING – No. 61 25.08.2020

Further updates on COVID-19 precautions have been received from members as summarized below. As always, please contact the relevant association for more guidance.

<b>Cyprus</b>	<p>The Cyprus Ministry of Health has announced a revision of the procedures for approving crew changes. The full announcement is attached but in summary the following procedures now apply:</p> <p>For crew members, of any nationality, arriving in Cyprus having spent 14 days or more only in a country defined as being in Category A or B (for details go to: <a href="http://www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy/en/country-categories">www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy/en/country-categories</a>) or having been on a vessel that remained at sea for that time or has only called at category A or B countries during that period, crew changes can be organised by the local ship agent or crewing agent in accordance with existing measures. No prior authorisation is required from the Shipping Deputy Ministry.</p> <p>For crew members <b>arriving by air from countries outside category A or B</b>, the agent will be required to obtain prior permission via the following link: <a href="http://www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy/en/special-permission">www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy/en/special-permission</a></p> <p>For <b>crew members arriving in Cyprus by sea that do not meet the above criteria</b>, the agent must make prior application to the Shipping Deputy Ministry at: <a href="mailto:crewchanges@dms.gov.cy">crewchanges@dms.gov.cy</a></p> <p>The following information must be provided for any application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vessel name or IMO number</li><li>• Vessel location in the Republic of Cyprus</li><li>• Crew member names (on- and off-signers)</li><li>• Passport numbers</li><li>• Nationality</li><li>• Crew member flight details and original country of departure</li><li>• Accommodation arrangements in Cyprus if applicable</li></ul> <p><b>All</b> incoming crew arriving by air must complete a Cyprus Flight Pass <b>before</b> boarding the flight to Cyprus at: <a href="http://www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy/en/quick-check">www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy/en/quick-check</a></p> <p>For crew transferring between vessels in Cyprus ports, no prior approval is required.</p> <p><b>Please note that in all cases where prior permission is required, the application must be obtained by the company, individual applications will not be accepted.</b></p>
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<b>International</b>	The International Chamber of Shipping, the International Maritime Health Association and INTERTANKO have published a series of protocols to mitigate the risks of COVID outbreaks on ships. Whilst these are mainly aimed at shipowners, operators and crews, they may also be of interest to shipping agents involved in such situations by providing guidance to the actions being taken on board the vessels and therefore provide advanced indication of the level and scope of engagement required by the agent once the vessel arrives. A copy of the document is therefore attached.
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REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

SHIPPING DEPUTY MINISTRY TO THE PRESIDENT

Circular No.: 17/2020

SDM 5.13.09 & 21.11.02

12 August 2020

To all members of the Cyprus Shipping Chamber  
To all members of the Cyprus Union of Shipowners  
To all members of the Cyprus Shipping Association  
To all members of the Cyprus Marinas Association  
To all Registered Owners, Registered Bareboat Charterers, Registered Ship Managers  
To all Owners of Coastal Passenger Vessels

**Subject: Revised procedure for facilitating crew changes within the framework of the gradual relaxation of the Restrictive Measures applicable during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Pursuant to the Decree issued by the Minister of Health titled «the Infectious Diseases (Determination of Measures against the Spread of COVID-19 Coronavirus Decree (No. 30) of 2020» (P.I. 265/2020 published in the Official Gazette of the Republic on 19.06.2020, hereinafter “the Decree”, which is **attached hereto**), crew changes are possible at Cyprus ports provided certain conditions are met.

This Circular issued by the Shipping Deputy Ministry (“SDM”), which **replaces Circular No. 13/2020** dated 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2020, provides information regarding the **revised procedure for conducting crew changes in a practical and effective way**, in accordance with the above Decree and the relevant instructions of the Minister of Transport, Communications and Works, regarding the operation of Ports and Port Facilities as well as the related protocol for crew changes. This procedure is as follows:

1. For crew changes involving crew members regardless of nationality which, in the 14 preceding days before their arrival in Cyprus, were in countries belonging only to categories A or B (according to categorisation of countries based on their epidemiological situation), or were onboard vessels which did not dock at any port, or which docked only at ports of countries belonging to categories A or B, **no approval is required from the Shipping Deputy Ministry**. In all such cases, crew changes should be executed in accordance with all existing measures and procedures applicable to persons arriving from countries belonging to categories A and B.

2. In cases of crew changes on vessels and pleasure crafts for crew members entering the Republic of Cyprus through the airports that **do not meet the provisions set out in paragraph 1 above, the shipping agents or the interested companies can apply for the granting of a special permission** for entering the Republic of Cyprus at the official web electronic platform of the Republic of Cyprus (<https://www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy>), field “Special Permissions”. It is noted that, for the purposes of ensuring that the relevant decrees are met, applications for the granting of a special permission submitted directly by seafarers will not be accepted.



3. In cases of crew changes on vessels or pleasure crafts for crew members that are about to disembark/ discharge or crew members entering the Republic of Cyprus through the ports of the Republic of Cyprus that **do not meet the provisions set out in paragraph 1 above, the shipping agents or the interested companies** should submit their requests for approval at the Shipping Deputy Ministry electronically at the following email address: [crewchanges@dms.gov.cy](mailto:crewchanges@dms.gov.cy).

All requests submitted to the SDM should include the following information:

- Vessel Name and/ or IMO number
- Vessel location in the Republic of Cyprus
- Crew members' names (on-signers and off-signers)
- Passport Number
- Nationality
- Crew members' flight details and original country of departure
- Accommodation arrangements in the Republic of Cyprus (if applicable)

No approval is required for crew changes **between vessels** (which do not involve the embarkation/ disembarkation of any crew members).

4. In cases where charter flights are organised for the transfer of crew members and/ or passengers, additional permission is required from the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Works ("MTCW") for the execution of such flights.

5. The above procedures should be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Decree and of the protocol of the MTCW on crew changes. It is noted that the relevant provisions on **crew changes** can be found in paragraph 2.10 of the Decree. Provisions for the **disembarkation** of crew members can be found in paragraph 2.11 and provisions for the disembarkation from **pleasure craft** can be found in paragraph 2.13 of said Decree.

6. Crew members entering the Republic of Cyprus through the airports of the Republic of Cyprus should fill in the "Cyprus Flight Pass" before boarding the aircraft at the official web electronic platform of the Republic of Cyprus (<https://www.cyprusflightpass.gov.cy>). Crew members that reside in a country/ or travel from a country/ or have been traveling in a country **of category C** in the preceding 14 days, in filling in the Cyprus Flight Pass, must select in the field "Passengers that meet the requirements for covid-19 test in Cyprus" the category of passengers **"Persons, regardless of nationality, having a special permission by the Republic of Cyprus"** and fill in the Special Permission reference number that has been obtained during the procedure described in paragraph 2 of this Circular.



Stavros Michael  
Acting Permanent Secretary  
Shipping Deputy Ministry

CC:

- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport, Communications and Works
- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry
- Permanent Secretary, Deputy Ministry of Tourism
- Permanent Secretary, Cyprus Ports Authority

# Coronavirus (COVID-19)

## Protocols to Mitigate the Risks of Cases On Board Ships



## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Protocols to Mitigate the Risks of Cases On Board Ships

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The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) is the global trade association representing national shipowners' associations from Asia, the Americas and Europe and more than 80% of the world merchant fleet. Established in 1921, ICS is concerned with all aspects of maritime affairs particularly maritime safety, environmental protection, maritime law and employment affairs. ICS enjoys consultative status with the UN International Maritime Organization (IMO).



## 1. Introduction

As we progress through the COVID-19 pandemic, it is vital to keep trade moving. To do that, we must ensure that crew can embark and disembark safely and efficiently.

ICS, IMHA and INTERTANKO have created two tools to help ship operators manage cases on board: a flowchart to help identify the process to follow when managing a larger number of suspect cases of COVID-19 on board; and a PCR testing procedures matrix to help identify what to do and when prior to boarding and if a suspect case is identified on the ship.

## 2. Decision Making for On Board Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

A flowchart attached at Annex A identifies the process to follow when managing a larger number of potential cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) on board. If COVID-19 cannot be satisfactorily excluded, seafarers must be treated as positive cases until further assessment shoreside or complete resolution of symptoms and isolation for 14 days. Isolation is critical in attempting to control the spread of disease on board. During the isolation period the seafarers should not work and should be disembarked at the nearest appropriate port. In deciding on the nearest appropriate port, medical facility capabilities ashore should be considered.

Affected seafarers should not be allowed to work and a risk assessment should be undertaken to ensure that the ship can safely undertake operations. Due regard should be taken of the safe manning certification and close liaison with the flag State must be maintained.

Isolate all patients in the sickbay, or in their own cabins, and ensure they wear medical face masks when mixing with other people. Patients should have access to bathrooms not used by others.

## 3. PCR Testing Procedures Matrix

A PCR testing procedures matrix attached at Annex B identifies what to do and when prior to boarding and also if COVID-19 is identified on board a ship.

Evidence suggests that asymptomatic persons still carry COVID-19 and transmit it to others. Testing:

- Can identify persons not identified by other screening measures;
- Should ideally be conducted on embarkation in ports or terminals, where tests are available by port health authority representatives; and
- Should currently be conducted using polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests, which involve a swab of the nose or throat. This recommendation may change once new tests are available.

Any seafarers testing positive should not board the ship and should receive further medical assessment or tests.

A negative PCR test does not guarantee seafarers are not infected with COVID-19 and could still potentially carry it on board the ship.

Any seafarers about to join the ship developing any symptoms should not be boarded and should receive further medical advice.

The ability to test seafarers before embarkation depends on many factors including testing availability in ports and terminals.



## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Protocols to Mitigate the Risks of Cases On Board Ships

Seafarers may become infected while travelling to a ship, so the best time to test for COVID-19 to reduce infection risks on board ship is in the port or terminal before embarkation, by isolating the seafarer ashore while awaiting the test result.

Testing before deployment to travel to a ship:

- Can reduce risks associated with COVID-19;
- May be a pre-requisite for travel by relevant authorities; and
- Avoids seafarers travelling to the ship who might not be allowed to board due to a positive test or screening upon embarkation and transmission to others during travel.

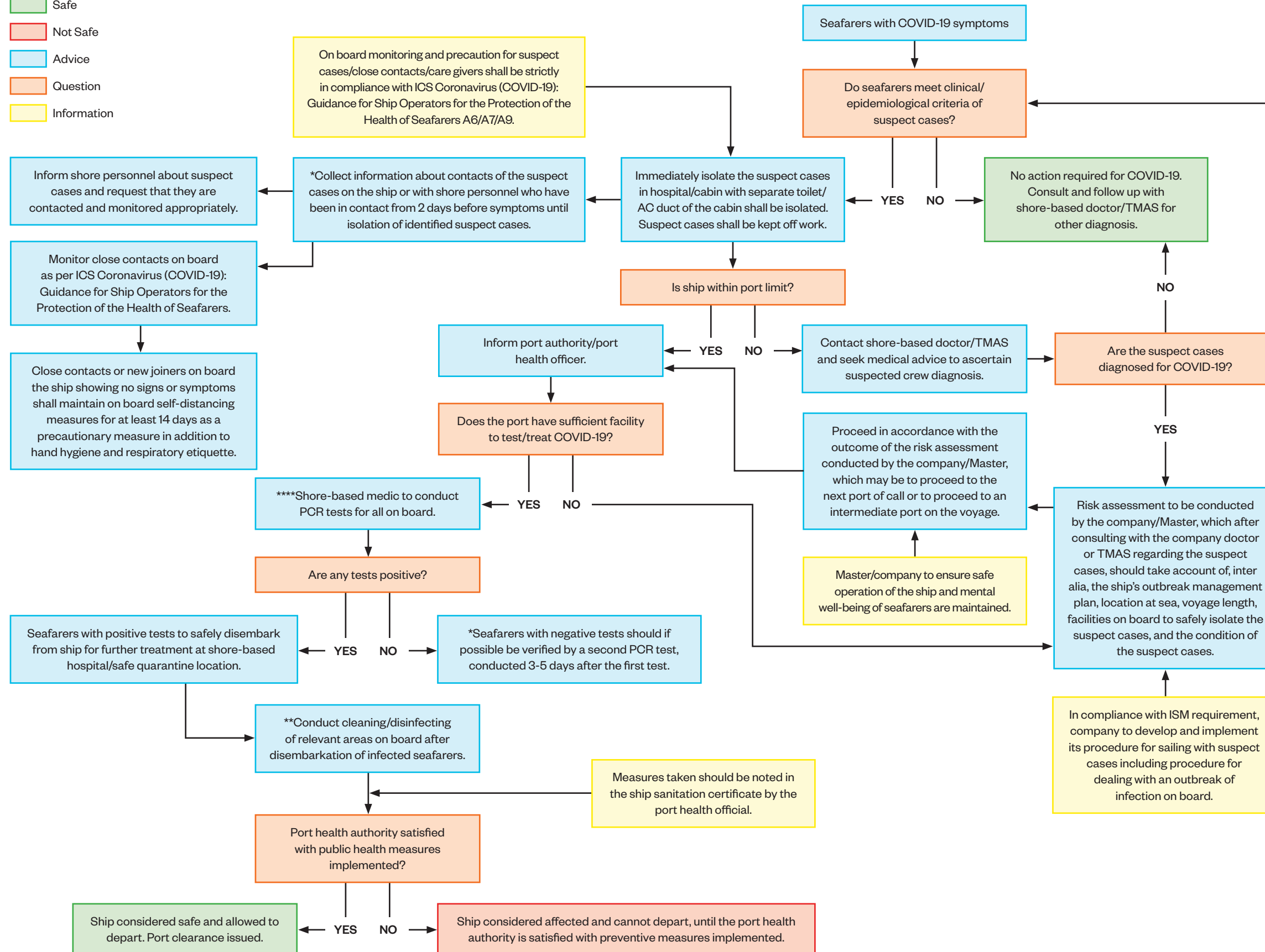
Early testing of seafarers suspected of having COVID-19 can help to mitigate spread to others on board ship and identify who else needs to be tested.





**Annex A**  
**Decision Making for On Board Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases**

- Safe
- Not Safe
- Advice
- Question
- Information



Symptoms of Suspect Cases:  
 \*\*\*Seafarers with acute onset of fever AND cough; OR acute onset of ANY THREE OR MORE of the following signs or symptoms: fever, cough, general weakness/fatigue, headache, muscle ache, sore throat, runny nose, problems with breathing, loss of appetite/nausea/vomiting, diarrhoea, reduced mental alertness. Self-assessment tool covid19atsea.no can be used. Company doctor/TMAS may also be consulted. However, many who test positive may not show any symptoms.

\* Reference information from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

\*\* For guide to cleaning refer to <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/cleaning-and-disinfection-of-environmental-surfaces-in-the-context-of-covid-19>

\*\*\* <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/who-2019-nCoV-surveillanceguidance-2020.7>

\*\*\*\* Specifically for non-passenger ships

Epidemiological criteria: Residing or working in an area with high risk of transmission of the virus: for example, closed residential settings and humanitarian settings, such as camp and camp-like settings for displaced persons, any time within the 14 days prior to symptom onset;

OR Residing in or travel to an area with community transmission anytime within the 14 days prior to symptom onset;

OR Working in health setting, including within health facilities and within households, anytime within the 14 days prior to symptom onset.

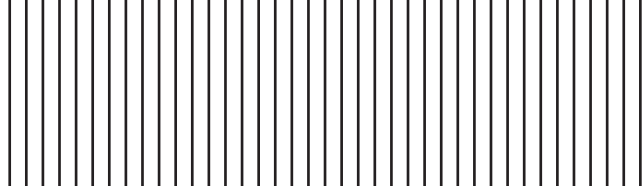
Follow reporting criteria to all concerned parties such as flag State/port authority/P&I club/charterers.



**Annex B**  
**PCR Testing Procedures Matrix**

	PCR Testing Requirements for Travel to and from the Ship			Suspect Case PCR Testing Requirements as Directed by the Port Health Authority (PHA)	
	Pre departure from home to ship location	On arrival in country of embarkation of the ship	On arrival in the country of disembarkation from the ship for repatriation	Initial tests	Repeated testing of crew/close contacts
<b>Required</b>	Test to be taken according to the rules of the country of arrival before leaving the seafarer's country of origin. * Due diligence should be conducted by the company to ensure the certificate is valid and not fraudulent.	Verification by officials in the country of arrival of the seafarer's test certificate. If the certificate is not valid retesting will need to be conducted whilst isolating the seafarer ashore. When there is no testing by the State Authority, the company should use due diligence to ensure the certificate is valid and not fraudulent.	To avoid quarantine some countries of arrival require a negative PCR test result prior to arrival of a returning seafarer. Where required the test should be available to the seafarer in the port where they sign off the ship.	On arrival in port.	Repeated tests are taken 3–5 days after the second test.
<b>If negative</b>	Seafarers may travel from the country of origin with the testing certificate to ship.	Board ship after agreed quarantine if required and/ or repeat testing if required.	Leave the ship with testing certificate.	Remain in isolation for the period of time required by the PHA. Seek medical advice.*	Remain in isolation for the period of time required.*
<b>If positive</b>	Seafarers should not leave country of origin.	Seek medical assistance and do not board ship.	Do not leave the ship and advise port health authorities.	Seek medical assistance and disembark for quarantine or isolate onboard.	Seek medical assistance and disembark for quarantine or isolate.
<b>References / comments</b>	* E.g. 48 hours for Singapore	Testing requirements for travel to and from the ship		*Testing Strategy for Coronavirus (COVID-19) in High-Density Critical Infrastructure Workplaces after a COVID-19 Case is Identified <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/worker-safety-support/hd-testing.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/worker-safety-support/hd-testing.html</a>	*Testing Strategy for Coronavirus (COVID-19) in High-Density Critical Infrastructure Workplaces after a COVID-19 Case is Identified <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/worker-safety-support/hd-testing.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/worker-safety-support/hd-testing.html</a>





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