

In the context of the prevention of infection with the COVID-19 ('Corona') virus, the government of The Netherlands (RIVM) has drawn up a number of policies and measures. These are in effect and also applicable to seagoing vessels. This document adapts these policies and measures for implementation on board ships. Some adjustments have been made in this version, these are listed at the bottom of the document.

General-summary:

- Human-to-human transmission via direct droplet infection only (coughing and sneezing). Probably also via airborne transmission and indirect transmission via objects such as toilets, door handles, cutlery, hand contact points, food, etc. play a part in the spread of the disease.
- Incubation time: 2-14 days (average 5-6 days)
- Symptoms: vary from mild respiratory symptoms such as coughing and sneezing with or without fever, to severe pneumonia and shortness of breath. A small part of COVID-19 patients has gastro-intestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, stomach aches and diarrhea.
- Exact data on the infectious period is missing. In any case, a patient is contagious during the symptomatic phase (if he/she shows symptoms of disease)
- Actual info at:
<https://lci.rivm.nl/richtlijnen/covid-19>

Translation into the situation at sea:

- Basically, seafarers are healthy people (holding a medical certificate declaring them fit for duty) without serious underlying conditions. The risk of serious complications in seafarers is therefore limited
- Crew changes can be a potential source of contamination
- In case a seafarer is suffering **from either coughing or sneezing or fever**, he should be isolated in his cabin. If he shares a cabin with others, another solution must be found so that he resides by himself in a confined space
- Severe cases (apart from coughing, sneezing or fever **also** severe general illness and shortness of breath) should be submitted to a Radio Medical Service (TMAS/RMA)
- Personal protection measures such as the use of a mouth-nose mask, splash glasses and plastic apron are, analogous to the advice for care staff, only necessary for seafarers who are required to provide medical care to potentially infected people on board
- In the Netherlands, the MDoH is used to report any infectious diseases to the authorities. In some countries flying the yellow (quarantine) flag is mandatory. This is not a requirement in The Netherlands
- All ships are required to timely file a full and correct MDoH. Please state clearly:
 - any relevant complaints or medical symptoms of any crewmember (see symptoms)
 - any measures already taken/implemented on board (like isolation)
 - if a Radio Medical Service has been contacted and why (TMAS/RMA)

- If a MDoH has been filed timely, a ship can sail to any NL port.
- As soon as a ship has submitted a MDoH and has been assessed by the GGD. (Municipal/Port Health Authority), the captain will be notified whether additional measures are needed.
- Passenger ships with potential Corona cases must contact the Port Health Authority as soon as possible.

Prevention and additional information:

Because Covid-19 is distributed mainly through drops but also through hands, general hygiene measures such as hand washing, hygiene when preparing food and beverages, sneeze/cough hygiene etc., will be useful to prevent transmission and reduce the epidemic. These measures will not completely prevent getting infected by COVID-19

Practically, this means:

- Wash your hands regularly
- Cough and sneeze in the inside of your elbow
- Use paper handkerchiefs and discard them immediately after single use
- Touch your nose, mouth and face as little as possible.
- Don't shake hands
- Keep 1.5 meter distance from everyone.

Additional detailed info on Corona from IMO, WHO and IMHA:

[https://www.ics-shipping.org/docs/default-source/resources/coronavirus-\(covid-19\)-guidance-for-ship-operators-for-the-protection-of-the-health-of-seafarers.pdf?sfvrsn=6](https://www.ics-shipping.org/docs/default-source/resources/coronavirus-(covid-19)-guidance-for-ship-operators-for-the-protection-of-the-health-of-seafarers.pdf?sfvrsn=6)

Date	Change
3 April 2020	The case definition has been eliminated because every person with complaints that could be COVID-19 infection are treated as such
3 April 2020	The symptoms of COVID-19 have been extended, since a part of the patients develop gastro-intestinal symptoms
3 April 2020	Indirect transmission via surfaces has been included.
3 April 2020	The contact information for the Port of Rotterdam have been removed, since ships with persons with symptoms on board can also go to the other Dutch ports.
3 April 2020	The preventive measure of 1.5 meter distance has been added.