

# GUIDELINES FOR DANISH SHIPS - COVID-19



**SØFARTSSTYRELSEN**

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# PREFACE

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Along with other sectors, the shipping industry has been severely affected by the consequences of the spread of COVID-19. The consequences are felt in the sector itself by the seafarers and the shipping companies, which have taken a number of measures for the continued operation of ships based on the authorities' general health recommendations. They also experience stricter procedures for interaction with ports. Furthermore, shipping itself plays an important part in keeping supply lines open between Denmark and the outside world as well as for internal mobility between regions.

Both Danish and international shipping have already gained a number of relevant experiences in relation to ensuring the continued operation of ships in a way that minimizes the spread of infection on board. In order to guide Danish ships in the best possible way on how to prevent or reduce the risk of Covid-19, the Danish Maritime Authority has drawn up the following guidelines, which has been done with the involvement of the National Health Authority and in collaboration with the Danish Ships Inspection Council comprised of organizations representing ship owners and seafarers.

Acknowledging that conditions on board can vary considerably between different types of ships in relation risks and which measures are practically implementable, the guidelines are structured within the following three groups:

- Danish merchant ships engaged in international voyages
- Danish passenger ships
- Other merchant ships, including fishing vessels

In that context, it is recalled that everyone on board Danish ships must respect the security precautions the ship's master takes for the sake of the safety of those on board.

The guidelines mentioned above are also targeted Danish offshore units. In the case of units operating within Denmark, it is recommended to consult the section on other merchant ships, including fishing vessels, whereas units on international voyages should consult the section on Danish merchant ships in international voyages. When referring to the ships crew below, this also includes any co-sailing technicians, fitters etc. who are also encouraged to follow all advice directed the ships crew.

The shipping companies themselves should have a concrete action plan at hand to deal with any infections on board and such a plan should be deliberated in the ships' Safety Committees. The shipping company should furthermore consider additional ways in which to keep the seafarers informed. If ships should experience any specific challenges not covered by these guidelines, contact the Danish Maritime Authority at [cfs@dma.dk](mailto:cfs@dma.dk) for specific guidance.

A number of other guidance documents have been issued by other authorities and international organizations. From the outset, the Danish authorities' guidelines should be considered first by shipping companies.

# DANISH MERCHANT SHIPS ENGAGED IN INTERNATIONAL VOYAGES

Merchant ships engaged in international voyages are characterized by having the same mustered crew on board for extended periods at a time. The most significant risks of infection will be in connection with crew changes as well as with other interactions with ports. Together with appropriate measures of behavior and hygiene on board the ship, dealing with the aforementioned risks will therefore be the most important measures in order to prevent or limit infection with COVID-19. In addition to these specific guidelines, ships are also recommended to follow relevant recommendations of the International Maritime Organization, the IMO, and the International Chamber of Shipping, which are referred to below.

## **Prevention in ports and especially during crew changes**

- The number of persons not part of the crew on board the ship at berth (e.g. repairmen) should be limited to what is strictly necessary in order to ensure the ship's operation and maintenance.
- The ships crew's contact with land should be limited as far as possible unless they are to sign off or require medical assistance onshore.
- The crew should be informed in advance that they should not sign on if they show symptoms of COVID-19.

The information could for example be provided in form of information material provided by the Danish health authorities.

For further specific guidance, ships and seafarers are advised to consult [the IMOs COVID-19 related guidelines for ensuring a safe shipboard interface between ship and shore-based personnel \(Circular Letter No. 4204/Add. 16\) of May 6 2020](#)

## **Prevention on board including behaviour and hygiene**

If practicable, the ships crew should be separated so that everyone does not have contact with each other in order to isolate any possible risk of infection.

For specific hygienic advice in connection with ship-shore interaction, the ships crew are recommended to follow Annex A, point 16 of the IMO guidelines referred to above.

## **Dealing with persons showing symptoms of COVID-19**

On longer voyages, COVID-19 cases on board may require special procedures if it is not immediately possible to quickly receive assistance ashore or to go into port.

- If a seafarer on board shows symptoms of COVID-19 or falls ill, the ship master shall, in consultation with Radio Medical, assess the best treatment. As a general rule, the seafarer must remain in isolation on board.

### **Get in touch**

- Radio Medical Denmark
- [rmd@rsyd.dk](mailto:rmd@rsyd.dk); +45 75 45 67 66

Radio Medical Denmark advises on the specific handling of the seafarer or passenger. If treatment needs to be carried out ashore and if problems arise in this connection, the Danish Maritime Authority can assist the ship to the extent necessary, including by contacting relevant authorities at home and abroad.

Guidance to be followed when a person on board should be isolated has been prepared. Any precautions for other person on board, prevention of infection, etc. can be taken in consultation with Radio Medical. [See guidance](#)

# DANISH PASSENGER SHIPS

When preventing infection on passenger ships, frequent changes of crews shall in particular be taken into account together with the fact that other personnel also have easy access to the ship. The shipping company should therefore prepare detailed guidelines taking into account the following conditions and which follows the general recommendations of the Danish National Health Authority.

In addition to the specific guidelines below, the shipping company should consult the relevant sections of the European Commission guide: [COVID-19: Guidelines on the progressive restoration of transport services and connectivity](https://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/covid-19/guidelines-on-the-progressive-restoration-of-transport-services-and-connectivity)

Danish passenger ships arriving at non-Danish ports should also be aware of any guidelines or instructions from local authorities.

## Prevention on board including behaviour and hygiene

On board ships, the same precautions as everywhere else should apply. It is recommended to follow the advice and guidance from the Danish health authorities on how best to avoid infection. It is also important to follow the guidance and instruction of the local port authorities. Read more at: <https://en.coronasmitte.dk/>

The crew should keep proper physical distance, exercise good hand hygiene and follow applicable rules for use of protective personal equipment, such as masks, in place for public transport in Denmark.

Read more on the Danish Working Environment Authority's homepage: <https://workplacedenmark.dk/health-and-safety/prevent-the-spread-coronavirus/>

In addition:

- The ship should be cleaned and disinfected continuously and to the extent practicable.
- If practicable, the ships crew should be separated so that everyone does not have contact with each other in order to isolate any possible risk of infection.
- Both crew and passengers should be encouraged in advance not to sign on or board the ship if they show symptoms of COVID-19. This message could be given in the form of the information material made available by the Danish health authorities.
- If there is an urgent need to transport passengers with symptoms, e.g. for the sake of testing or treatment, the shipping company should determine guidelines for handling this. These guidelines should have a specific focus on how contact with the crew and other passengers can be limited or completely avoided.
- The crew should be made aware of symptoms of COVID-19 and should furthermore be encouraged to pay particular attention if they are beginning to show symptoms on board. This information could be given in the form of the information material made

available by the Danish health authorities.

On longer voyages, COVID-19 cases on board may require special procedures if it is not immediately possible to quickly receive assistance ashore or to go into port.

If a seafarer on board shows symptoms of COVID-19 or falls ill, the ship master shall, in consultation with Radio Medical, assess the best treatment. As a general rule, the seafarer must remain in isolation on board.

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Guidance to be followed when a person on board should be isolated has been prepared. Any precautions for other person on board, prevention of infection, etc. can be taken in consultation with Radio Medical. [See guidance](#)

The local authorities (such as the epidemic commission represented by the police in the Danish ports) must in all cases be informed of the suspicion or confirmation of COVID-19 cases on board.

### **Contact amongst seafarers/staff and passengers**

- Physical contact between crew and passengers should be kept at a minimum.

In cases where physical contact is unavoidable, disinfectant or hand washing should be used, as should the use of physical shielding. In all cases, the applicable Danish rules for the use of protective personal equipment, as masks, in the public transport must be followed.

On board ships are the same applicable as any other places in the public. It is recommended to follow the advice and guidance from the Danish health authorities on how best to avoid infection: <https://en.coronasmitte.dk/>

Additional advice on planning of work and reducing contact between crew and passengers can be found at the Danish Ministry of Industry's guidance (In Danish only): [https://virksomhedsguiden.dk/erhvervsfremme/content/temaer/coronavirus\\_og\\_din\\_virksomhed/](https://virksomhedsguiden.dk/erhvervsfremme/content/temaer/coronavirus_og_din_virksomhed/)

Guidance about the use of masks and other protective personal equipment can be found on the Danish Working Environment Authority's homepage (In Danish only): <https://at.dk/spoergsmaal-svar/c/corona-haandsprit-masker-og-andre-personlige-vaernemidler/>

### **Common room for passengers, including access and cleaning**

In particular, regarding common rooms for passengers, the ships should:

- Consider marking and operation of access roads to avoid e.g. the use of door handles



- Ensure clear marking of common rooms and access roads that indicates proper distance between passengers as well as other precautions
- Ensure availability to allow a good hand hygiene
- Have a plan for cleaning and disinfections of common rooms

### Handling foodstuffs

According to the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration, there is no indication that COVID-19 is transmitted directly through food. When purchasing foodstuffs, there is generally low risk of infection as long as good hygienic measures are kept.

- Where appropriate, the ships must follow the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration's respective guidelines for handling foodstuffs and for restaurants and cafes, including buffet service.

The Danish Veterinary and Food Administration's guidelines for handling foodstuffs (only available in Danish): <https://www.foedevarestyrelsen.dk/Leksikon/Sider/F%C3%B8devarer-og-COVID-19.aspx>

The Danish Veterinary and Food Administration's guidelines for restaurants and cafes: <https://www.foedevarestyrelsen.dk/english/Lexicon/Pages/Information-about-COVID-19-for-cafes-and-restaurants.aspx>

### Passengers on car decks

- The decision to allow passengers to stay on car decks can only be taken in exceptional cases by the captain and

based on a specific assessment and on request from passengers with special needs for protection.

- In such cases, the shipping company must still have set up contingency plans and necessary procedures to deal with the particular situation. A maximum number of passengers who can stay in the cars during the crossing must be determined.
- It must also be ensured,
  - that there is sufficient space between the cars at all times so that all passengers can easily get out of the cars with direct access to emergency exits,
  - that guard duty is maintained on the vehicle deck throughout the crossing and that there is sufficient crew on the car deck to assist in case of an evacuation,
  - that the number of passengers sitting in cars on the car deck is determined,
  - that an evacuation plan and emergency exits from the car deck to the ship's rescue equipment are planned, as well as procedures to verify that everyone is evacuated from the car deck.
- Catering services should not be offered on this part of the ship.

Any deviation from the abovementioned must only occur with the written permission from Danish Maritime Authority. If the shipping company plans to allot a specific number of passengers who can stay in the cars during the crossing, they must contact Danish

Maritime Authority on [cfs@dma.dk](mailto:cfs@dma.dk) in order to get a permission. In case of the need to change the number of passengers or procedures the shipping company must contact DMA again for a renewed permission.

If ships occasionally plans to allow passengers to stay on the car decks in more than to cars, and have a fixed procedure for this, the DMA must be noted about this on [cfs@dma.dk](mailto:cfs@dma.dk). The shipping company must at the same time confirm, that they comply with the guidelines above and provide information on the shipping company's procedure for this. Any changes in numbers of cars and procedures must be noted to the DMA with regards to a renewed permit.

# OTHER MERCHANT SHIPS, INCLUDING FISHING VESSELS

On board ships, the same precautions as everywhere else should apply. It is recommended to follow the advice and guidance from the Danish health authorities on how best to avoid infection. It is also important to follow the guidance and instruction of the local port authorities. Read more at <https://en.coronasmitte.dk/>

Specific guidance for fishing vessels: <https://fiskeritidende.dk/nyheder/fiskeri/2020/april/infopakke-begraens-spredning-af-virus-i-fiskeriet/> (in Danish only) prepared by the social partners including The Danish Fishermen's Occupational Health Services has also been developed.

- This type of ships should pay particular attention to:
  - That the production areas on board ships are arranged in order to reduce the risk of infection and to comply with the guidelines for physical distance and hygiene.
  - That the crew are informed in advance that they should not sign on if they show symptoms of COVID-19.
  - That unauthorized access to the ship is restricted as much as possible.
  - Hygiene when purchasing supplies.

- If a seafarer on board shows symptoms of COVID-19 or falls ill, the ship master shall, in consultation with Radio Medical, assess the best treatment. As a general rule, the seafarer must remain in isolation on board.

## Contact

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<https://www.foedevarestyrelsen.dk/Leksikon/Sider/Coronavirus-og-foedevarer-Cafeer-restauranter.aspx>

Furthermore, the Danish authorities have prepared the following:  
<https://em.dk/media/13728/retningslinjer-for-produktionsvirksomheder-140520.pdf> (only available in Danish), which provides additional guidelines regarding how to arrange the workplace.

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COVID-19

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