



SECRETARIAT GENERAL  
OF HEALTH

DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH

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HEALTH

*Version 7*

# HEALTH MEASURES FOR THE RE-STARTING OF INTERNATIONAL CRUISES

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## **OBJECTIVE**

The main objective of this procedure is to set out the measures to be implemented by cruise ships intending to make international voyages and visiting Spanish ports. It is aimed at preventing Covid-19 health emergency-related events and ensuring proper management should they occur.

## **GENERAL RULES**

As a general rule, appropriate measures should be implemented to prevent infected persons from boarding; reduce the likelihood of transmission on board; identify cases early; and handle them appropriately until disembarkation.

Appropriate measures should also be taken to limit contact between people. To this end, passengers and crew members should, as far as possible, be put into groups, each of which will have different schedules for meals, embarkation and disembarkation, and involvement in the ship's activities, in such a way that there is as little interaction as possible between the groups.

## **PASSENGER INFORMATION**

Prior to the start of the cruise, the shipping company will inform passengers and crew about recommendations to follow during the voyage. This information must include criteria for denied boarding (evidence of symptoms or having been diagnosed with Covid-19 within the previous 7 days). In addition, it should cover the requirements for embarkation in relation to vaccination against Covid-19, diagnostic tests and recovery from the illness.

Regular information must also be provided during the cruise regarding measures to be taken during the voyage (hygiene measures, diagnostic tests, information about symptoms compatible with Covid-19; and, where such symptoms arise, the applicable measures for notifying the crew). This should be done using information posters and public address messages.

Finally, prior to calling at any Spanish port, passengers must be given information about the measures in place at the locations they will be visiting.



## HEALTH MEASURES FOR OPERATING AT SPANISH PORTS

Each cruise ship intending to operate in Spanish ports must have a **COMPANY PROCEDURE FOR PREVENTING AND MITIGATING AGAINST COVID-19 RELATED HEALTH RISKS**. This must cover the measures to prevent and control transmission of the disease and how to respond to Covid-19 related events.

The shipping company's procedure should cover all possible scenarios - including the potential full evacuation of the ship, and should include all aspects related to transportation, medical treatment and supervision, accommodation, maintenance and eventual repatriation of any passenger or crew taken off for Covid-19-related reasons. Costs arising from these actions shall be covered by the shipping company, either directly or through an insurance company.

### MONITORING OF THE EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION

Prior to starting the cruise, shipping companies should monitor the situation in regard to the disease at the destinations they plan to visit, paying special attention to information regarding variants, as well as requirements established by the health authorities for entry into Spain.

They should also assess the situation at passengers' and crew members' places of origin, in case any additional preventive measures need to be put in place.

### COMPANY PROCEDURE FOR PREVENTING AND MITIGATING COVID-19 RELATED HEALTH RISKS

The shipping company's procedure is to be updated regularly and cover at least the following:

1. A designated person on-board to be directly responsible for applying the procedure.
2. The maximum capacity of the ship, which the shipping company must communicate to the Port Authority and shall be determined by compliance with the following requirements:



- a. The flow of passengers at the port facilities must be suitable and crowding avoided. If the Port Authority deems the proposed limit to be excessive, it will notify the shipping company, which must justify the maximum capacity and, if necessary, propose a reduction.
  - b. The locations of the ports included in the itinerary must have sufficient capacity to handle any response to a potential outbreak on board, or must be less than 24 hours by sea from a port that has such capacity. For this purpose, the relevant Foreign Health Department units and autonomous communities in question must be duly notified of the shipping company's protocol via the applicable Port Authorities.
  - c. Safety distances on board must be maintained at all times, along with adequate isolation of any cases.
3. The appropriate number of crew members must be kept in key positions to ensure that Minimum Safe Manning levels are respected and maintained, as well as those in charge of onboard medical facilities, in the event of an outbreak. Efforts are to be made to avoid more than two crew members sleeping in the same cabin.
4. The ship must have adequate ability to perform diagnostic tests on board, and must have arrangements in place to perform them ashore if required. These tests are necessary both for assessing suspected passengers as well as for periodic screening tests.
5. There must be adequate designated areas on board to handle an incident correctly:
  - a. Medical facilities with sufficient capacity and staffing according to the characteristics of the ship. These facilities should have clearly differentiated areas in which patients with suspected infectious disease can be separated from those with other types of illness.
  - b. Allocated areas to isolate cases that do not require medical attention. As part of this, at least 5% of the maximum capacity must be reserved for possible isolation.



6. Provision of personal protective equipment: surgical and high efficiency masks, eye protection, gloves, waterproof gowns, etc.
7. Cleaning and disinfection procedure, setting out the products to be used, dilution and method of use.
8. Description of the ventilation system in the ship's interior areas - especially in common areas and those that have the highest passenger traffic.

A copy of the Shipping Company's Procedure and Responsible Statement that its procedures comply with these measures, on an ongoing basis, must be sent to [cruceros@puertos.es](mailto:cruceros@puertos.es) and each Spanish Port Authority on the planned itinerary.

## HEALTH ASSISTANCE COVER GUARANTEE

In the event of an incident on board, all related costs must be borne by the shipping company via an insurance policy which must include agreements with health centres and other agreed establishments where passengers who need it can be accommodated.

It is essential that the shipping company meets this requirement **before the cruise begins**, ideally at all Spanish ports of the itinerary; compliance at the home port is mandatory. It must cover at least the following:

1. Agreements with health centres and other onshore facilities that include all the needs of any patients diagnosed with Covid-19, as well as their adequate treatment and follow-up:
  - a. At healthcare centres (both conventional healthcare facilities and intensive care facilities with mechanical ventilation if necessary).
  - b. At establishments (hotel rooms or single/double occupancy apartments with private bathroom on a full-board basis).

Health centres and accommodation arranged for caring for and isolating cases must be adequate for this purpose, and a sufficient number must be provided for, depending on the number of people on board.

2. Carrying out the necessary confirmatory tests.
3. Any potential transfers - including those from the ship to the medical centre or agreed establishment, from the accommodation or hospital to the ship, from the ship to the airport, and air transfers.



4. Repatriation of cases or potential bodies, as well as any necessary crew changes.

## CREW TRAINING

Cruise managers must ensure all crew members receive regular and adequate training in recognising the signs and symptoms of Covid-19 and be fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in the event of an incident.

They must also be trained in the use of personal protective equipment as well as the cleaning and disinfection protocols in place on the ship.

Lastly, all crew members must understand at all times that, in the event of onset of symptoms of the disease, they must self-isolate and immediately notify their superiors.

## MEASURES RELATING TO PASSENGERS

### During boarding

All passengers embarking on a cruise that includes Spanish ports as part of its itinerary must undergo a series of measures implemented by the shipping company, at the time of boarding:

1. Passengers disembarking at a Spanish port - whether for a stopover or at the end of the cruise - must complete a health questionnaire at the start of the cruise, specifying any symptoms. The information will be collected using the EU Digital Passenger Locator Form (dPLF) app, developed by HEALTHY GATEWAYS, once it becomes available for use in Spain. In the meantime, health questionnaires and passenger contact information must be kept by the ship's managers and made available to the health authorities upon request.
2. Passengers' temperatures should be taken and they should be observed for signs of illness. Their temperature should be taken using non-contact thermometers or, preferably, thermographic cameras, and the passenger's privacy should be ensured at all times.
3. Any passenger with a temperature above 37.5°C or presenting symptoms compatible with Covid-19 should undergo further medical evaluation, including diagnostic testing to confirm or rule out infection.
4. No passenger must be allowed to board if any of the following situations apply to them:



- a. After medical assessment, they are suspected or confirmed as having Covid-19.
  - b. They have been diagnosed with Covid-19 within the last 7 days.
  - c. They present a positive result from a diagnostic test for active infection.
5. All passengers aged 12 or older must have one of the following health certificates prior to boarding, and these must be available at all times in case they are required:
- a. Vaccination certificate,
  - b. Diagnostic test certificate,
  - c. Proof of recovery certificate.

Certificates issued by the enforcing authorities for entry into Spanish territory shall be accepted as valid on the Department of Health's website via the following link:

<https://www.sanidad.gob.es/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov/spth.htm>

In addition to the above requirements, **all passengers must be tested at least 24 hours prior to boarding**. Anyone who tests positive must be denied boarding.

### **During the itinerary**

1. A daily temperature check will be conducted for everyone on board, along with a visual assessment to pick up any possible symptoms. In cases of suspected transmission, the frequency of temperature checks may be increased.
2. Passengers who have not provided a certificate of vaccination or proof of recovery certificate at the time of embarkation will be tested periodically (NAAT or antigen test). The frequency of this will vary depending on the duration of the cruise - as follows:
  - a. If the duration of the cruise is up to 7 days, a test will be done on the 3rd or 4th day of the cruise.
  - b. If the duration of the cruise is more than 7 days, a test will be done every 4 days.
3. Vaccinated or recovered passengers may be tested on the 3rd or 4th day on a voluntary basis.



## Upon disembarkation at a Spanish port after the cruise has ended

1. Passengers who end their cruise in a Spanish port are to be tested within 24 hours prior to disembarkation and the result must be negative. Anyone presenting a valid vaccination or proof of recovery certificate at the time of embarkation shall be exempt from this measure.
2. All passengers' temperatures should be taken immediately prior to disembarkation. If any have a temperature above 37.5°C, they should be tested for Covid. If the test result is positive, action should be taken as described in the PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF A CASE OCCURRING ON BOARD of this procedure. If negative, the passenger may be allowed to disembark.
3. All passengers disembarking at a Spanish port from abroad must comply with the regulations in force at that time of their entry.

## MEASURES RELATING TO CREW MEMBERS

1. Before resuming operations, all crew members must comply with Point 5 in the section "Measures relating to passengers. During embarkation". All of them are to be tested before boarding.
2. All new crew members or any returning after an extended period of time away from the ship (leave, holiday, etc) must also comply with the above requirements. They must also be quarantined for 7 days (10 if unvaccinated), which may be done on board or ashore, and then tested at the end of this quarantine period.
3. As the ship follows its cruise itinerary, all crew members must undergo NAAT or antigen testing on a regular basis depending on their vaccination status:
  - a. Unvaccinated: twice a week
  - b. Vaccinated or with a valid proof of recovery certificate: once a week.

On cruises where at least 95% of the crew and passengers are fully vaccinated or have a valid proof or recovery certificate, testing of vaccinated crew members may be spaced as follows:

- a. Unvaccinated: twice a week
- b. Vaccinated or with a valid proof of recovery certificate: every two weeks.



## PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF A CASE OF COVID-19 OCCURRING ON BOARD

Pursuant to the provisions of International Health Regulations-2005 and applicable Spanish regulations, any incident relating to suspected or confirmed Covid-19 cases must be reported at the next Spanish port of arrival by sending the **Maritime Declaration of Health ("DMS")** through the National Single Window system. The following measures must be applied:

1. The person must be **isolated** in the ship's pre-designated facilities and **tested**.
2. Close contacts of confirmed Covid-19 cases need not be quarantined. However, they are to be told that, during the 10 days following the most recent exposure, they should take extreme precautions and reduce social interactions as much as possible by wearing a mask at all times and maintaining proper hand hygiene. In particular, they must avoid contact with anyone who is vulnerable.
3. Information must be provided to those caring for the sick person on the ship about the risks of transmitting the disease.
4. Crew members looking after the sick person must be properly identified and wear the appropriate protective equipment.
5. Surfaces with which the patient and/or their secretions have been in contact must be cleaned and disinfected.
6. The Foreign Health Department is Spain's enforcing health authority and may authorise the ship's entry into port subject to inspection, with nobody being permitted to board or disembark and no loading and unloading until such authorisation has been given. Once the ship has docked, the Foreign Health Department will assess the need for a health inspection, following the appropriate protection measures and setting out the measures to be put in place in each case.

### 7. Disembarkation of cases:

Any confirmed cases with severe symptoms should be taken off the ship and moved to a health centre agreed with the shipping company.

As a general rule, asymptomatic cases or those with mild symptoms (at the discretion of the doctor on board) may remain on board provided the following requirements are met:



- a. Should the person develop symptoms or worsen, health care is to be guaranteed until the patient is taken off the ship.
- b. Foreign Health Department has considered the on-board isolation facilities as adequate for this purpose - both in terms of quality and quantity. To this effect, the cabins designated for isolating cases shall not be deducted from the 5% capacity for isolation described in point 5.b of this document, SHIPPING COMPANY PROCEDURE FOR PREVENTING AND MITIGATING COVID-19 RELATED HEALTH RISKS.

If the patient requires medical assistance on land at any point, they must be taken off the ship immediately.

Patients who remain on board must stay in isolation in their cabins for 7 days from the onset of symptoms or from the testing date if the person is asymptomatic, if at the end of this period the person is asymptomatic and at least 3 days have elapsed since symptoms have passed.

8. Close contacts may remain on board, whilst following the recommendations set out in Point 3.
9. The costs of accommodation, meals, health monitoring and any medical or health care of disembarked patients are to be paid by the shipping company, regardless of whether the patient leaves the ship at a port of call or at the cruise's final destination.
10. If, upon arrival at a Spanish port, 3.5% or more of those on board (crew and passengers) are reported as Covid-19 cases, only those cases and passengers who end the cruise at that port will be allowed to disembark; under no circumstances shall passengers be allowed to disembark for tourism or other reasons. Crew members may only disembark for essential reasons. Authority may be given for patients' close family members to be allowed off the boat. Passengers joining a cruise may also be given authority to board.
11. If at any time the ship's structural capacity for properly handling cases on board (set at 5%) is exceeded, or if the health authority of any of the ports on the itinerary deems that sustained transmission of Covid-19 is occurring on board the ship, additional measures may be taken as deemed appropriate. These could include: early termination of the cruise, disembarkation of all passengers, and detention of the ship. If the port does not have sufficient capacity to do so, it may authorise the ship's departure to the nearest designated port that does.



## **MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED AT PORTS WHERE INTERNATIONAL CRUISE SHIPS OPERATE**

The safe management of port facilities where cruise passenger transport activities take place has five basic objectives:

1. Encourage active social distancing.
2. Reduce, as far as possible, people's physical contact with the environment, with reinforced cleaning and disinfection measures in place.
3. Facilitate the implementation of appropriate health risk prevention and mitigation protocols at all times.
4. Encourage the implementation of controls planned by shipping companies that, for whatever reason, require facilities within or outside the terminal where cruise ships operate.
5. Facilitate the implementation of activities relating to the management of health incidents that have been detected on board, or have been identified at passenger terminal facilities, and which may affect passengers, crew, terminal ground staff and anyone else transiting through the terminal.

## **AVAILABILITY OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND MATERIAL RESOURCES**

All material and human resources of the passenger terminal must be oriented towards fulfilling the basic objectives mentioned above, throughout the entire period when there is a need to contain the pandemic. Compliance with the objectives must be compatible with operating the passenger terminal's normal activities, unrelated to disease-prevention protocols.

The terminal's infrastructures and material resources that may be used to achieve the five basic objectives mentioned above include:

1. Passenger PA and information systems.
2. Signage, markings, capacity control and flow separation.
3. Location and safe disposal points for health and safety materials: sanitising gels, masks, gloves, disposable trolley grips and other materials.
4. Specific signposted areas, suitably isolated where necessary, for the purposes of:



- a. The terminal's health and safety protocols.
  - b. Health checks to be carried out on cruise passengers who are embarking or disembarking and which, for any reason, should be conducted out at the terminal and not on the ship; this area should be large enough for evaluating the passengers' clinical condition and for carrying out infection-related questioning.
  - c. Procedures where a health incident is detected either on board a ship or at the terminal.
5. As many processes as possible should be digitised at the terminal - such as card payments, issuing of boarding passes, automatic passports and ID scanners, in order to help reduce the time passengers spend at the terminal and to avoid congestion.

Where the ship needs to sail for onward travel and the autonomous community's health service has not yet taken over responsibility for it, the terminal must provide space for the isolation and custody of any suspected or confirmed cases that have been assessed by the Foreign Health Department. Likewise, terminals are required to work with the shipping companies in implementing their diagnostic and detection protocols, as set out in the shipping company's procedure.

In regard to the use of vehicles, shuttles and mobile machinery by terminal workers and passengers, the necessary cleaning and disinfection measures are to be followed, as well as the maximum number of people per vehicle and the necessary frequencies in the process of embarking or disembarking passengers to ensure the safety of occupants, even when boarding or disembarking ships that have a high capacity.

## STAFF

All terminal staff must fully understand applicable protocols regarding pandemic prevention and taking care of passengers who have symptoms that are compatible with Covid-19. These protocols are to be included in the terminal's Self-Protection Plan.

Terminal staff should at all times respect the measures established by the prevention of occupational hazards service.

The degree of training to be provided to staff will depend directly on their specific tasks and requires constant updating to adapt to new regulations and protocols.

As far as possible, ground staff operating at the terminal should perform their tasks in sealed groups or work units in order to reduce the risk of Covid-19 infection, facilitate the traceability of infections where they occur, and ensure continuity of



service.

In general, for terminal staff, the necessary measures will be put in place to comply with the Department of Health's "Guide to Good Practice in the Workplace" document, as well as any updates and particular features that may apply at any given time.

Ground staff are to wear personal protective clothing in accordance with the plans of the companies involved, in regard to preventing occupational hazards. Passengers are required to wear face masks at the terminal facilities in accordance with current regulations.

## CATERING FACILITIES

Catering facilities at the terminal should comply with the standards imposed by the enforcing authority as well as the recommendations contained in this Guide, in line with requirements determined at any given time.

## TOILETS

In public toilets, the minimum number of users must be managed in order to maintain physical distance in accordance with local authority regulations.

## SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing of at least 1.5 metres should be maintained, as should the wearing of face masks in all internal and external areas of the terminal.

Restrict access to terminals for accompanying passengers if necessary due to capacity in order to maintain safe distance.

Consideration should be given to the use of floor markers to ensure spacing, arrows to indicate directional flow, signage and audio announcements for passengers, and optimising layout to restrict the number of cruise ship use of terminals.

This may include establishing specific lanes or separating of different user flows and dividing up terminals into designated zones.

Consideration should also be given to the use of protective glass or plastic panels in order to protect terminal staff at locations where physical distancing is not possible.

Consideration should be given to removing any items from the terminal that may encourage crowding - for example tables and benches. Fixed unmovable seating, whether indoors or outdoors, should be marked to show where people cannot sit in



order to maintain social distance.

Where conditions permit, users of the terminal should be encouraged to use outdoor spaces.

Health promotion information material should be prominently displayed and provided to inbound and outbound passengers.

## FACE MASKS

Anyone using the terminal must wear face masks inside and outside the terminal, in line with local regulations in force.

## RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

Good respiratory etiquette should be encouraged at terminals: the nose and mouth should be covered with a disposable tissue when sneezing or coughing, and the tissue should then be immediately disposed of in a non-contact receptacle, followed by meticulous hand hygiene.

It is important to have relevant supplies available in different areas of the terminal (such as tissues and paper towels and disposable gloves, no-touch containers, and so on).

Information on good respiratory etiquette should be provided to terminal users through adverts, television, displays, brochures, infographics, electronic posters and so on.

## HAND HYGIENE

All terminal users should be encouraged to follow good hand hygiene practices. The use of gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene.

Alcohol sanitiser gel stations should be available at all terminal entrances and in other areas such as toilets, counters, retail and food service areas, as well as in the boarding area.

## CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

Cleaning and disinfection should be done in accordance with routine procedures and with greater frequency for surfaces that are most used by terminal staff and users.



Terminal cleaning and disinfection must be done before and after each embarkation. Special cleaning and disinfection protocols should also be implemented after a possible or confirmed case has been identified, either at the terminal or on board a ship if it has used the terminal facilities.

## VENTILATION

The inside parts of cruise terminals should be adequately ventilated. Natural ventilation is preferable wherever possible.

However, drafts should be avoided, as they could create a risk of spreading any aerosolised droplets even further.

Where mechanical ventilation is used, the number of air exchanges per hour should be maximised along with the supply of fresh air as much as possible.

Systems such as HEPA filters are very effective in this regards for filtering out viruses and bacteria, but can themselves become breeding grounds if they are not decontaminated on a regular basis.

## LUGGAGE HANDLING

Disinfection of luggage - and especially parts that come into contact with the hands - may be considered before loading luggage on board, by agreement with the shipping company.

## MANAGING POTENTIAL CASES AT THE CRUISE TERMINAL

The evacuation of passengers, crew or ground staff from a ship or from the terminal facilities, due to detection of actual or suspected positive cases, must be done with the authorisation, coordination and protocols determined in each case by the health authorities.

## SHIP SUPPLY SERVICES

Particular attention is to be paid to ship provisioning and supply operations - in particular, in regard to access to port facilities by persons and vehicles carrying them out.

In regard to handing over waste generated by ships and at the terminal itself, where any incident (actual or suspected infection) has been reported, special hygiene and



disinfection measures should be considered, including isolation of any waste related to the cases detected.

## COORDINATED MARITIME-PORT COMMUNITY

The "Health & Safety Recommendations to be Implemented at Passenger Maritime Stations and On Board Ships for the Reopening of Passenger Traffic", issued in May 2020 by State Ports and General Directorate of the Merchant Marine and overseen by Ministry of Health, states that Port Authorities must set up a coordination committee for each Port or Port Authority. This committee must meet regularly and be attended by the Port Authority, the Health Authority, managers responsible for the Autonomous Community in which the port is located, Maritime Captainty, concessionaires, authorisation holders, licensees, consignees and shipping companies to discuss the implementation of any measures to be put in place, in accordance with instructions given by the enforcing authorities and applicable protocols.

To ensure agile management of the operations and any potential incidents, the Port Authority must act as the coordinating entity between all the parties involved in the aforementioned committee acting at each Port.

The terminal coordination committee will first need to decide which areas of the terminal are most suitable for complying with the purposes of this document.

Likewise, for each passenger terminal operating in the Port, a person in charge of coordinating and monitoring the health and safety measures to be implemented should be appointed to act as the single interface with the Port Authority on this matter.

## OTHER NOTES

Implementation of the measures described in the previous section shall be subject to any updating of standards and instructions by the enforcing authorities from time to time.

Where temperature control or medical check-up and control equipment is used, it must bear all certifications and approvals required by the enforcing authorities and must be used in accordance with the standards and recommendations issued by the Ministry of Health.

Where disinfection protocols are used that are based on means such as ultraviolet light, nebulisation or spraying with biocides, ozonisation or other means, such equipment must bear all certifications and approvals required by the enforcing authorities and must be used in accordance with the standards and recommendations issued by the Ministry of Health, as well as the manufacturer's instructions. Products



used in enhanced disinfection tasks (biocides and other disinfectants) must be included in the list of products authorised by the Ministry of Health and must always be used as authorised. Companies that carry out this work must be duly authorised by the corresponding Autonomous Community.

Specific procedures should be put in place for the care of people with disabilities and/or reduced mobility.

The measures set out in this document shall be subject to certification as part of State Ports Certification Schemes, through the Cruiser Traffic Service Quality Service Directive.