



13075 Gateway Drive S, Suite 100
 Seattle, WA 98168
 Phone (206) 309-3507
 Fax (206) 826-1814
 Email: admin@discoveryhealthmd.com
www.discoveryhealthmd.com

DRAFT COVID-19 CATCHER AND TENDER VESSEL PROCEDURES						
Discovery Health MD, PLLC						
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COVID-19 CATCHER AND TENDER VESSEL PROCEDURES

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PURPOSE

These procedures are intended to provide medical guidance to catcher and tender vessels engaged in commercial fishing utilizing guidance provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the United States Coast Guard (USCG) to control the spread of COVID-19 on board vessels calling upon the United States and to mitigate the risk of potential COVID-19 exposure to local communities. This document is focused on operators and vessels. It is not intended to give guidance to communities, regulators or state or local officials.

COVID-19 is now classified as a global pandemic, as declared by the World Health Organization. In order to assist in containing the spread of COVID-19 to the extent possible, crew members, other than those leaving for the season, should practice all recommended social distancing protocols, remaining on the vessel except for essential duties.

In alignment with social distancing practices recommended for all community members, crewmembers should only disembark at port or contact local populations for essential needs and duties. In the event crewmembers disembark at a port, they are expected to follow social distancing and other mitigation strategies and wash hands before returning to the vessel.¹

Background: The Alaska catcher and tender vessel fishing fleets are geographically distributed among Southeast Alaska, Prince William Sound, Copper River Flats, Cook Inlet, Bristol Bay, Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, and the Gulf of Alaska. Depending on the fishery, seasons range throughout the year, with large fleets of smaller vessels operating in specific summer or fall seasons. Vessels range from skiffs to 190 feet in length. Crews may range from 1-6 people. Crewmembers may live locally, travel from other Alaskan cities, or arrive from out of state. They may go directly to a vessel or spend a few weeks in shipyard prior to the beginning of the season. The majority of these vessels have limited medical kits and medical training aboard and no practical way to isolate sick crewmembers apart from the rest of the crew. Some of the vessels may have a captain's stateroom or separate crew's quarters, but the majority would be unable to provide a separate isolation room and bathroom. Access to medical care may be complicated by the highly remote locations of these fisheries, prolonged USCG response time, and limited shore-based medical facilities. Local communities have varied options for housing and medical care, ranging from remote villages that may have a Community Health Aide, to larger towns with clinics and hospitals. Lodging options are highly variable. This document was developed to mitigate risk to local communities and fishermen. This document is tailored to catcher vessel and

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community-mitigation-strategy.pdf>

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tender operations, recognizing that vessels and their environs are naturally self-isolating and spend the majority of their operations uniquely distant from communities and other people.

This guide is designed to assist the companies and associations affiliated with these fisheries to draft response procedures to try to prevent the introduction of COVID-19 in a community or aboard a vessel, and to mitigate the risk to local Alaska communities if a COVID-19 case were suspected. Recognizing the wide range of vessel types and operations, medical skill and resources on board, and challenges with procuring medical supplies, these guidelines should be adapted by each operator to the best of their ability, and all sections will not be applicable.

Compliance with submitted plans and state mandates is critical to preventing the introduction of COVID-19 to a local community or onboard. The State of Alaska has created an email: INVESTIGATIONS@ALASKA.GOV to submit concerns of people violating the mandates.

PREPARATION

Crew changes and shore contact:

Catcher and tender vessel crews ideally have the benefit of maintaining the same crew during the season. It is recommended to minimize crew changes. Once a vessel crew has been established, undergone 14 days without illness, and has had no new COVID-19 exposure, it is recommended that that healthy crew remain with the vessel for the season. **Crew should discontinue the practice of moving between vessels during the course of their work.** Companies should have plans in place for emergency crew changes if there is an emergent reason. Joining crew should ideally undergo a 14-day self-quarantine period before joining a vessel if possible. If this is not possible, the entire vessel should consider themselves quarantined for 14 days if a new member joins. Vessels may continue to fish during this time as long as all crewmembers remain healthy.

Once a crew has completed a 14-day quarantine, they should restrict exposure to local communities, shore workers, tenders, or other vessels. If contact must happen, social distancing and *meticulous* hygiene must be practiced.

It is advised that companies work with Federal fishery observer programs to minimize shore contact and minimize crew changes. Workers are encouraged to use verbal communication instead of in-person communication and anyone going to shore is obligated to abide by social distancing recommendations.

Minimize shoreplant workers from coming on board vessels during offload. Ideally the onboard crew could offload directly to the tender or shoreplant.

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We advise working with regulators to find alternatives to having forms physically signed or be required to physically pass documentation between people.

Have a shore-based expediter bring groceries and supplies to the vessel as necessary rather than sending a crewmember into town.

Transferring material between vessels or between vessel and shore:

- If material must be passed between vessels, crew should wear gloves and faceshields when handling material and be mindful to not touch their faces. If possible, disinfect any new supplies that arrive on board. After handling material, crew should remove and discard or wash gloves, immediately wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, and then disinfect any personal items they may have touched, such as radios.
- Wipe down rails, door handles, and surfaces frequently with disinfecting wipes.

Alaska 14-day Quarantine mandate:

Vessels and fisheries will have different strategies to comply with the two-week quarantine mandate. The nature of how crew arrive at the final Alaskan port and their actions on arrival are one of the main differentiators of this class of vessels.

There are multiple strategies to comply with a two-week quarantine recommendation.

For crewmembers traveling from out of state or another location in Alaska and who will immediately join a vessel:

- All crewmembers are responsible to self-quarantine at home for two weeks prior to flying to the final port. We recommend twice-daily temperature and symptom monitoring and screening via questionnaire and/or in person for 14 days prior to travel to or within Alaska. Travel to Alaska should be direct from home to the vessel with no stops in between and social distancing during transport. Crew should not stop at a grocery store or other location between arrival at the local airport and transport to the vessel. ***This option does not remove the obligation to practice social distancing and self-quarantine on the vessel for 14 days after arrival in Alaska.***

For crewmembers traveling from out of state or another location in Alaska who cannot complete a 14-day self-quarantine prior to arrival:

- Any new crew that has not completed a 14-day self-quarantine prior to arrival in Alaska *must* travel directly to the vessel, practicing social distancing during transport and immediately self-quarantine on the vessel for 14 days. They may not stop at a grocery store

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or other location between arrival at the local airport and transport to the vessel. It is recommended the entire crew complete this process together. The vessel may fish during this time. Any contact with tenders or port staff is restricted. If offloading or deliveries must occur or deliveries, crew must comply with the guidance under the “Local Community Protection Plan”.

For crewmembers traveling from out of state or another location in Alaska who will be staying locally for shipyard or waiting to join a vessel:

- All crewmembers are responsible to self-quarantine at home for two weeks prior to flying to the final port. We recommend twice-daily temperature and symptom monitoring and screening via questionnaire and/or in person for 14 days prior to travel to or within Alaska. On arrival to shipyard or final port, a crewmember will self-quarantine for an additional 14-days. Though the worker can still carry out essential duties during that time, they must not have contact with local populations during the 14-day quarantine period and should only travel between quarantined lodging and worksite. If a new crewmember joins a quarantined worksite, the 14-day clock restarts for the entire crew. Crewmembers can complete the 14-day quarantine on the vessel.
- Individual boat yards, harbors, and other port workspaces should develop protocols for their particular facilities that meet state and local health mandates and create means for maintaining crew quarantine – while facilitating essential infrastructure work. Considerations that worksite managers should incorporate when establishing protocols for their local fleets can be found in the “Local Community Protection Plan” section.
- Arriving crewmembers **must** comply with the boatyard or harbormaster protocol.

For crewmembers who live locally or return to port daily:

- Crewmembers and families or roommates should practice social distancing for the duration of the season and crew should follow the precautions listed when transferring product or supplies to or from the dock or a tender noted in the section above.

Be aware that the State of Alaska has mandated quarantine for 14 days whether resident, worker, or visitor. Fishing is considered part of the critical infrastructure and for workers to enter Alaska and begin

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work immediately, a plan or protocol outlining how you will avoid the spread of COVID-19 is required to be submitted.²

Local Lodging Considerations:

Prior to the season, identify local lodging where a crewmember could be housed under isolation who would not be appropriate to remain on board but does not require hospitalization or medevac. **This must be done in concert with local community leadership and medical services.**

Isolation or Quarantine Rooms:

Vessels that have separate staterooms and designated heads sufficient for isolation:

If a vessel has a separate stateroom and separate bathroom facilities that would be appropriate for isolation, they may use the guidelines listed under the ISOLATION section of this document to isolate ill crewmembers in order to prevent the entire crew from needing to quarantine for 14 days. Given that people may be infectious prior to showing symptoms and the inherent nature of close contact on a catcher or tender vessel, this strategy is not advised.

Vessels that cannot practically isolate sick crew:

It is unlikely that most vessels in this segment will have separate rooms available for isolation or quarantine. If a crewmember becomes ill, it should be assumed that all other crewmembers have had close contact and should be quarantined accordingly. If the ill crewmember does not require shore side medical attention, the vessel may continue to fish and complete a 14-day quarantine at sea. If the vessel returns to port, it would be advised to work with the local medical facility via phone to determine if the crewmember should undergo evaluation and/or testing. The remaining quarantined crewmembers could decide to complete their 14-day quarantine on shore or at sea.

Bathroom or head considerations:

Be aware that bathrooms shared among isolated or quarantined crew pose a potential infection risk. If toilet seats have lids, the lids should be shut before flushing. There is evidence that COVID-19 can be shed in feces and flushing may generate an infectious aerosol. Bathrooms should not use air hand dryers as these can spread droplets, paper towels should be provided with a designated waste bin. Frequently clean and disinfect bathrooms.

² <https://content.govdelivery.com/bulletins/gd/AKDHSS-282d20b>

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Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

Ensure adequate PPE (NIOSH-certified N95 mask or surgical mask, disposable long-sleeved gown, disposable medical gloves, eye protection such as goggles or disposable face shields that cover the front and sides of face) is available on board. Vessels with 1-6 crew should aim for at least three N95 masks, 5-10 surgical masks, 3 gowns, 50 pairs of gloves and 3 sets of eye protection. Operators should have contingency plans for rapid resupply during outbreaks. It is recognized that these materials are currently in short supply and vessels should attempt to obtain these supplies as they become available.

Train responders on appropriate donning and doffing techniques for PPE. Have disposal plans in place. <https://www.cdc.gov/hai/pdfs/ppe/ppe-sequence.pdf>

If N95 masks or surgical masks are not available, the CDC has issued the following guidance:

In settings where facemasks are not available, health care providers might use homemade masks (e.g., bandana, scarf) for care of patients with COVID-19 as a last resort. However, homemade masks are not considered PPE, since their capability to protect health care provider is unknown. Caution should be exercised when considering this option. Homemade masks should ideally be used in combination with a face shield that covers the entire front (that extends to the chin or below) and sides of the face.³

Be very careful with non-disposable masks after use, these represent a potential source of contamination. Masks should not be shared, should be cleaned frequently and should not be placed on a surface unless that surface is immediately disinfected.

If N95 masks or surgical face masks are not available, but a higher level industrial respirator, such as a half-face or full-face mask with a HEPA filter cartridge is available, this may be an acceptable alternative if an OSHA respiratory protection program is in place, the employee has been fit tested for the specific respirator, and a sanitizing and cleaning program is in place.⁴

Galley:

Studies of spread of COVID-19 on ships have pinpointed the galley and mess areas as high-risk areas for transmission. Pay special attention to food handling, serving, and dining habits. Ensure all crew wash hands before eating or touching any food items or utensils. Any crew with cough or respiratory

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/face-masks.html>

⁴ <https://www.fda.gov/media/135763/download>

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symptoms should eat separately. If anyone needs a video to understand how easily infection can be transmitted, this is a good demonstration: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wPKBpk7wUY>

Galley should be prepared to send individual meals to sick crew and clean dishes separately. Eliminate buffet or family-style dining and any common serving dishes. Identify one crewmember to handle food and to prepare a plate for each crew. Do not allow serving utensils to be shared.

Consider having a galley crewmember prepare individual snacks for the day and distribute to each crewmember. Eliminate common bowls of snacks or opportunities for multiple people to touch food or packaged food products.

Galley crew should practice *meticulous* hand and cough hygiene and should mask and wear gloves while serving food.

Some additional considerations include:

- Self-service utensils – to reduce the opportunity for items to be touched by multiple people, set up trays with utensils on them and hand them out or set table before service;
- Use of single use cups/plates/etc;
- Aggressive sanitizing of push button/lever beverage dispensers, condiments, etc. – areas that people may be touching during the meal service;
- Stagger meal breaks to reduce the number of people in the galley at one time or reducing the seating capacity in the galley so people are spaced farther apart;
- Ensure people sanitize their hands on the way to and from the galley.

Movement on Vessel:

Restrict access into the ship's accommodation – keep doors locked to restrict unnecessary crew or visitor movement through vessel.

Post hand and cough hygiene posters throughout vessel.

Vendors:

It is recognized that there will be times that vendors will need to board the vessel to perform repairs. Ideally, any deliveries could be made without a vendor boarding a vessel. The delivery should be disinfected if possible before bringing on board. In the event that a vendor must board a vessel, it is advised that they undergo the same screening as a crewmember boarding a vessel and be denied boarding if fever, respiratory symptoms, or a high-risk COVID-19 exposure in the prior 14 days.

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Vendors should wear a mask and face shield on board and should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer prior to boarding and after leaving. Vendors and crew should practice social distancing and remain 6 feet apart if possible. If working in a loud environment, find an alternate communication method to yelling. Yelling across a loud engine room is a dangerous practice that could spread disease. Consider using radios or microphones.

If working in an engine room, keep ventilation fans running for circulation, even at the dock. Try to allow vendors to work alone and use only the absolute minimum required number of workers in a space.

Carefully control the ingress and egress of vendors from the vessel. Vendors should minimize the number of trips they must make – bringing tools and equipment as necessary. Vendors may wish to bring food on board rather than leave the vessel to eat and must follow all precautions as listed under “Galley” in this document. Any time a vendor enters or leaves a vessel, hand hygiene protocols must be followed. Gloves are a potential source of infection and should be removed after egress and hands washed or sanitized. Gloves should then be discarded or washed.

Consider fitting vessels with more remote diagnostic tools, try to provide guidance and solutions verbally rather than sending a worker to the vessel.

Vendors should bring their own tools and not use onboard tools. If they must use onboard tools they must be disinfected prior to and after use.

After a vendor leaves, the ship should be disinfected and all crew should wash hands.

Any runners, or those delivering supplies to a vessel, should be educated on social distancing and hand and cough hygiene protocols.

Supplies:

Vessels should have appropriate diagnostic supplies for the level of medical training on board. This may include stethoscopes, blood pressure cuffs, pulse oximeters, and thermometers.

Ensure adequate supplies for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting, including PPE and bags for disposal.

Have alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60-70%) ready for use upon entry to ship, in the galley, wheelhouse, and throughout the vessel. Have disposable tissues and waste bins available throughout the vessel.

Vessels should consider carrying Point-Of-Care influenza tests. Per the CDC, vessels should have sterile viral transport media and sterile swabs to collect nasopharyngeal and nasal specimens if COVID-19 is

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suspected. These specimens must also be refrigerated for up to 72 hours after collection, or frozen. Guidance for testing of suspected COVID-19 cases is still evolving and these testing supplies are currently not widely available or necessarily indicated for vessels of this size.

Vessels should carry appropriate medications and pharmaceutical supplies, based on the level of training of medical responders on board. Companies should assess the medical capabilities of crew and determine which medications and supplies are appropriate. Some considerations may include:

- Antipyretics such as acetaminophen;
- Oseltamivir;
- Oral hydration salts;
- IV fluids and IV administration supplies;
- Oxygen and oxygen administration supplies;
- Airway interventions including oral and/or nasopharyngeal airways;
- Advanced airway support interventions;
- A selection of antibiotics, oral and IV, to treat bacterial respiratory infections and sepsis.

Terminations:

If a crewmember is terminated or quits mid-season, the company should have the crewmember transported directly to the airport and flown home. The crewmember must not be allowed to remain in a local community or have contact with local communities. **Companies should review crew contracts at the beginning of the season to ensure crew comply with this obligation.**

EDUCATION OF CREW

Ensure your crew members are aware of the⁵:

- Global and regional risk of COVID-19 during international and domestic travel;
- Signs and symptoms that may indicate a sick person has COVID-19;
- Requirement for the ship's medical unit to report a traveler with suspected or known COVID-19 to CDC and USCG Captain of the Port (COTP), if ship is destined for a US port;
- Importance of not working on a ship while sick with fever or acute respiratory symptoms.

The ship's company should also review their sick leave policies and communicate them to employees.

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/maritime/recommendations-for-ships.html>

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CDC recommends that crew members who self-report or appear to have fever or acute respiratory symptoms (such as cough or shortness of breath) be immediately evaluated. If onboard, this should be done by the captain or a designated medical representative. If onshore, please contact a local clinic by phone before sending a potential COVID-19 case in, if the crewmember's medical condition does not require an urgent or emergent evaluation.

Reassure crew that COVID-19 is not thought to spread via airborne transmission. It is thought to spread via droplet transmission, mainly from person-to-person, between persons who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet), or through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.⁶

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Reassure crew that COVID-19 is unlikely to be spread through onboard ventilation systems. Droplets are too large to be airborne for a prolonged period of time and quickly settle out of air.

Crew should be advised to frequently wash hands with sudsy soap and water, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer, mask if coughing or sneezing, and not touch their faces. Although it will be difficult to maintain the recommendation for 6-foot social distancing on a cramped vessel, try to minimize the time spent in close quarters to others.

We highly recommend having crew watch this video before joining the vessel to help understand how to recognize and prevent COVID-19 spread: <https://vimeo.com/398986642>

PREDEPARTURE SCREENING

We recommend screening of crew at least 14 days in advance of arrival if possible. If a 14-day window is not feasible, screening should begin as soon as possible prior to departure.

All crew should self-quarantine during this 14-day window.

A potential screening process could include the following steps:

1. 14-day Pre-Departure Screening

⁶ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/transmission.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Ftransmission.html



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- a. Have you experienced any difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, loss of smell or taste, unusual fatigue or symptoms of acute respiratory illness in the last 72 hours?⁷
- b. Have you experienced a fever (100.4° F [38° C] or greater using an oral thermometer) within the last 72 hours? (A forehead (temporal) scanner is usually 0.5°F (0.3°C) to 1°F (0.6°C) lower than an oral temperature. An ear (tympanic) temperature is 0.5°F (0.3°C) to 1°F (0.6°C) higher than an oral temperature.)⁸
- c. Have you experienced signs of a fever such as chills, aches & pains, etc. within the last 72 hours?
- d. Have you traveled within the past 14 days to an affected area as identified by the CDC? <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>
 - i. **Travel to an area with documented COVID-19 infections in a jurisdiction with known community transmission may contribute to an epidemiologic risk assessment to inform testing decisions. Obtain a detailed travel history and cross reference with the CDC website for a risk assessment.⁹ Refer to the CDC website for US areas with community mitigation plans for US cities and regions considered high risk. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcases-in-us.html**
- e. Have you had contact within 14 days of symptom onset with a lab confirmed or **suspected** COVID-19 case patient? (contact defined as being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time (10 minutes) or having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case).

If a crewmember answers “no” to all the above questions, we recommend self-quarantine at home for the next 14 days to minimize the risk of infection prior to travel. If self-quarantine is not possible, he or she must practice social distancing, meticulous hand and cough hygiene and minimize interactions.

⁷ Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath means the person is

- unable to move enough air into or out of the lungs, or can do so only with an unusually great effort
- gasping for air,
- feeling “short of breath,” or unable to “catch” his/her breath
- breathing too fast or shallowly, or using muscles of stomach, chest or neck to breathe (especially for children).

⁸ <https://www.cigna.com/individuals-families/health-wellness/hw/medical-topics/fever-temperatures-tw9223>

⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/clinical-criteria.html>

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2. 14-day At Home Monitoring

- a. Crew member should take his or her temperature twice daily and document temperature and any subjective fever or respiratory symptoms.

If crewmember develops fever or symptoms during this time, travel should be delayed.

Crewmembers should carry a copy of this documentation with them on travel to Alaska to demonstrate compliance with screening recommendations.

3. Day Before Departure Screening

- a. Have you experienced any difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, loss of smell or taste, unusual fatigue or symptoms of acute respiratory illness in the last 72 hours?
- b. Have you experienced a fever (100.4° F [38° C] or greater using an oral thermometer) within the last 72 hours? (A forehead (temporal) scanner is usually 0.5°F (0.3°C) to 1°F (0.6°C) lower than an oral temperature. An ear (tympanic) temperature is 0.5°F (0.3°C) to 1°F (0.6°C) higher than an oral temperature.)
- c. Have you experienced signs of a fever such as chills, aches & pains, etc. within the last 72 hours?
- d. Have you traveled within the past 14 days to an affected area as identified by the CDC? <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>
 - i. **Travel to an area with documented COVID-19 infections in a jurisdiction with known community transmission may contribute to an epidemiologic risk assessment to inform testing decisions. Obtain a detailed travel history and cross reference with the CDC website for a risk assessment.¹⁰ Refer to the CDC website for US areas with community mitigation plans for US cities and regions considered high risk. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcases-in-us.html**
- e. Have you had contact within 14 days of symptom onset with a lab confirmed **or suspected** COVID-19 case patient? (contact defined as being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time (10 minutes) or having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case).

¹⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/clinical-criteria.html>



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If crewmember answers no to all questions, travel may continue to the vessel.

4. Vessel Arrival Screening

- a. On arrival to the vessel, crewmember should demonstrate a measured temperature < 100.4. (This reference is for oral temperature, a forehead (temporal) scanner is usually 0.5°F (0.3°C) to 1°F (0.6°C) lower than an oral temperature. An ear (tympanic) temperature is 0.5°F (0.3°C) to 1°F (0.6°C) higher than an oral temperature.) **Anyone performing screening should wear PPE including an N95 mask, face shield, gloves, and gown. If not available, allow the crewmember to take their own temperature.**
- b. Crewmember must be free of fever or respiratory symptoms. A possible exception would be if crewmember has mild symptoms that are clearly attributable to another source (i.e. allergies).
- c. If available, an oxygen saturation level could be measured with a fingertip pulse oximeter. Deny boarding and recommend medical evaluation for an oxygen saturation equal to or below 94%.

IDENTIFICATION

Procedure to identify crew with suspected COVID-19¹¹

Screen crew for:

1. Have you experienced any difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, loss of smell or taste, unusual fatigue or symptoms of acute respiratory illness in the last 72 hours?¹²
2. Have you experienced a fever (100.4° F [38° C] or greater using an oral thermometer) within the last 72 hours? (A forehead (temporal) scanner is usually 0.5°F (0.3°C) to 1°F (0.6°C) lower than an oral temperature. An ear (tympanic) temperature is 0.5°F (0.3°C) to 1°F (0.6°C) higher than an oral temperature.)¹³

¹¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/clinical-criteria.html>

<https://www.who.int/publications-detail/operational-considerations-for-managing-covid-19-cases-outbreak-on-board-ships>

¹² Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath means the person is

- unable to move enough air into or out of the lungs, or can do so only with an unusually great effort
- gasping for air,
- feeling “short of breath,” or unable to “catch” his/her breath
- breathing too fast or shallowly, or using muscles of stomach, chest or neck to breathe (especially for children).

¹³ <https://www.cigna.com/individuals-families/health-wellness/hw/medical-topics/fever-temperatures-tw9223>

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3. Have you experienced signs of a fever such as chills, aches & pains, etc. within the last 72 hours?
4. Have you traveled within the past 14 days to an affected area as identified by the CDC?
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

Travel to an area with documented COVID-19 infections in a jurisdiction with known community transmission may contribute to an epidemiologic risk assessment to inform testing decisions. Obtain a detailed travel history and cross reference with the CDC website for a risk assessment.¹⁴ Refer to the CDC website for US areas with community mitigation plans for US cities and regions considered high risk.

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcases-in-us.html

5. Have you had contact within 14 days of symptom onset with a lab confirmed **or suspected** COVID-19 case patient? (contact defined as being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time (10 minutes) or having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case).¹⁵

¹⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/clinical-criteria.html>

¹⁵ The International Chamber of Shipping defines close contact as: <https://safety4sea.com/ics-issues-new-guidance-about-seafarers-protection-amid-coronavirus/>

- Has stayed in the same cabin with a suspect/confirmed COVID-19 case;
- Has had close contact within one metre of was in a closed environment with a suspect/confirmed COVID-19 case (for passengers this may include sharing a cabin);
- Participated in common activities on board or ashore;
- Participated in the same immediate traveling group;
- Dined at the same table (for crew members this may include working together in the same ship area);
- Is a cabin steward who cleaned the cabin;
- Is a staff member who delivered food to the cabin;
- Is a medical support worker or other person providing direct care for a COVID-19 suspect or confirmed case.

The WHO defines close contacts on board a ship (high-risk exposure) as: <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/operational-considerations-for-managing-covid-19-cases-outbreak-on-board-ships>

- Stayed in the same cabin as a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case;
- Had close contact (within 1 m of) or were in a closed environment with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case –
- For crew members, this may include participating in common activities on board the ship or while ashore, being a member of a group traveling together, dining at the same table, working in the same area of the ship as the suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case, for example, cabin stewards who cleaned the cabin or galley staff who delivered food to the cabin
- Healthcare worker or another person who provided care for a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case..

The European Center for Disease Prevention and Control defines close contact for case surveillance as: <https://www.euro.who.int/en/operations/novel-coronavirus-facts-advice/advice-to-health-personnel/definitions-of-probable-and-confirmed-cases-of-coronavirus-covid-19-and-con/>

- A person living in the same household as a COVID-19 case;
- A person having had direct physical contact with a COVID-19 case (e.g. shaking hands);
- A person having unprotected direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g. being coughed on, touching used paper tissues with a bare hand);
- A person having had face-to-face contact with a COVID-19 case within 2 metres and > 15 minutes;

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Action:

If a crewmember screens “yes” to any of the symptom questions (1-3), place a surgical mask on if tolerated.

If a crewmember screens “yes” to BOTH: any of the symptom questions (1-3); AND an epidemiological risk factor questions (4 or 5), **place a surgical mask on crewmember if tolerated and isolate per the ISOLATION protocol.** If an isolation room is not available, consider the entire vessel under isolation.

Evaluating provider to don appropriate PPE and begin to document who has exposure to crewmember from this point forward.

If available, obtain a rapid influenza swab. If positive, and no other reason to suspect COVID-19, treat crewmember as an influenza case, not a COVID-19 case. There can be co-infection with COVID-19 and influenza, if there is any suspicion for COVID-19 exposure in the prior 14 days, continue to treat as a suspected COVID-19 case.

If a crewmember screens “yes” to fever and respiratory symptoms, but does not clearly have an exposure that would qualify for a COVID-19 suspect case, recommend isolation for 72 hours AFTER the fever ends without the use of fever-reducing medications AND an improvement in initial symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) before returning to work.¹⁶

Additional Recommendations:

Screen crew daily for:

- New signs of fever, cough, loss of smell or taste, unusual fatigue or shortness of breath
- If there is a respiratory illness identified on board, take temperature twice daily of each crewmember

Crew should provide vessel owner with contact tracing information for the month after departure. (name, phone number, home address, email). They should be provided with information on whom to contact if they develop fever, cough or shortness of breath in the following 14 days.

-
- A person who was in a closed environment (e.g. classroom, meeting room, hospital waiting room, etc.) with a COVID-19 case for 15 minutes or more and at a distance of less than 2 metres;
 - A healthcare worker (HCW) or other person providing direct care for a COVID-19 case, or laboratory workers handling specimens from a COVID-19 case without recommended personal protective equipment (PPE) or with a possible breach of PPE;
 - A contact in an aircraft sitting within two seats (in any direction) of the COVID-19 case, travel companions or persons providing care, and crew members serving in the section of the aircraft where the index case was seated (if severity of symptoms or movement of the case indicate more extensive exposure, passengers seated in the entire section or all passengers on the aircraft may be considered close contacts).

¹⁶ <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/COVIDcasepositive.pdf>

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/emergency-preparedness/preparing-yourself/pandemic-flu/businesses/returning-to-work.aspx>

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ISOLATION

*Isolation separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick. In vessels that have a separate stateroom and a head that can be designated for only isolated crew, these procedures may be considered. **In vessels that cannot accommodate isolation, consider the entire vessel under quarantine for 14 days.***

Procedure to isolate crew with suspected COVID-19¹⁷

If a crewmember is identified as a potential COVID-19 case, immediately ask them to wear a facemask (a surgical mask, not N-95) if tolerated.

Place the crewmember in a private room with the door closed, ideally an airborne infection isolation room if available. Place a label on the door indicating no one is to enter the room without proper PPE. This room should have separate toilet and bathing facilities.

Any staff entering the room should use Standard Precautions, Contact Precautions, and Airborne Precautions, and use eye protection such as goggles or a face shield. If N-95 masks are not available, a surgical mask may be considered an acceptable alternative at this time.¹⁸

Access to the room should be limited to personnel involved in direct care. Meals should be delivered to the room and dishes and utensils cleaned separately. Anyone with exposure to the crewmember should document the date and time of exposure, nature of exposure (close contact, same room, secretions), and PPE worn.

Meticulous hand hygiene **MUST** be performed immediately after doffing PPE.

- Maintain a distance of 6 feet from the sick person while interviewing, escorting, or providing other assistance.
- Keep interactions with sick people as brief as possible.
- Limit the number of people who interact with sick people. To the extent possible, have a single person give care and meals to the sick person.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- **Wash your hands often with sudsy soap and warm/hot water.** If soap and water are not available and if hands are not visibly soiled, use a hand sanitizer containing 60%-95% alcohol.

¹⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/maritime/recommendations-for-ships.html>

¹⁸ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/control-recommendations.html?CDC_AA_reVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhcp%2Finfection-control.html

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- Provide tissues and access to soap and water and ask the sick persons to:
 - Cover their mouth and nose with a tissue (or facemask) when coughing or sneezing.
 - Throw away used tissues immediately in a disposable container (e.g., plastic bag) or a washable trash can.
 - Wash their hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly soiled, the sick person should use a hand sanitizer containing 60%-95% alcohol.
- If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly soiled, the sick person should use a hand sanitizer containing 60%-95% alcohol.

Discontinuance of Isolation for crew not requiring care on shore, can be considered, in conjunction with your telemedical advisory service, under the following conditions:¹⁹

- If you had a fever, 3 days after the fever ends without the use of fever-reducing medications AND you see an improvement in your initial symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath);
 - If you did not have a fever, 3 days after you see an improvement in your initial symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath);
- AND**
- 7 days after symptom onset,
- whichever is longer.**

Note: discontinuance of isolation for a suspected COVID-19 case should be made on a case by case basis with your vessel telemedical advisory service or shoreside medical advice or public health and does not remove the mandatory USCG reporting requirements.

PROTECTION

Procedure to identify who will have exposure to a potential COVID-19 case, what PPE will be worn, and how PPE will be managed:²⁰

Once a suspect COVID-19 case is identified and isolated, response team members should be identified who will be the primary contact with the isolated crew. This should be reduced to the absolute

¹⁹ <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/COVIDcasepositive.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/emergency-preparedness/preparing-yourself/pandemic-flu/businesses/returning-to-work.aspx>

²⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/control-recommendations.html>

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minimum number of people. In the event isolation is not possible, anyone with direct contact or caring for an ill crewmember with suspected COVID-19 should follow these procedures.

Proper PPE must be provided:²¹

- NIOSH-certified N95 mask or surgical mask;
- disposable long-sleeved gown;
- disposable medical gloves;
- eye protection such as goggles or disposable face shields that cover the front and sides of face.

For N-95 masks, an OSHA respiratory protection program and fit testing should be in place.

Designated responders must be trained in how to appropriately don and doff PPE:

<https://www.cdc.gov/hai/pdfs/ppe/ppe-sequence.pdf>

Designate a hand hygiene station for doffing of PPE as close to the exit of the room as possible. Hand washing with soap and water is preferred to hand sanitizer if possible.

A plan for collection and disposal of PPE must be in place.

The amount of PPE provided should be determined by the operator based on the size of the crew, anticipated exposure, and availability of supplies.

ASSESSMENT

Procedure on assessing possible COVID-19 cases, on-board diagnostic and treatment recommendations²²

When a potential COVID-19 case is identified, the isolated crewmember should be evaluated by the medical officer on board, wearing appropriate PPE. Attempt to maintain a distance of 6 feet from the sick person while interviewing, escorting, or providing other assistance.

The following historical information should be gathered:

- List of the sick traveler's signs and symptoms, including onset dates. Symptom definitions are available here: <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/maritime/definitions-signs-symptoms-conditions-ill-travelers.html>
- The sick traveler's highest recorded temperature;

²¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/maritime/recommendations-for-ships.html>

²² <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/maritime/recommendations-for-ships.html>

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- The sick traveler's embarkation date and port;
- The ship's ports of call during the 14 days before the person got sick;
- List of ports of call where the sick traveler disembarked during the 14 days before the person got sick;
- Contact with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in the past two weeks;
- Countries visited two weeks prior to onset of symptoms;
- Past medical history;
- Medications taken including dose and frequency;
- Allergies and reactions;
- History of influenza vaccination and if childhood vaccination sequence completed.

The following physical exam information should be obtained:

- Complete vital signs including temperature, blood pressure, pulse, pulse oxygenation, respiratory rate;
- Mental status exam;
- Lung exam;
- Skin/perfusion exam;
- Any other relevant organ system exam based on presenting signs and symptoms.

If indicated, based on medical officer assessment or consultation with medical advisory service, the following diagnostic testing may be recommended:

- Rapid influenza testing;
- Sterile viral transport media and sterile swabs to collect nasopharyngeal and nasal specimens if COVID-19 infection is suspected are recommended by the CDC. Samples must be refrigerated for up to 72 hours after collection or frozen.
(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/rt-pcr-detection-instructions.html>)

Treatment recommendations should be discussed with a vessel's telemedical providers. Some treatments that may be recommended include:²³

- Antipyretics such as acetaminophen;
- Oseltamivir;
- Oral rehydration salts;

²³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/clinical-guidance-management-patients.html>
https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/clinical-management-of-novel-cov.pdf?sfvrsn=bc7da517_2

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- IV fluids and IV administration supplies;
- Oxygen and oxygen administration supplies;
- Airway interventions including oral and/or nasopharyngeal airways;
- Advanced airway support interventions;
- A selection of antibiotics, oral and IV, to treat bacterial respiratory infections and sepsis.

Frequent reassessments of the crewmember's medical status are recommended as symptoms can change rapidly.

How to manage an ill crewmember is a judgement call of the captain. Deciding when an ill crewmember requires a higher level of medical care may be made in conjunction with a vessel's telemedical advisory service (if one is available), shore-based providers, and/or the USCG. If the crewmember is stable, it is acceptable to continue fishing but it is imperative to frequently reassess the crewmember.

We recommend **discontinuing the practice of transferring an ill crewmember to a tender for transport to shore if COVID-19 is suspected.** If a crewmember with suspected COVID-19 requires shoreside care, the original vessel should transport the crewmember to shore and contact the receiving medical facility by phone or radio prior to arrival to alert them of a possible COVID-19 case. Also review the mandatory USCG reporting requirements under the COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING section and relevant sections of the TRANSPORTATION section for recommended PPE.

COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING

Procedure on communicating possible COVID-19 cases with telemedical providers, shore-based providers, and port and regulatory authorities:

Telemedical providers:

If a vessel subscribes to a telemedical service, all cases of suspected COVID-19 (based on criteria under IDENTIFICATION procedure), should be communicated with the vessel's medical advisory service. A standard template to include the information on the ASSESSMENT procedure should be used for documentation.

Before arriving at a US port, vessel medical staff and telemedicine providers must discuss the disembarkation of patients suspected of having COVID-19 with the CDC quarantine station having jurisdiction for the port and with state and local health departments.²⁴

²⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/maritime/recommendations-for-ships.html>

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If a vessel does not have a telemedical service, consideration may be given to discussing the case with the USCG or shore based medical providers if available.

Shore-based providers:

Shore-based medical providers will benefit from advanced notification of a potential COVID-19 patient. Information should be relayed to the provider by phone, fax or email before the affected crewmember is disembarked. A crewmember should wear a surgical mask during transport if tolerated.

US Coast Guard, Port and Regulatory Authorities:²⁵

Per 33 CFR 160.216, all cases of persons who exhibit symptoms consistent with COVID-19 **or other flu like illness** must be reported ***immediately*** to the USCG Captain Of The Port (COTP) as a hazardous condition.²⁶ **42 CFR 71.1 provides the definition of an ill person onboard a vessel. (below)**

Please note 33 CFR 160.216 applies to Jones Act Vessels engaged in domestic trade as well as vessels coming from a foreign port.

Hazardous conditions aboard a vessel must be reported immediately to the COTP per 33 CFR 160.216. A hazardous condition is any condition that may affect the safety of a vessel or a port, including “injury or illness of a person onboard,” per 33 CFR 160.202. COVID-19 has been determined to be a hazardous condition, as it may affect the safety of the subject vessel or the port. These authorities, of course, flow from the COTP’s authority to deny entry or control operation of a vessel when the COTP has objective evidence that the vessel or a condition upon the vessel adversely affects the safety of any vessel or the port, under 33 CFR 160.111(c).

The hazard of COVID-19 adds reporting requirements due to the increased risk to the port, even where a vessel might not have previously deemed a crewmember’s illness reportable because the vessel did not believe that the level of symptoms posed a risk to safe manning requirements or to the port facility. In the current situation, where a person onboard shows symptoms of COVID-19, even where those symptoms may be minor, those cases must be reported to the COTP, per the Novel Coronavirus Marine Safety Information Bulletin MSIB 02-20 (Change 1), as amended and MSIB 06-20. This determination does not reduce or minimize the standing regulatory requirement to report hazardous conditions to the COTP.

²⁵ https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/DCO%20Documents/5p/MSIB/2020/MSIB-02-20_Change-3_Novel-Coronavirus.pdf?ver=2020-03-17-091856-473

²⁶ https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/DCO%20Documents/5p/MSIB/2020/MSIB-06-20_Reporting-Requirements.pdf?ver=2020-03-13-092336-483

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Please have the following information available before contacting the nearest CDC Quarantine Station
<https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/quarantinestationcontactlistfull.html>:

- List of the sick traveler’s signs and symptoms, including onset dates;
- The sick traveler’s highest recorded temperature;
- The sick traveler’s embarkation date and port;
- The ship’s ports of call during the 14 days before the person got sick;
- List of ports of call where the sick traveler disembarked during the 14 days before the person got sick.

42 CFR 71.21 requires the master of a ship destined for a US port of entry to immediately report any death or illness among the ship’s passengers or crew.

According to U.S. federal regulations, all deaths and ill persons displaying any of the following signs and symptoms must be reported to CDC:

- A. Fever (has a measured temperature of 100.4 °F [38 °C] or greater; or feels warm to the touch; or gives a history of feeling feverish) **accompanied by one or more of the following**:
- skin rash;
 - difficulty breathing or suspected or confirmed pneumonia;
 - persistent cough or cough with bloody sputum;
 - decreased consciousness or confusion of recent onset;
 - new unexplained bruising or bleeding (without previous injury);
 - persistent vomiting (other than sea sickness);
 - headache with stiff neck;

OR

- B. Fever that has persisted for more than 48 hours;

OR

- C. Acute gastroenteritis, which means either:
- diarrhea, defined as three or more episodes of loose stools in a 24-hour period or what is above normal for the individual, or
 - vomiting accompanied by one or more of the following: one or more episodes of loose stools in a 24-hour period, abdominal cramps, headache, muscle aches, or fever (temperature of 100.4 °F [38 °C] or greater);

OR

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- D. Symptoms or other indications of communicable disease, as the Director may announce through posting of a notice in the Federal Register (CDC will notify partners in applicable industries as well as posting on the CDC website).

DOCUMENTATION

Procedure on documenting potentially exposed contacts of a suspected COVID-19 patient²⁷

Once a potential case of COVID-19 is identified, there are two important areas of documentation:

- Identification of all potential exposures while the crewmember was experiencing symptoms
- Documentation of all personnel who have contact with crewmember after isolation is instituted

Once a potential case is identified, interview the crewmember to determine:

The time and date of onset of symptoms

From **48 hours before the symptoms began**, document all people who had close contact with the affected crewmember, defined as:

- A. being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time; (close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case)

OR

- B. having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case; (e.g., being coughed on or shared utensils)

Document the name and contact information, time and date of contact, the nature of contact (close contact, in the same room) and the duration of contact.

High-risk close contacts of suspected COVID-19 cases should be quarantined according to the QUARANTINE section of this document. In the case of a catcher or tender vessel without isolation capabilities, consider the entire vessel crew to be high-risk close contacts and to complete the quarantine period on-board or ashore. It is advised that no new crew join the vessel during this time. If that occurs, the 14-day quarantine period must start over from the date a new crew member joins.

This includes any people that may have already disembarked the vessel.

²⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/risk-assessment.html>

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If isolation is possible, once a crewmember is isolated, maintain a log to document:

All personnel who enter the crewmember's room, the time and date, duration of exposure, type of PPE worn, nature of exposure (close contact, secretions, same room). Provide name and contact information as well.

Other documentation:

Daily logs of temperature and signs or symptoms including fever, cough or shortness of breath on all crew should be maintained and available for inspection.

TRANSPORTATION

Procedure on transportation of suspected COVID-19 cases at disembarkation²⁸

For the crewmember with suspected COVID-19:

A facemask should be worn by the patient for source control. If a nasal cannula is in place, a facemask should be worn over the nasal cannula. Alternatively, an oxygen mask can be used if clinically indicated. If the patient requires intubation, see below for additional precautions on the referenced site above for aerosol-generating procedures.

If ambulance transportation is required

Local EMS should be notified that this is a potential COVID-19 case so that responders may use appropriate PPE and follow their protocols.

If private vehicle transportation is utilized

Anyone who will be driving a crewmember with suspected COVID-19 who will provide direct care (e.g., moving patients onto stretchers) should wear recommended PPE. After completing patient care and before entering a driver's compartment, the driver should remove and dispose of PPE in sealed plastic bag and perform hand hygiene **before** entering the driver's compartment. Windows should be down to allow for air exchange if possible.

All personnel should avoid touching their face while working.

The receiving healthcare facility should be notified that a patient with suspected COVID-19 is being brought in so that they may take appropriate infection control precautions.

²⁸ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html>

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13075 Gateway Drive S, Suite 100
Seattle, WA 98168
Phone (206) 309-3507
Fax (206) 826-1814
Email: admin@discoveryhealthmd.com
www.discoveryhealthmd.com

QUARANTINE

Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. If separate staterooms with designated bathrooms are available, this procedure may be considered for individual crew. Otherwise, consider this procedure for the entire vessel.

Procedure for quarantining crew exposed to a potential COVID-19 case²⁹

ONBOARD:

Passengers and crew members who have had **high-risk exposures** to a person suspected of having COVID-19 should be quarantined in their cabins. All potentially exposed passengers, ship medical staff, and crew members should **self-monitor under supervision** of ship medical staff or telemedicine providers until 14 days after the last possible exposure. If an entire vessel is under quarantine, they may continue to work.

A high-risk exposure could occur through close contact with the suspected case without PPE. Close contact is defined as:

- A. being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time; (close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case);

OR

- B. having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on)

For a catcher or tender vessel with a suspected case, consider the entire crew to have had a high-risk exposure.

Self-monitoring with delegated supervision means, for vessel crew members, self-monitoring with oversight by your onboard medical staff and telemedical provider in coordination with the health department of jurisdiction. Points of contact between the self-monitoring personnel, vessel, vessel management, telemedical provider, local and state health departments with jurisdiction for the location where personnel will be during the self-monitoring period should be established. If personnel develop fever, cough, or difficulty breathing during the self-monitoring period, they should undergo medical assessment, isolation, treatment, reporting and transportation as per the other relevant

²⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/maritime/recommendations-for-ships.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/risk-assessment.html>

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sections of this document. Vessel management and telemedical providers should remain in contact with personnel through the self-monitoring period to oversee self-monitoring activities.

If the volume of quarantined crewmembers would pose a risk of vessel unseaworthiness, it is recommended to work with your medical advisory service, CDC, and port authorities to determine the minimum necessary crew to bring the vessel safely to port, triage quarantined crew to allow the lowest risk contacts to work, and have these crewmembers wear surgical masks and gloves while working. For catcher or tender vessels, it is likely the entire crew would be considered quarantined.

ONSHORE:

The CDC has responsibility for determining if contacts of a suspected COVID-19 case should be quarantined on land, however the vessel operator may be required to operationally comply with the quarantine.

Companies should have plans in place for locally housing crew. Be aware that some small towns may not have facilities for quarantine and likely do not have medical facilities to manage ill crewmembers. Consideration may have to be given to charter flights or medevac transportation to complete quarantine recommendations on land.

Refer to the “Management of positive or suspected COVID-19 source patient contacts” flowchart for guidance on quarantine.

First-degree contacts are defined as those that had close contact (defined above) with the suspected COVID-19 source patient from **48 hours before symptoms began or 14 days before the time a positive test sample was obtained**. All first-degree contacts should be quarantined for 14 days with twice daily symptom monitoring or until the source patient’s COVID-19 test comes back negative. If the source patient’s COVID-19 test is positive, all first-degree contacts should be quarantined with twice daily symptom checks for 14 days from the date the test was obtained.

If a first-degree contact has roommates, attempt to move the first-degree contact to a private room or a room with other first-degree contacts for quarantine. If the first-degree contact develops symptoms during the 14-day period, *second-degree contacts* should be quarantined for 14 days or until the first-degree contact’s COVID-19 test result comes back negative. If the first-degree contact’s test result is positive, the second-degree contacts should be quarantined for 14 days with twice daily symptom monitoring from the time the test was obtained.

Second-degree contacts are defined as people who had close contact with a first-degree contact who was not having symptoms from the time of contact with the source patient.

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Note: discontinuance of quarantine for a suspected COVID-19 case should be made on a case by case basis with advice from a medical provider.

LOCAL COMMUNITY PROTECTION PLAN

Local communities require assurance that all possible measures are undertaken to minimize the risk of inadvertent introduction of COVID-19. It is the responsibility of all vessel crew and companies to put into place and adhere to screening programs, social distancing and travel restrictions, rapid identification and isolation of suspected cases, and comply with quarantine recommendations. Failure to educate crew and insist on compliance with company procedures threatens the viability of Alaska fisheries and the health and welfare of local populations. ***It is everyone's responsibility to be vigilant in preventing the introduction or spread of COVID-19 to local communities.***

It is anticipated that catcher and tender vessels may have local community contact for the following reasons:

- offload, resupply, and maintenance;
- planned shipyard work at the beginning of the season;
- vessels that return to port daily or frequently as part of their fishery;
- medical or other unforeseen emergencies.

Crew that are arriving in local communities should have already completed a 14-day self-quarantine at home and undergone appropriate screening.

Arriving crew will travel directly to their place of work, whether that is a vessel, shipyard, or local housing. No contact outside of that travel should be permitted. **Crew should not stop at a grocery store or make any other stops between the local airport and vessel, shipyard, or local lodging.**

A 14-day quarantine period on arrival to the local community must be undertaken. This may be accomplished on the vessel with other crew. ***Time spent at sea with crew, with no outside contact, is considered part of the quarantine period when arriving in state or going from port to port.***

Individual boat yards, harbors, and other port workspaces should develop protocols for their particular facilities that meet state and local health mandates and create means for maintaining crew quarantine – while facilitating essential infrastructure work. Considerations that worksite managers should incorporate when establishing protocols for their local fleets:

- Docking, fueling and anchoring recommendations for vessels maintaining quarantine;

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- Delivery of food and supplies, with deliveries following social distancing and disinfecting protocols;
- A plan for management of common bathroom facilities to keep quarantined workers and local populations separate and procedures for frequent cleaning and disinfection of bathroom facilities. Air hand dryers should not be used and waste should be placed in designated plastic bags that are tied shut and handled with gloves and face shields;
- Identify local lodging options prior where crews or workers can quarantine. (Some local hotels may offer “quarantine rates” at this time);
- Identify appropriate transportation if needed that would allow crews to maintain self-quarantine while transiting between the worksite and lodging if they are separate;
- Recommendations around tool and supply sharing, or common use items such as hoses and electrical outlets;
- Boat yard managers and harbor masters will have additional considerations not captured in this document. Local stakeholders should work together to devise solutions that meet the essential principles of quarantine and social distancing.

Shipyard:

Crew should plan to quarantine for 14 days after arriving in the community and should review any regional or local shipyard plans for additional requirements. Contact the shipyard manager prior to arrival.

Absent the submission of a regional or local shipyard plan or demonstration of prior adherence to in-state 14-day quarantine by users, shipyards should adhere to the following precautions:

If crew will be staying on a vessel or if it is possible to quarantine in local accommodations during shipyard, designate a specific region of the shipyard for quarantined crew. Identify housing, bathing, and working areas that are restricted to quarantined crew and separated from local populations. Restrict access to and egress from the shipyard. Have food and supplies delivered to shipyard workers. If housing must be done off site, provide transportation to and from housing for the worker. Do not permit any outside contact for the 14-days after arrival.

If access to boatyard and fisheries support facilities cannot be restricted or cordoned off then the following procedures are recommended:

- Sanitize common-use dock hoses;
- Maintain social distancing;

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- Do not share tools or otherwise exchange goods between vessels. If that must occur, follow CDC recommended disinfecting and prevention protocols;
- Boatyards will need to develop additional recommendations and strategies to adhere to quarantine and social distancing principles where workers cannot be easily segregated from local or transient populations.

Try to have all shipyard crew arrive at the same time and complete the 14-day quarantine together. If a new worker joins and has close contact, the 14-day quarantine must restart.

Onboard: if crew will be completing the 14-day quarantine on-board, it is acceptable to continue to fish during this time. Restrict contact with tenders or shore-personnel as much as possible. If contact with other vessels or personnel must occur, adhere to the safety plans set up by tender or port facilities, and utilize the following precautions:

- Restrict personnel from boarding the vessel, any communication should be done by phone or radio instead of in person if possible;
- If material must be passed between vessels or from vessel to shore, crew and shore personnel should wear gloves when handling material and be mindful to not touch their faces. Consider wearing faceshields. If possible, disinfect any new supplies that arrive on board. After handling material, crew should remove and discard or wash gloves, immediately wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, and then disinfect any personal items they may have touched, such as radios.
- Wipe down rails, door handles, and surfaces frequently with disinfecting wipes.

Port calls: Recognizing that living and working on a catcher or tender vessel for a prolonged period of time is challenging, and that many fishers may return to their home port regularly, it is important to consider restrictions for port calls. Shore leave for crew should be minimized to the extent possible. Vessel captains should check in with the harbor master prior to any port call and follow the local protocol. In the absence of more specific guidance from local authorities, for crew who do go ashore:

- Crew should travel directly from the vessel to their home or lodging with no stops in-between;
- Close contact with family members or roommates presents an opportunity for infection, attempt to follow self-quarantine, social distancing, and disinfection procedures in the home. Advise family members or roommates to practice social distancing for the duration of the season as well to prevent transmission to vessel crew;
- Follow “social distancing” recommendations (stay at least 6 feet away from people), maintain good cough and hand hygiene, avoid groups of people;

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- Wash hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer frequently. Do not shake hands;
- Crew should be screened for fever, cough, loss of smell or taste, unusual fatigue or shortness of breath on return to the vessel, isolated, and refused boarding if symptoms present.

SANITATION AND DISPOSAL

Procedure to clean, sanitize, and disinfect a vessel and dispose of PPE³⁰

Dedicated person(s) should be assigned to these tasks of cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. After tasks are completed, they should spray disinfectant chemical on the soles of their shoes, to prevent any cross-contamination. They should also change out of their uniform, and send to laundry in sealed bag, and take a shower. Consider the use of “dissolvable laundry bags” for contaminated linen and clothing.

In addition to routine cleaning and disinfection strategies, **vessels may consider more frequent cleaning of commonly touched surfaces such as handrails, countertops, drawers, navigational aides, steering wheels, hydraulic handles, switches, bathroom (head) fixtures, doorknobs, etc.**

The primary mode of COVID-19 virus transmission is believed to be through respiratory droplets that are spread from an infected person through coughing or sneezing to a susceptible close contact within about 6 feet.

CLEAN, SANITIZE, AND DISINFECT COMMON AREAS DAILY

Daily disinfection of surfaces that people touch frequently can help decrease the spread of germs. When illness has been identified on board consider disinfecting surfaces multiple times per day. One does not need to both sanitize and disinfect, disinfecting is sufficient.

Cleaning uses soap or detergent to remove dirt and debris from surfaces.

Sanitizing is meant to reduce, but not kill, the occurrence and growth of germs from surfaces.

Disinfection uses a chemical to kill germs on surfaces that are likely to harbor germs.

Disinfectants work best on a clean surface and usually require a longer surface contact period (between 1 - 10 minutes) to work.

³⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html>
<https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/communicable-diseases/disease-control/~media/depts/health/homeless-health/healthcare-for-the-homeless/documents/cleaning-disinfection-guidelines-shelters.ashx>
<https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/maritime/recommendations-for-ships.html>

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Surfaces that people touch a lot (door handles, railings, light switches, chairs, tables) and bathroom and kitchen surfaces should be cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected routinely.

SUPPLIES FOR CLEANING, SANITIZING, AND DISINFECTION

Ensure supplies are stocked and available for cleaning and disinfecting:

- Personal protective equipment: disposable gloves, eye protection, clothing that covers exposed skin, face mask;
- Properly labeled spray bottles & measuring cups;
- Scrubbing pads/cleaning brushes, paper towels, garbage bags.

HOW TO SELECT A SANITIZER AND/OR DISINFECTANT

Sanitizing and disinfecting cleaners and wipes are readily available and come in pre-mixed formulas such as kitchen or bathroom disinfectant as well as hospital-grade formulations. These products are effective for cleaning and sanitizing common surfaces. To select the best one for your vessel, read the label for guidance.

Common types of disinfectants to choose from include:

- Bleach/sodium hypochlorite;
- Quaternary ammonias (ammonium chloride formulations);
- Accelerated hydrogen peroxides.

HOW TO USE “DISINFECTANT WIPES” EFFECTIVELY

To use wipes for disinfecting, use a “wipe, discard, wipe” technique. Wipe the surface to clean away dirt or debris, discard the wipe, and then wipe again with a fresh wipe and allow the surface to air dry.

STEPS FOR CLEANING, SANITIZING, AND DISINFECTING USING SPRAY SOLUTIONS

1. Clean first:

Spray your surface with a cleaning solution. Wipe or rinse with water. Use a scrubbing pad or brush to remove debris. If using a disinfectant cleaner, follow the instructions on the product label for cleaning.

2. Apply your Sanitizer/Disinfectant:

Wet the surface and leave solution on the surface for the recommended contact time, generally between 1 -10 minutes. Dry with a paper towel or let the surface air dry.

HOW TO MIX A BLEACH SOLUTION

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- Identify the bleach/sodium hypochlorite % on the label and prepare your sanitizing or disinfecting solution based on the surface or area you are cleaning (see table below).
- Use cool water, not warm or hot water, for mixing.
- Mix fresh solutions for sanitizing and disinfecting. If using a spray bottle, mix daily, and if using a bucket with rags, make a new batch every 2-4 hours.
- Always add the bleach to the water.
- Do not mix liquid bleach with other cleaning products.

	To one gallon of water, add:	
	8.25% bleach/sodium hypochlorite	5.25% bleach/sodium hypochlorite
Sanitizing (100 PPM)	1 teaspoon	1 teaspoon
Disinfecting (600 PPM)*	2 tablespoons	¼ cup
Special disinfecting (5000 PPM): vomit, diarrhea, blood	1 cup	1 ½ cups

*Contact time: Wet for 10 minutes or as specified on the label when used as a disinfectant.

Cleaning a vessel after a suspected COVID-19 exposure

Cleaning recommendations are based on existing [CDC infection control guidance](#) for preventing COVID-19 from spreading to others in homes.

STEP 1: Restrict access to rooms used for isolation or quarantine for at least 2 hours after the sick person has left the room/cabin

Standard practice for pathogens spread by air (such as measles, tuberculosis) is to restrict people unprotected (for example, no respiratory protection) from entering a vacated room/cabin until sufficient time has elapsed for enough air changes to remove potentially infectious particles (more information on [clearance rates under differing ventilation conditions](#) is available).

We don't yet know how long COVID-19 remains infectious in the air.

In the interim, it is reasonable to apply a similar time period before entering the sick person's room/cabin without respiratory protection as used for other pathogens spread by air (for example, measles, tuberculosis), **restrict access for two hours after the sick person has left the room/cabin.**

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STEP 2: Clean surfaces infected by the respiratory secretions of a sick person suspected with COVID-19 (for example, in the sick person’s living quarters or work area, and in isolation rooms) while wearing appropriate PPE and maintaining awareness of OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard.

Use disinfectant products against COVID-19 with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved emerging viral pathogens claims. These products can be identified by the following claim:

- [Product name] has demonstrated effectiveness against viruses similar to COVID-19 on hard non-porous surfaces. Therefore, this product can be used against COVID-19 when used in accordance with the directions for use against [name of supporting virus] on hard, non-porous surfaces.
 - Specific claims for “COVID-19” will not appear on the product or master label.
- More information about EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims can be found here: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/emerging-viral-pathogen-guidance-antimicrobial-pesticides>
 - If there are no available EPA-registered products with an approved emerging viral pathogen claim for COVID-19, use products with label claims against human coronaviruses according to label instructions.
- This claim or a similar claim, will be made only through the following communications outlets: technical literature distributed exclusively to healthcare facilities, physicians, nurses, and public health officials, “1-800” consumer information services, social media sites and company websites (non-label related).
- **Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims are recommended for use against SARS-CoV-2. Refer to List N on the EPA website (<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>) for EPA-registered disinfectants that have qualified under EPA’s emerging viral pathogens program for use against SARS-CoV-2.**
- Ensure that environmental cleaning and disinfection procedures are followed consistently and correctly, to include the provision of adequate ventilation when chemicals are in use.
- **In addition to wearing disposable gloves during routine cleaning, wear disposable gowns when cleaning areas suspected to be contaminated by COVID-19.** Wear PPE compatible with the disinfectant products being used and approved for use onboard the ship. Remove carefully gloves and gowns to avoid cross-contamination and the surrounding area. Procedures for proper removal of gloves are reviewed here: <https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/poster-how-to-remove-gloves.pdf>

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- A face shield or facemask and goggles should also be worn if splashes or sprays during cleaning are anticipated.
- Perform hand hygiene (<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>) upon removing and disposing gloves by washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60 to 95% alcohol.
- Clean all “high-touch” surfaces in the sick person’s room/cabin (for example, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, light switches, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables) according to instructions described for the above EPA-registered product. Wear disposable gloves and gowns during cleaning activities.
- If visible contamination (for example, blood, respiratory secretions, or other body fluids) is present, the basic principles for blood or body substance spill management are outlined in the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard: <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/bloodbornepathogens/standards.html>) CDC guidelines recommend removing bulk spill matter, cleaning the site, and then disinfecting the site with the above EPA-registered disinfectant. For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, remove visible contamination if present, and wash according to the manufacturer’s instructions. Clean and disinfect unremovable materials with products mentioned above and allow to air dry.

STEP 3: Launder soiled textiles, linens and dispose of PPE appropriately.

- When cleaning is completed, collect soiled textiles and linens in sturdy leak-proof containers; these can be laundered using conventional processes following your standard operating procedures.
- Follow standard operating procedures for containing and laundering used linen. Avoid shaking the linen.
- PPE should be removed and placed with other disposable items in sturdy, leak-proof (plastic) bags that are tied shut and not reopened. The bags of used PPE and disposable items can then be placed into the solid waste stream according to routine procedures. Follow your standard operating procedures for waste removal and treatment. Proper PPE should be worn when handling potentially contaminated trash. When handing trash off to another vessel or taking to town, PPE should be used and hands should be washed after handling.
- No additional cleaning is needed for the ship’s supply-and-return ventilation registers or filtration systems.

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- No additional treatment of wastewater is needed.

STEP 4: Clean and disinfect any reusable equipment that may have been exposed.

Clean and disinfect reusable patient-care equipment before use on another patient, according to manufacturer's instructions.