



SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

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Subject: Measures to Support Safe Cruise Travel in Canada (modified April 1, 2022)

Purpose

This bulletin outlines measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 from cruise ship operations. These practices must be implemented for cruise ship operations that continue, under restrictions, during the COVID-19 pandemic with Canadian ports of call.

Scope

This bulletin applies to authorized representatives and passengers of the following:

- Large Cruise Ships (certified to carry more than 100 persons and are equipped with overnight accommodations) that are Canadian vessels operating anywhere or that are foreign vessels operating in Canadian waters; and
- Small Cruise Ships (certified to carry 100 persons or less and are equipped with overnight accommodations) that are Canadian vessels operating anywhere or that are foreign vessels operating in Canadian waters.

Background

As of November 1, 2021, cruise ships are permitted to operate in Canadian waters.

Transport Canada, in consultation with the Public Health Agency of Canada, has developed a comprehensive framework (the “Framework”) focusing on the COVID-19 related health requirements that the cruise industry must abide by, supporting safe cruise activities in Canada.

It should be noted that all operations and guidance are subject to changing epidemiological conditions in Canada.

Required Documents

COVID-19 Management Plan

A COVID-19 Management Plan must be implemented by every Authorized Representative of a large Canadian cruise ship or large foreign cruise ship operating in Canadian waters. The Management Plan is to be vessel-specific and shall contain the following components:

- measures implemented to ensure that vaccination requirements in relation to passengers are complied with;
- measures to ensure passengers are tested and provide the results of a COVID-19 test, in accordance with the testing framework section below;
- measures to prevent or limit the spread of COVID-19 on board a cruise ship,
- measures to protect crew members and passengers from the transmission of COVID-19 when the cruise ship stops at a port of call during the voyage;
- measures to respond to a COVID-19 outbreak on board a cruise ship; and
- in the case of a cruise ship that is a foreign vessel, measures implemented to ensure that it complies with European Union's framework in relation to COVID-19 that applies to cruise ships, or, if eligible to participate the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Voluntary COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Program for Foreign-flagged Cruise Ships Operating in US waters.

The authorized representative of large Canadian cruise ships or large foreign cruise ships must ensure that a copy of their COVID-19 management plan is kept on board each cruise ship for which they are the authorized representative and must make that plan available to the Minister of Transport (Minister) upon request.

Cruise operators can refer to this [Instructional Reference Tool](#) to assist in the development of their COVID-19 Management Plans.

Ship to Shore Checklist Respecting Procedures at Ports

The authorized representative of every large Canadian cruise ship and large foreign cruise ship operating in Canadian waters must develop and maintain on board a checklist respecting procedures to be followed when the cruise ship is at a port of call that has been co-signed by the port authorities where the cruise ship is scheduled to call and is to be shared with the Minister and with public health authorities upon request.

The checklist must include measures to prevent or limit the spread of COVID-19 during the embarkation and disembarkation of passengers at a port of call.

For further guidance on the development of checklists please see the [Standards for the Development of a Ship-to-Shore Checklist Respecting Procedures at Ports](#).

Attestation and Confirmation

Authorized Representatives of all cruise ships must, before commencing operations in Canadian waters or first entering Canadian waters, confirm to the Minister that passengers onboard the vessel meet the requirements outlined in section 8 of the Interim Order, as they relate to vaccination and testing.

Additionally, the authorized representative of any large Canadian cruise ship operating anywhere or large foreign cruise ship operating in Canadian waters must, before commencing operations in Canadian waters or first entering Canadian waters, notify the Minister that they have implemented a COVID-19 Management Plan, and attest that the Ship to Shore Checklist is

completed and signed.

Confirmation and attestation can be completed via the [electronic form](#).

Reporting Requirements

Maritime Declaration of Health

Authorized Representatives should be aware that the Public Health Agency of Canada requires Authorized Representatives of Canadian vessels operating anywhere or foreign vessels operating in Canadian waters to submit the following:

- A [Maritime Declaration of Health \(MDH\)](#) within 48 to 24 hours before entering Canadian waters or at last international port (if less than 24 hours away from Canadian waters).
- An [Annex A](#) report if there are suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 onboard. This document is to be initially submitted at the same time as the MDH and resubmitted as required in the *Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order (Quarantine, Isolation and Other Obligations)* .
- An [Annex B](#) report on other communicable diseases to be submitted as outlined in the *Quarantine Act section 34 2 (a)*.

Report on Passengers and Crew

Additionally, an authorized representative of a Canadian cruise ship or a foreign cruise ship operating in Canadian waters, must provide to the Minister a report that includes the following information:

1. Company Name
2. Vessel IMO Number
3. Report date
4. Total number of passengers on board
5. Number of passengers fully vaccinated
6. Number of passengers with a medical exception
7. Number of passengers with a religious exception
8. Number of passengers who were denied boarding due to non-compliance with vaccination requirements (including by failing to provide the required information, but excluding due to false/misleading information)
9. Number of passengers who were denied boarding due to providing false or misleading information
10. Number of passengers with positive COVID-19 test
11. Number of fully vaccinated passengers with positive COVID-19 test
12. Number of passengers with positive COVID-19 test and an exception
13. Total number of crew on board
14. Number of fully vaccinated crew
15. Number of unvaccinated crew with an approved exemption
16. Number of vaccinated crew with a positive COVID-19 test

17. Number of crew with an approved exemption with a positive COVID-19 test

Authorized Representatives will be required to submit these reports to Transport Canada by logging into [Transport Canada's Federal Vaccination Mandate portal](#).

Transport Canada will provide additional guidance on the reporting process. Should you have any questions please contact: trcreporting-rapportstc@tc.gc.ca

Reporting Frequency

Authorized Representatives of Canadian cruise ships or foreign cruise ships operating in Canadian waters will be required to report into [Transport Canada's Federal Vaccination Mandate portal](#) on passengers and crew on a daily basis while operating in Canadian waters.

Frequency of reporting is subject to changing epidemiological conditions in Canada.

Testing Framework

All passengers 5 years of age and over will be required to provide a **pre-embarkation test** prior to being on board the following vessels:

- A large cruise ship that is a Canadian vessel operating anywhere
- A large or small cruise ship that is a foreign vessel operating in Canadian waters; and
- A small cruise ship that is a Canadian vessel docking at ports outside of Canadian waters.

Passengers who are not fully vaccinated due to a medical contraindication or for sincere religious reasons, or passengers who are not fully vaccinated and are 5 years of age or older but under 12 years of age, boarding a small cruise ship operating exclusively between Canadian ports will also be required to meet the **pre-embarkation** testing requirements.

Passengers onboard all cruise ships, including small cruise ships operating exclusively between Canadian ports, may be subject to additional testing requirements as well as isolation and quarantine requirements, as outlined below.

Pre-Embarkation Testing Requirements for Passengers

To fulfill the above requirements, passengers requiring a pre-embarkation test will need to provide one of the following:

- Evidence of a negative COVID-19 molecular test (e.g. PCR test) – performed on a specimen collected from the person no more than 72 hours prior to their initial boarding of the cruise ship.
- Evidence of a negative COVID-19 antigen test (e.g. RAT) – performed on a specimen collected from the person no more than 2 days before initially boarding the cruise ship.
- Evidence of a positive result for a COVID-19 molecular test that was performed on a specimen collected from the person at least 10 days and no more than 180 days before the person initially boards the cruise ship.

In addition to the requirements above, passengers who are unable to be vaccinated due to medical contraindication or sincere religious reasons, or passengers who are not fully vaccinated and are 5 years of age or older but under 12 years of age, who have provided a negative pre-embarkation test, are also required to provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 antigen test taken on embarkation day.

Evidence of a result for a COVID-19 molecular test or antigen test must include:

- a) the name and date of birth of the person from whom the specimen was collected for the test
- b) the name and civic address of the accredited laboratory or the testing provider that performed or observed the test and verified the result
- c) the date the specimen was collected and the test method used
- d) the test result

A testing provider means:

- a) a person who may provide COVID-19 screening or diagnostic testing services under the laws of the jurisdiction where the service is provided;
- b) an organization, such as a telehealth service provider or pharmacy, that may provide COVID-19 screening or diagnostic testing services under the laws of the jurisdiction where the service is provided and that employs or contracts with a person referred to in paragraph (a); or
- c) in the case of a COVID-19 Antigen Test - a person employed by the Authorized Representative who is trained to oversee and attest to the results of such a test.

Additional Testing Requirements

The following additional testing measures will be required for persons onboard all Canadian cruise ships or foreign cruise ships operating in Canadian waters:

- All persons on board the ship, or intending to re-embark the ship, with signs and symptoms of COVID-19 must take either a COVID-19 molecular test or a COVID-19 antigen test.
 - A person who is awaiting test results for a COVID-19 molecular test must isolate while awaiting the result.
 - A person who receives a positive antigen test must isolate for 24 hours and retest with a molecular test.
 - If the results of a COVID-19 molecular test are negative, the person can be released from COVID-19 isolation requirements.
 - If the results of a COVID-19 molecular test are positive, the person must isolate for 10 days (including the original 24 hours).
- All COVID-19 tests must be either performed or observed by a testing provider.

Quarantine of Close Contacts

A person who is a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case on board the ship is required to take a COVID-19 molecular or a COVID-19 antigen test. The person is required to quarantine for 14 days following their last exposure.

If the traveller undergoes any additional testing in the 14-day period of quarantine, and the results of that test is positive, the person must isolate for 10 days from the day of that test.

All COVID-19 tests must be either performed or observed by a testing provider.

Testing requirements for **crew** are outlined in [Ship Safety Bulletin No. 17/2021](#).

Isolation Measures

The measures for the place of isolation are the following:

- a) it allows the person to remain in isolation during the applicable isolation period;
- b) it allows the person to avoid all contact with other persons, unless that person is a dependent child in a parent-child relationship or 22 years of age or older and dependent on them for care or support by reason of mental or physical limitation and no alternative care arrangement is available;
- c) it allows the person to avoid all contact with any other people unless they are required or are directed to go to a place to seek medical care;
- d) it allows the person to have access to a bedroom that is separate from those used by all other persons;
- e) it allows the person to have access to a bathroom that is separate from those used by all other persons
- f) it allows the person to have access to the necessities of life without leaving that place;

The isolation requirements outlined above are required for isolation on board the vessel, as well as any isolation periods on shore, outlined under the Public Health Agency of Canada's (PHAC) [Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order \(Quarantine, Isolation and Other Obligations\)](#) (PHAC Order).

Under PHAC's order at the end of a voyage with final disembarkation in Canada, persons who are disembarking the vessel and who have not yet completed their 10 day isolation period may complete their isolation period on shore as long as they have remained in a suitable place of isolation on board since their diagnosis.

For persons who do not have a suitable isolation or quarantine plan, Authorized Representatives are responsible under Interim Order No. 3 for covering costs associated with the isolation or quarantine of persons on shore who are disembarking the vessel during their isolation or quarantine periods. Authorized Representatives are reminded that under the PHAC Order they are responsible for organizing a suitable isolation or quarantine place for persons who do not have suitable plans, as well as arranging for daily meals, and in the case of isolation, private transportation to the isolation location on shore. Quarantining and isolation measures apply to cruise ships of any size and is not limited to those with over 100 passengers.

The Authorized Representative and travellers should be aware of additional responsibilities, as they relate to isolation measures, as outlined in Orders made pursuant to the [Quarantine Act](#).
Exceptions to Vaccination Requirements

Passengers who are not fully vaccinated may be permitted to board a cruise ship, if they provide evidence to the cruise ships Authorized Representative that:

- a) They are not able to be vaccinated due to a medical contraindication; or
- b) In the case of a passenger who is boarding a cruise ship in Canada, they have a sincerely held religious belief.

The Authorized Representative has the responsibility to verify that a passenger who is unvaccinated for a medical contraindication or sincerely held religious belief has provided sufficient evidence which meets the requirements for entry to Canada, and/or for travel in Canadian waters.

Template forms for individuals seeking to provide evidence of this can be provided to Authorized Representative or their agents through a request via email to the CMAC Secretariat (cmac-ccmc@tc.gc.ca).

A person over who is 12 years of age or older who is unvaccinated, and who does not hold written evidence of a medical contraindication as per the requirements of the [Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order \(Quarantine, Isolation and Other Obligations\)](#), is prohibited entry into Canada under the [Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order \(Prohibition of Entry into Canada\)](#). This includes a foreign national who holds an exemption from vaccination for a sincerely held religious belief, and unaccompanied unvaccinated children 12 years of age or older. In addition, under the [Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order \(Quarantine, Isolation and Other Obligations\)](#), foreign nationals who are unable to be vaccinated due to a medical contraindication must provide evidence that has been signed by a medical doctor.

It should also be noted that for those with the right of entry to Canada, they will be required to quarantine upon return to Canada as per the [Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order \(Quarantine, Isolation and Other Obligations\)](#).