



SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

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Subject: Measures to Support Safe Cruise Travel in Canada (modified September 8, 2022)

Purpose

This bulletin outlines requirements for Authorized Representatives of cruise ships engaged in international voyages while they are operating in Canadian waters, and passengers on board those vessels. These requirements are made pursuant to Transport Canada's [Interim Order Respecting Cruise Ship Restrictions and Vaccination Requirements Due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) and aim to mitigate the risks of COVID-19 transmission, and the severity of the disease, on board the cruise ship.

Scope

Requirements of this bulletin apply to authorized representatives of and passengers on board a cruise ship, operating in Canadian waters. For the purposes of this bulletin, the vessel needs to meet the following criteria:

- is a passenger vessel certified to carry more than 12 passengers, other than a ferry vessel or passenger vessel that provides essential services;
- carries passengers who are scheduled to be on board for 24 hours or more; and
- is on a voyage from a port in Canada that includes a scheduled stop at one or more ports of call in a country other than Canada; or
- is on a voyage from a port of call in a foreign country that includes a scheduled stop at one or more ports of call in Canada.

This bulletin and requirements in [Interim Order Respecting Cruise Ship Restrictions and Vaccination Requirements Due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) do not apply to:

- a cruise ship that is a foreign vessel exercising right of innocent passage; and
- a vessel that is operated for the purpose of saving lives, securing the safety of another vessel or preventing the immediate loss of another vessel

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 cruise ship (certified to carry more than 100 persons and equipped with overnight accommodations) engaged in an international voyage 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

The authorized representative of a large cruise ship must ensure that a copy of their COVID-19 management plan is kept on board the cruise ship and must make that plan available to the Minister of Transport (Minister) upon request.

Authorized representatives 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 cruise ship engaged in an international voyage 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 engaged in international voyages and operating in Canadian waters must, before commencing operations in Canadian waters or first entering Canadian waters, confirm to the Minister that passengers on board the vessel meet the requirements outlined in section 5 of the Interim Order, as they relate to vaccination and testing. Attestation is to be completed for each voyage of a Cruise ship to ensure that all persons on board meet the requirements of the Interim Order.

Additionally, the authorized representative of any large cruise ship engaged in international voyages and 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 on COVID-19 cases on board is to be initially submitted at the same time as the MDH, even if there are no cases on board, and resubmitted as required by the Quarantine Officer. If there are confirmed cases on board, the Annex A Case Reporting Form must be completed and attached to the Annex A submission.
- An [Annex B](#) report on other communicable diseases to be submitted as outlined in the *Quarantine Act* section 34 (2) (a). The Annex B Case Reporting Form must be completed and attached to the Annex B submission.

Annex A Case Reporting Forms and Annex B Case reporting forms were shared with Industry via email from the CMAC Secretariat on May 5, 2022. If you need to request a copy of the forms please contact CNS/SNC at the following email: cns-snc@phac-aspc.gc.ca.

Guidance documents for how use the Maritime Declaration of Health can be found at this [link](#).

Report on Passengers and Crew

Additionally, an authorized representative of a 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

The reports must represent information that is current **only for the day on which the report is submitted**. The report covers the situation on board the vessel on the particular date the report is entered and represents a point in time. The report data is **NOT** cumulative.

Authorized Representatives will be required to submit their report 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: tcreporting-rapportstc@tc.gc.ca

Reporting Frequency and Record Keeping

Authorized Representatives of a cruise ship operating in Canadian waters will be required to report into [Transport Canada's Federal Vaccination Mandate portal](#) on passengers and crew once per voyage. The report must be submitted on the first day the cruise ship enters Canadian waters from international waters. For further clarity, cruise ships who commence their operations in Canada will not be required to report to Transport Canada until the day they re-enter Canadian waters after voyaging outside of Canada. Authorized Representatives should continue to keep

onboard daily records reflecting the health status of persons onboard.

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 a cruise ship that is operating in Canadian waters, **unless** they meet the conditions set out under the “Tall Ship Requirements” section.

Passengers on board a cruise ship operating in Canadian waters may be subject to additional testing requirements as well as isolation and quarantine requirements, as outlined below, **unless** they meet the conditions in the “Tall Ship Requirements” section.

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.
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- 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 on board cruise ships engaged in international voyages 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.

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 48 hours after contact with the positive case.

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* or any Order that replaces it (PHAC Order).

Under the PHAC Order at the end of a voyage with final disembarkation in Canada, persons who are disembarking the cruise ship 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 the Interim Order for covering costs associated with the isolation or quarantine of persons on shore who are disembarking the vessel during their isolation or quarantine periods. For vessels arriving in Canada, 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 that 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).

As per the PHAC Order, a foreign national who is 12 years of age or older who does not meet the definition of “fully vaccinated”, and who does not hold written evidence of a medical contraindication as per the requirements of the [PHAC Order](#) is prohibited 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 PHAC Order, 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 all travellers who do not meet the definition of “fully-vaccinated” are required to have evidence of a pre-arrival test upon entry to Canada as per the [PHAC Order](#).

Tall Ship Requirements

For the purposes of this bulletin, a Tall Ship is defined as a monohull vessel that:

- a) has sufficient sail area for navigation under sails alone, whether or not fitted with mechanical means of propulsion; and
- b) has a length of at least 9.14 m at the water line

Passengers who are boarding a Tall Ship, will **not** be subject to any testing requirements prior to boarding the Tall Ship, provided they are on board for a period of 8 hours or less and provided that the ship is part of an event or festival.