



An Roinn Iompair,
Turasóireachta agus Spóirt
Department of Transport,
Tourism and Sport

Covid-19 agreed protocol for International Ro-Ro Passenger Transport Services, Ports & Terminal Service Operators July 2020

COVID-19 Agreed Protocol for International Ro-Ro Passenger Transport Services, Ports & Terminal Service Operators



An Roinn Iompair,
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COVID-19 Agreed Protocol for International Ro-Ro Passenger Ferry Services, Ports & Terminal Service Operators

The majority of scheduled sailings in and out of Ireland on Ro-Ro passenger ships and other shipping continued during COVID-19 to ensure the continued supply of goods and the carriage of essential workers to critical jobs along with the repatriation of citizens. While shipping remained open, Ro-Ro passenger operators have seen reductions in passenger numbers of up to 98% due to the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions by Governments on travel.

This agreed protocol has been put together through collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including the shipping industry, ports and the Department of Health on a voluntary basis (list of stakeholders appended). The protocol has due regard to the National Guidance in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and maintain passenger safety. The aim is to ensure a broadly consistent approach to the facilitation by maritime transport providers of a safe and gradual restoration of maritime passenger transport as countries lift travel restrictions. The document is aimed at Ro-Ro passenger ships on international services and relevant Irish ports and passenger terminal operators.

Participating Ro-Ro Passenger, Terminal and Port operators are required to commit to the principles and responsibilities stated in this voluntary protocol. These operators will also promote a culture of collective responsibility for public health safety, involving passengers, staff and crew.

This is a living document which means as Government restrictions and Public Health guidelines evolve, this document will also evolve to reflect new Government advice and changes to protocols when they emerge. All sectoral guidelines have been developed in line with the Government's Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business and based on the latest health guidance available from the Department of Health and the HSE. The links to latest guidelines are outlined below.

This protocol is without prejudice to the role and responsibility of the Flag State where the ship is flagged and other relevant guidance issued by other states of embarkation and disembarkation. In all cases, the requirements of the flag state must be followed and the overall layout and arrangements of the ship including the operation must not be changed without the prior approval of the flag state and port state authorities.

It should be noted that this agreed protocol and the advice within does not affect the responsibility of shipping companies and operators from ensuring compliance with their obligations under the relevant international conventions and codes and that they remain subject to Flag State and Port State Control.

Flag State surveys and inspections are the responsibility of the flag state of the ship. Port State Control inspections are carried out in Ireland by Port State Control Officers on foreign ships in accordance with the port state control regulatory regime – which include, inter alia, matters relating to living and working conditions of those on board the vessels and policies and procedures relevant to the operators ISM (International Safety Management) Code.

The vessel's Safety Officer will be assigned responsibility by the operating company for conducting regular audits of COVID-19 measures, and forwarding the outcomes to the vessel's ISM Managers. This would be in line with existing ISM procedures. The COVID-19 measures will also be included in the ISM Managers' Internal Audit process, and it is expected that external ISM auditors acting for the flag state will also verify processes during their audits.

Nothing in this document alters or detracts from Public Health Guidelines and Government restrictions in operation at any given time. The Guidance in this document has been drawn, as appropriate, from the following published Guidance which should also be referred to:

Health Service Executive advice on preventative measures

<https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/?source=banner-www>

Return to work Safely Protocol

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/22829a-return-to-work-safely-protocol/>

Gov.ie Guidance on use of face coverings

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/aac74c-guidance-on-safe-use-of-face-coverings/>

Healthy Gateways Advice

https://www.healthygateways.eu/Portals/0/plcdocs/EU_HEALTHY_GATEWAYS_COVID-19_Cleaning_Disinfection_ships_09_4_2020_F.pdf?ver=2020-04-09-124859-237

EU Healthy Gateways European Manual for Hygiene Standards and Communicable Disease Surveillance on Passenger Ships

<http://www.shipsan.eu/Home/EuropeanManual/TabId/146/PID/649/CategoryId/31/CategoryName/EuropeanManual/Default.aspx>

<https://www.healthygateways.eu/Novel-coronavirus>

EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS working group titled "Interim advice for preparedness and response to cases of COVID-19 on board ferries after lifting restrictive measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic" (Version 1 – 24/06/2020)

https://www.healthygateways.eu/Portals/0/plcdocs/Advice_Passenger_Ferry.pdf?ver=2020-06-25-091223-253

Interferry Guidance on reopening passenger services

https://interferry.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/INTERFERRY_GUIDANCE-ON_MITIGATING_SPREAD_OF_COVID-19.pdf

Guidelines for Accessible Maritime Passenger Transport

[Maritime Transport Passenger Accessibility](#)

Marine Notice No 6 of 2020 on the Submission of Maritime Declarations of Health

<https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/1424e2-marine-notices-2020/>

International Maritime Organization (IMO) Advice for IMO Member States, seafarers and shipping especially letter of May 6 2020 Coronavirus (COVID 19) – COVID-19 related guidelines for ensuring a safe shipboard interface between ship and shore-based personnel

<http://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) Guidance for Ship Operators for the Protection of the Health of Seafarers

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

Advice and Information on food safety during COVID 19 provided by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)

<https://www.fsai.ie/faq/coronavirus.html>

All persons arriving from overseas are legally required to complete a COVID-19 Passenger Locator Form. The form may be used by health authorities to contact passengers in order to verify their location in the country. It will also help contact tracers get in touch with a passenger should someone on their flight or ferry be confirmed as having Covid-19.

[Covid-19 Passenger Locator Form](#)

EU Guidance on the progressive restoration of transport services and connectivity

https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/communication_transportservices.pdf

Information provided by EMSA

<http://emsa.europa.eu/news-a-press-centre/Covid19.html>

IMO guidance for embarking crew

<https://www.martek-marine.com/blog/imo-marine-guidance-recommended-coronavirus-Covid-19-framework-of-protocols-for-safe-crew-change-and-travel/>

WHO Operational considerations for managing COVID-19 cases/outbreak on board ships

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

Ferry operators should also refer to the Fáilte Ireland Industry Guidelines incorporating the latest Health Protection Surveillance Centre advice in relation to physical distancing

requirements for the various businesses operated on board, in particular the guidelines for pubs, restaurants and cafes.

<https://covid19.failteireland.ie/business-supports/business-reopening/pubs/guidelines-for-re-opening/>

<https://covid19.failteireland.ie/business-supports/business-reopening/restaurants-and-cafes/guidelines-for-reopening/>

These sector specific guidelines offer advice on the systems that should be implemented to help instill public confidence while adhering to public health advice and government protocols.

1. PASSENGER GUIDANCE

The following guidance is for passenger awareness and should be used in communications and promotional material.

- **Do not travel if you have the following symptoms:** Fever, Cough, Shortness of breath, Loss of Taste or Smell;
- **Follow the carriers advice** concerning the expected duration of time required to be at the Port before your ferry Departures;
- Answer the health-related questions that may be asked at check-in;
- Be aware that **only passengers intending to travel or travelling should enter the Ferry terminal buildings;**
- Follow the **instruction of Terminal Staff and Ferry Crew**, when in the Port, when embarking and disembarking the Ferry and on the Ferry;
- Where possible use **On-Line Check-In and electronic boarding passes; and electronic payment methods;**
- At all times **practice physical distancing where possible, respiratory/cough/sneeze hygiene etiquette, hand hygiene, avoid touching face, nose, eyes and mouth;**
- **Face coverings should be worn in public areas** when conditions dictate that social distancing as per the HSE and WHO guidance cannot be fully maintained;
- **Please bring enough face coverings for the duration of your journey; Be aware that there may be limited movement allowed on board during sailing, and that masks can be removed temporarily for specific reasons, e.g. while in your cabin, eating or drinking;**

- **Watch and listen to all announcements and safety demonstrations;** be aware that **new procedures** requiring the following of specified routes and social distancing will be in place for on-board services – such as lavatories, disembarkation, etc.;
- Where appropriate, collect your bags and leave the **terminal building as soon as possible;**
- **Reduce the risk of virus transmission by minimising interaction with people** in the arrival terminal and in communal areas on board the ferry; Be aware that there may be limited movement allowed on board during sailing, and that masks can be removed temporarily for specific reasons, e.g. while in your cabin, eating or drinking;
- All persons arriving from overseas are legally required to complete a COVID-19 Passenger Locator Form. The form may be used by health authorities to contact passengers in order to verify their location in the country. It will also help contact tracers get in touch with a passenger should someone on their flight or ferry be confirmed as having Covid-19.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/e885b2-covid-19-coronavirus-travel-advice/>

The best way to protect yourself and others against COVID-19:

Wash your hands frequently*

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth

Practice respiratory/cough/sneeze hygiene

Maintain social distancing

Wear Face covering in public areas where social distancing is not possible

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily

**by doing this you eliminate viruses that may be on your hands and avoid infection that could occur by then touching your eyes, mouth, and nose*

2. RECOMMENDED MEASURES FOR FERRY OPERATORS AND PORT/FERRY TERMINAL OPERATORS TO HELP PROTECT PASSENGERS AND EMPLOYEES

The international maritime passenger sector in Ireland is served by ro-ro passenger ships, often referred to as ferries. Ferry and terminal operators as well as port authorities will need to assess the impact of applicable health and safety directives and guidance when determining appropriate mitigation strategies. The below guidance is designed to assist operators in developing procedures and practices consistent with the most recent directives and guidance allowing for the resumption of passenger travel. The procedures that apply on board vessels should be embedded in quality control processes to the greatest extent possible and in particular, those processes that relate to hygiene, cleaning, staff training and induction.

The first step is for the ship operating companies to assess all identified risks to their ships, crew, passengers and other persons in relation to the COVID-19 disease and to establish appropriate safeguards. In establishing safeguards or implementing mitigating measures in relation to COVID-19 pandemic, available relevant codes, guidelines, and standards regarding COVID-19 should be taken into consideration. In particular, relevant IMO and EU COVID-19 related documents, in particular guidance from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), should be considered for implementation as found relevant and applicable.

Written contingency (outbreak management plan)

A written – COVID-19 Outbreak Management Plan should be developed by ferry operators as per WHO guidance and EU Healthy Gateways¹ for the prevention and control of possible cases of COVID-19, and all crew on board should have good knowledge of this and preparedness to implement. As per WHO Operational considerations for managing COVID-19 cases or outbreaks on board ships, in Ireland this plan shall be available for inspection by HSE Port Health Officers.

The ships onboard management team, under the command of the ship's master will be responsible for implementing.

The plan should include:

A. Preventive measures

- Physical distancing measures
- Personal hygiene rules
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) use
- Health monitoring of symptoms for transport staff and where applicable passengers and record keeping
- Procedures for responding to a possible case (temporary isolation, arrangements for providing the preliminary medical examination by the ship's doctor or the master of the ship or a medically trained officer as applicable)

¹ <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/operational-considerations-for-managing-covid-19-cases-or-outbreaks-on-board-ships-interim-guidance>
<https://www.healthygateways.eu/Novel-coronavirus#Interim>

- Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) for cleaning and disinfection covering all types of surfaces and materials and defining the disinfectants and the methods to be used
- SOPs for laundry of linen and clothing
- SOPs for cleaning and disinfection of body fluid spills in the environment
- Food safety management
- Potable water safety management
- Recreational water safety management
- Ventilation of indoor areas
- Communication plan including reporting public health events to the competent authorities

B. Measures for the response and management of a possible case

- Isolation/separation plan of the possible case
- Communication with competent authorities at ports
- Collaboration with the national competent authorities for contact tracing and quarantine of contacts ashore
- Cleaning and disinfection procedures of contaminated spaces, objects and equipment (daily and final cleaning and disinfection)
- Waste management procedures

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

It is recommended that the company reviews the emergency procedures in view of the measures outlined in this document and includes, where necessary, additional considerations to deal with persons infected or suspected to be infected, whilst ensuring that all the other precautionary measures for non-infected passengers and crew are kept.

In addition, normal safety related emergency procedures should also be considered. For example, to ensure social distancing is maintained during all safety training and drills.

AT BOOKING

This is the first opportunity operators have to advise passengers (including those with reduced mobility or requiring special assistance) of the procedures in place on board. Operators should take advantage of this to ensure passengers know what to expect and that they are adequately prepared for the journey. Particularly, the following procedures are advised:

- Ensure Information is provided about the importance of handwashing/hand sanitising, coughing routines, handshaking, etc.;
- Advise passengers to bring enough face coverings for the duration of their journey;
- Facilitate ordering of on-board services and other measures to reduce contact with personnel on-board, where possible;
- Reduce the overall capacity depending on vessel kind, size and construction. This can be limited in connection with ticket sales;
- Where possible, use of cabins should be optimised (and disinfected after each use) when travelling on appropriate routes;
- As far as possible, passengers should be facilitated to board the ship with minimum physical contact. In addition, handling of documents, if any, should be kept to a minimum.

AT CHECK IN

As this process requires face-to-face interaction, in order to ensure that the health of employees and passengers is adequately protected, the following measures should be put in place:

- Questions need to be asked of every passenger at check-in. Passengers with symptoms and that have been in high risk area/contact are to be denied boarding;
- Information should be provided by way of text, video or e-learning to each passenger on how to behave while on-board;
- Implement the necessary measures to control and manage queues safely (e.g. distance-signage, distance markings on the floor, different check-in times, staff on hand to organise queues where necessary);
- Public lavatories are to be cleaned and disinfected frequently;
- Hand sanitising by personnel on every passenger entering the building;
- Automatic check-in machines to be disinfected frequently;
- Sneeze guard/Plexiglass on manual check-in desk to be mounted;
- Manual check-in desk and all other common touch points disinfected frequently;
- Check-in clerks informed about handwashing/disinfection routines and issued with relevant national guidance;
- Credit card and contactless payments preferred;
- PETS chip scan done by the passenger, scanner to be disinfected after use.

Given the additional measures to be put in place to protect the health and safety of employees and passengers, it is important that passengers are made aware that there may be delays in relation to embarking and disembarking the vessel and that they should leave enough time to allow for such delays. In particular, passengers should be advised of the following measures to be implemented outside and inside the terminal and when boarding.

PORT SIDE/OUTSIDE THE TERMINAL

- Pre-embarkation areas outlined with distance markings. This can be achieved to some extent as long as passenger volumes do not reach maximum. Additional staff may be required for monitoring;
- Present instructions on how to conduct check-in for:-
 - foot passengers;
 - car passengers;
 - truck drivers;
 - other passenger types.

PORT SIDE/INSIDE THE TERMINAL

- If local requirements dictate, then compulsory wearing of masks/face covering. Passengers instructed to bring their own mask/face covering;
- Distance markings & walk-ways to be clearly outlined;
- Manage access/numbers to WCs. Closure of every other urinal, etc.;
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection of sanitary facilities recorded and records available for inspection;
- Physical presence of a member of cleaning at every ship call for regular disinfection of desks;
- Public area marshals, if the volumes dictate the need;
- Plexiglass/sneeze screen protection for employees should be installed;
- Maximum number of passengers allowed inside the terminal to be implemented;
- Credit card and contactless payments preferred as payment method;
- Wearing of gloves when cash handling;
- Extra hand sanitising stations available in terminals and on-board;
- Schedule of cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched hand points;
- Information in different languages available in all terminals.

EMBARKATION/DISEMBARKATION

- Ensure sufficient separation of passengers during loading and unloading;
- Implement a loading/unloading sequence both for foot passengers and vehicle passengers to limit the number of passengers in areas at the same time. Adapt the stopover time if necessary;
- Define the maximum number of people allowed in lifts and face coverings should be worn in lifts;
- Have measures in place to manage and control queues and have distance-signage in place;
- Ensure hand sanitising of every passenger embarking on gangway or staircase for vehicle-passengers;
- Arrange early boarding in close collaboration with port authority and border control/customs authority where practicable.

ONBOARD

- Written COVID-19 Outbreak Management Plan as per WHO guidance;
- Face coverings should be worn in public areas when the conditions dictate if social distancing as per the national and WHO guidance cannot be fully maintained;
- Where possible, walkways for passengers inside the vessel should be marked to indicate 2m distancing;
- Reduce the capacity on all ships to secure 2m distance where possible, but in any case no less than WHO advice at the time;
- The escape routes, muster and evacuation arrangements on-board should not be altered from that for which the ship is designed and certified;
- Extra hand sanitising stations should be available onboard;
- Passengers in the same group (e.g. vehicle) can sit together, all others to sit separated, messaging to be promulgated onboard;
- Where possible hygiene instructions for crew and passengers should be visible at all places;
- There should be appropriate frequent passenger information announcements on board regarding social distancing and hygiene measures;
- Childcare facilities, cinema areas and other high-risk areas to be kept closed and entertainment events eliminated in line with current health advice;
- Areas for isolation of passengers should be available if necessary;
- Have PPE (masks, gloves, suits, etc.) ready in case of a positive or suspected positive person on board;
- Promote the ready access to fresh sea air on the open deck, weather permitting.

SHOPS

- Sneeze guards/Plexiglas protection should be placed and used at cashier desks;
- Ensure frequent disinfection of cashier-area;
- Ensure frequent disinfection of common touch-points;
- Ensure frequent disinfection of shopping-trolleys/baskets;
- Ensure hand sanitising available for every passenger on entering and leaving;
- Measures to prevent queues and distance-signage should in place;
- The amount of visitors in different shops should be limited to maintain social distancing;
- Ensure distance marking on the shop floor to separate passengers queuing to the cash desks;
- Ensure hand sanitiser available in all shops;
- Face coverings to be available for sale on board in the shops to passengers;
- All take away food sold in the shops should be wrapped or packed;
- Cleaning and disinfection in all shop areas should be intensified;
- Credit card and contactless payments preferred as payment method;
- No unauthorized personnel in the stores or supply areas.

RESTAURANTS

- Ensure frequent disinfection of cashier-area;
- The amount of visitors in different restaurants to be limited to maintain social distancing, taking account of the [Fáilte Ireland Guidelines for Re-opening Restaurants and Cafes](#);
- Ensure hand sanitisers are available in all restaurants;
- Ensure all food is prepared following all HACCP procedures and are considered safe;
- Serve food in portions – no self-serve buffet;
- Take away food from the restaurants to the cabins or other public areas will be accepted, where practicable;
- All food in cafés to be wrapped or packed;
- Plexiglas protection/Sneeze screen at in use cash desks;
- Cleaning and disinfection in all areas to be maintained;
- Credit card and contactless payments preferred.

CLEANING & DISINFECTION REGIMES AND HYGIENE MEASURES

Follow the EU Health Gateways advice for cleaning and disinfection of ships. Take a proactive approach in undertaking extra cleaning and disinfection in terminals/waiting areas, in booking offices and on board ferries. It is important to increase the frequency and extent of cleaning and disinfection regimes and ensure that at a minimum the following protocols are met:

- Extra measures to clean and disinfect all touch points (touch point cleaning focuses on common areas and locations that are touched frequently by people throughout the day), especially all hard surfaces in high-contact areas such as:
 - door handles;
 - grab rails/ hand rails in corridors/stairwells;
 - plastic-coated or laminated worktops;
 - access touchpads;
 - payment PIN pads;
 - ticket machines;
 - telephones/keyboards in offices; and
 - toilets/taps/sanitary fittings.
- sufficient cleaning and disinfectant materials should be made available for use by staff as well as sufficient and appropriate cleaning utensils;
- extra measures to clean and disinfect crew cabins, crew mess and all other crew areas should also be implemented;
- extra measures to clean and disinfect crew work areas particularly at every change of watchkeeping;
- install hand-sanitation points with alcohol-based hand sanitiser (at least 60% alcohol) in crew areas;
- crew should be advised of hand cleaning and sanitization procedure, that their hands should be washed and sanitised on a regular basis and, if possible, whenever moving from one compartment of the ship to another;
- extra attention should also be given to cabin trolleys and equipment used by cleaners which should be disinfected frequently;
- clean and disinfect regularly touched objects and surfaces using a household cleaning product/bleach;
- wear rubber gloves when cleaning surfaces, wash the gloves while still wearing them, then wash your hands after you take them off;
- ensure soap and hot running water, paper towels or a warm air dryer for drying hands and bins for disposal of paper towels when used in all toilet facilities/washrooms;

- install hand-sanitation points with alcohol-based hand sanitiser (at least 60% alcohol) in passenger areas (e.g. at points of entry to/exit from the ferry, beside any food/drink outlet in the toilets) and booking offices/waiting rooms - encourage passengers & staff to use these;
- ensure sufficient bins available for disposal of tissues (preferably covered bins, lined with a bin bag, replace when three-quarters full);
- provide disinfectant desk wipes in booking offices/reception;
- sufficient volumes of PPE should be made available to all staff who wish to use it, particularly those who need to interact with passengers and cleaners who must attend to the areas most commonly used by the public;
- training should be provided to relevant staff on how to correctly and safely use different types of PPE;
- the air recycling mode should be removed where possible from the air conditioning;
- Post a suspect COVID-19 case being removed, cleaning as per the aforementioned EU Healthy Gateways advice for Cleaning and Disinfection of Ships must occur before onwards sailing and HSE must be notified when completed and before departure.

CREW/EMPLOYEES

It is vitally important that employers ensure that all staff and crew are educated in relation to mitigating against the risks of Covid-19 and that staff and crew are aware of the strict hygiene measures that should be adhered to. They should be trained in PPE use and on the activation of the written contingency COVID 19 plan. In this regard all employees should be advised to:

- implement secure routines for crew changes in order to reduce risk of cross contamination between crews;
- avoid all unnecessary lingering in the common areas of the ship and maintain social distancing where a number of staff or crew must congregate;
- avoid all extra personal contact;
- ensure that the capacity of the ship's gym is limited and that all equipment is completely disinfected after each use;
- ensure that only persons responsible for the ship's food provision enter the galley or food storage facility areas;
- dine in small groups, taking into account the safe distance between crew members. Close contact in dining and break rooms should be avoided, and breaks and dining should be paced in such a way that as few crew members as possible will be in the same room simultaneously;

- ensure that where practicable, food will be served by the cook or someone else responsible for food provision, to ensure that only the cook and other kitchen crew will touch the serving utensils;
- ensure that the meals and cutlery delivered to the bridge are covered during delivery.

In addition to the protocols outlined above, employers should where practicable ensure:

- there is a separation of crew shifts to prevent outbreak amongst crew;
- the maintenance of health declaration procedures;
- all crew undergo regular medical crew screening (temperature, other symptoms);
- all crew remain on board the vessel while it is in port;
- that appropriate IMO guidelines are followed for embarking crew.

MEDICAL- Dealing with passenger/s or crew with suspected COVID 19

The latest Public Health Guidance should always be adhered to. Anyone who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 should not be travelling or working. However, in instances where a passenger or crew member begins to display symptoms of COVID-19, without prejudice to any instructions issued by the Flag State, the contingency plan (outbreak management plan) should be activated, including the following steps:

The master or the designated officer in the absence of a doctor on board shall carry out an examination of the patient in accordance with training received and report their findings to the medical teleconsultation centre (TMAS at sea or local rescue at dockside).

The assistance of a medical professional should be sought immediately as follows:

- For events at sea in Irish waters;
 - Liaise with the National Maritime Telemedical Assistance Service (Medico Cork). Contact via the Irish Coast Guard on telephone 112 or VHF Radio. http://emed.ie/Administration/MedicoCork/MedicoCork_about.php
- For events in Irish ports;
 - Contact National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) on **(01) 4631380** or **(01) 4631384** or **999/112** and ask for **HSE National Ambulance Service** for case management and Public Health assessment
- Notify the Port Authority of the suspected case as soon as possible;
- The immediate care of the ill person once in Port will be made under the instruction of Public Health;

- The decision about the onward movement of the ship will be made by Public Health following risk assessment;

If it is determined that there is a possible case of COVID-19 on board², the patient should be isolated in an isolation cabin with negative pressure if available or in a designated cabin, room or quarters and infection control measures should be continued until disembarkation and transfer of the patient to the hospital ashore.

Advice for management of possible cases can be found in the EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS Interim advice for ship operators for preparedness and response to the outbreak:

- A senior member of the ship's crew should be appointed to oversee the management of a suspect case on board, ensuring that all relevant protocols and guidances are adhered to. This crew member should be responsible for liaising with Port and HSE Public Health Authorities;
- an area to allow for the isolation of the passenger or crew member should be designated and available at all times;
- ensure employees on-board know what to do to manage the situation safely in order to minimise contact between passengers/crew with the ill person;
- the ill person should be separated from others and placed in the designated isolation area as soon as possible;
- any passengers accompanying the ill passenger should also be isolated in a separate area;
- all staff coming into contact with the ill passenger in order to offer assistance should be provided with and wear full PPE;
- details of all those coming in contact with the ill passenger should be logged (name/ details of length/ nature of exposure);
- all used PPE and tissues should be disposed of safely;
- the isolation area should be fully disinfected once the passenger/crew member has finished using it;
- an updated Maritime Declaration of Health should be completed for all vessels arriving in Ireland from a port outside the Island of Ireland with an ill person on board along with an updated Crew List and Passenger List;
- Further information in relation to submitting a Maritime Declaration of Health and what to do when there is suspected case of COVID-19 on board is available in Marine Notice 06 of 2020;

² Possible case: any person with at least one of the following symptoms: cough, fever, shortness of breath, sudden onset of anosmia, ageusia or dysgeusia. Additional less specific symptoms may include headache, chills, muscle pain, fatigue, vomiting and/or diarrhoea (source: Case definition for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), as of 29 May 2020. <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/covid-19/surveillance/case-definition>).

- Whether the ill person is crew or passenger, contact details for crew are required – not just passengers;
- Following risk assessment by HSE Public Health, all crew and passengers may be asked to complete Public Health Contact tracing Card prior to dis-embarkation;
- Following appropriate clinical assessment and investigation of the ill person, in the event of a person being treated as having COVID-19, based on risk assessment, there will be appropriate follow up of those deemed close and casual contacts, whether passengers or crew.

CONTACTS OF A POSSIBLE CASE OF COVID 19

- Management of contacts will take place according to the national policies of HSE Public Health;
- Advice for contact definition and management can be found in the following links:
 - EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS, Interim advice for ship operators for preparedness and response to the outbreak of COVID-19, available at: <https://www.healthygateways.eu/Novel-coronavirus>;
 - ECDC, Contact tracing: Public health management of persons, including healthcare workers, having had contact with COVID-19 cases in the European Union - second update <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/covid-19-contact-tracing-public-health-management>;
 - WHO, Operational considerations for managing COVID-19 cases/outbreak on board ships <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/operational-considerations-for-managing-covid-19-cases-outbreak-on-board-ships>;

Co-operation with relevant authorities and speed are essential here to help prevent any onward transmission of infection.

APPENDIX

LIST OF CONSULTED STAKEHOLDERS

Brittany Ferries

Irish Ferries Limited

Stena Line Limited

P&O Ferries

Dublin Port Company

Port of Cork Company

Rosslare Europort

Department of Health

HSE Multi-disciplinary Port Health Network

The Irish Maritime Development Office



An Roinn Iompair,
Turasóireachta agus Spóirt
Department of Transport,
Tourism and Sport