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Recommendation for working/staying on board yachts, boats and other vessels during the COVID-19 epidemic

The recommendations refer to the implementation of measures while working on yachts and other vessels during the coronavirus epidemic, and they are given in order to protect the crew and passengers with vehicle occupancy adhering to the 1.5 meter physical distancing measure.

1. Instructions for implementing general hygienic measures.

Visible notices. A notice of the obligation to adhere to general hygiene and physical distancing measures must be placed in a location which is visible to all passengers boarding the vessel, before or immediately after entry, as well as in the cabins.

Registration of passengers. Passengers should be encouraged to use online and mobile applications as much as possible for registration and reservation purposes.

Hand disinfection. Disinfectant dispensers (alcohol-based with a concentration of at least 70% or some other agent which is safe on skin with declared virucidal properties pursuant to manufacturer's instructions) must readily available when entering the vessels, as well as in the entrance areas of salons, wheelhouse and crew cabins, accompanied with the notice of mandatory hand disinfection upon arrival. Dispensers must be placed at the beginning of the hallways where the accommodation units are placed, i.e. close to the staircase, at the entrance to the salon on the main door for guests, and at the entrance to the wheelhouse and crew cabins.

Physical distancing. The 1.5 meter physical distance rule should be observed.

Cleaning and maintenance. High-touch surfaces, such as door handles, handrails, light switches and other surfaces which the passengers touch frequently, have to be regularly cleaned and disinfected. Instructions for cleaning and disinfecting are available at the following links: No COVID-19 patients: <https://bit.ly/3cnJJig>. The need to implement additional disinfection measures may arise in the event of transporting persons who are suspected of being infected or suffering from highly contagious diseases. The recommendations are available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3eJhJqZ>.

2. Spatial and technical conditions on yachts and other vessels.

Hygiene and ventilation of the passenger compartment. The internal passenger compartment must be regularly cleaned and disinfected after each voyage, when anchoring or staying in port. High-touch surfaces such as head and arm rests, light switches, windows as well as door handles, should be frequently wiped down with disinfectant. The interior should be regularly ventilated when sailing, anchoring or staying in port. The use of air conditioning units and heating should be avoided.

Isolating the bridge. It is advised to install a physical barrier between the bridge and the passengers (made from Plexiglas or similar material), if there isn't one already installed, and if that is not possible, the passengers should be instructed to adhere to the physical distancing rules.

Physical distancing in regard to seats and deckchairs. Separate deckchairs in such a way that physical distancing is ensured, and disinfect the deckchairs a couple of times per day, and certainly after an individual guest is no longer using the deckchair and before another guest uses it. If the vessel has other seating options, they also have to be arranged so that they are 1.5 m away from each other.

Air conditioning units, heating and ventilation units (HVAC). When using ventilation and air conditioning systems, special attention should be given to the state of the filters and maintaining the correct condition of the indoor air exchange rate. The proper functioning of ventilation and air exchange equipment has to be checked in accordance with usual protocols. It is advised to use ventilation with increased percentage of external air circulating into the system, and refrain from using recirculation mode in order to encourage the exchange of air which reduces the concentration of potentially infectious particles.

Water supply. The functioning of infrastructure regarding water for human consumption is carried out in the usual manner.

Sanitary facilities. It is necessary to ensure more frequent cleaning, disinfection and, if possible, ventilation of sanitary facilities. Passengers need to be provided with appropriate hand hygiene and disinfection.

Pool area. Instructions are available on the CIPH website: <https://bit.ly/2zJVXmQ>.

3. Food and beverage service areas and shopping facilities on yachts and other vessels.

Shops and catering facilities on yachts and boats should operate in accordance with the decisions of the Civil Protection Headquarters and the existing recommendations for these activities outside of shopping malls. Instructions for the operation of stores are available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3cEAHxC>. Instructions for hospitality facilities are available at the CIPH's website: <https://bit.ly/3cmqCoK>.

4. Protecting the crew, passengers and port authority employees.

General protective measures. It is necessary to maintain the recommended physical distance. When coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with your elbow or paper handkerchief, which needs to be thrown into a lidded garbage bin immediately afterwards and you should wash your hands. Regularly wash your hands with soap and water, or use an alcohol based disinfectant, or other agent suitable for use on skin with declared virucidal properties according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Informing the staff. Before starting work, instruct the crew regarding the measures which are being implemented.

Reduced contact between the crew and passengers. Crew members should avoid close contact with passengers, and when communicating with them and staff, it is necessary to maintain an appropriate distance (1.5 meters). Hands should be disinfected after handling luggage.

Face masks. The wearing of surgical masks or face masks, which cover the mouth and nose, is recommended when staying in the enclosed spaces of the ship. Instructions for the proper use of face masks are available at the following link. <https://bit.ly/2Lu1a4S>. The employer is obliged to provide face masks and disinfectants for the employees.

Monitoring crew health through daily body temperature measurements. Before starting work, all crew members must measure their body temperature during morning hours and they will not begin work if their temperature is higher than 37.2 C and/or if they have respiratory problems. In the event of elevated body temperature and/or respiratory problems with or without elevated body temperature, the employees will call their employer and competent family physician, and will not start work until the cause of the respiratory problems or elevated body temperature is ascertained.

Passenger records. It is advised that ship staff keeps records on passengers' contacts, as well as passenger disembarkation and embarkation, so that if a sick person is detected on board the territorially competent epidemiologists can identify and notify the sufferer's contacts as soon as possible and implement measures for preventing the further spread of infection.

Procedure in the event of symptoms indicative of COVID-19. Advise the person with symptoms of respiratory disease or elevated body temperature to remain in his cabin, with the doors closed; offer him surgical masks and paper handkerchiefs in sufficient quantity and instruct him not to leave his room and to contact the staff by telephone if necessary.

Guests who are part of the same group or members of the same family as the sufferer also have to stay in their cabins until the ship arrives at the closest port.

The staff is advised not to enter the cabin where the person suspected of being infected with SARS-CoV-2 is residing, and guests should be notified that the rooms will not be cleaned and linens replaced at usual intervals and in the usual manner. Such guests must maintain the cleanliness of the area in which they are staying themselves by using products which will be provided by the staff.

Meals will be left in front of the cabin door.

If there is a need to contact the sick guest, a single person will be designated to deal with that guest, during which they will have to wear a medical mask and protective gloves and maintain a physical distance from the sufferer.

Masks, gloves and similar protective equipment must be disposed immediately after use into a lidded garbage bin lined with a garbage bag, and they cannot be used again. After throwing the protective equipment into the waste bin, the employees must wash their hands with soap and water and disinfect them.

It is recommended for the vessel to pull into the nearest port, preferably one that has a larger health institution/hospital in the vicinity where the county crisis headquarters has organized isolation accommodation for the county for the purpose of accommodating persons suspected of having COVID-19. Before pulling into port, and in the event that the staff or passengers exhibit symptoms of respiratory disease and/or elevated body temperature, the skipper must immediately notify 112 so that the competent port authority of the port of arrival is informed, and that the port authority competent for the port of departure is also notified.

112 notifies the county crisis headquarters by following the established protocol in order to instruct them on further action and organization of isolation accommodation, and also informs the competent health care service for isolation accommodation.