



Office of
Deputy Commissioner
of Maritime Affairs

THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY

22980 Indian Creek Drive
Suite 200
Dulles, Virginia 20166, USA
Tel: +1 703 790 3434
Fax: +1 703 790 5655
Email: RegsandStandards@lisr.com
Web: www.lisr.com

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Marine Advisory: 31/2020

(This Marine Advisory supersedes Marine Advisory 30/2020)

SUBJECT: Requirements for crew change for cargo ships in the port of Singapore and for ship's crew visiting Singapore waters to minimize the risk of community spread of COVID-19 in Singapore

Ref:

- a) **Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) Port Marine Circular 16 of 2020**
- b) **MPA Port Marine Circular 23 of 2020**
- c) **MPA Port Marine Circular 26 of 2020**
- d) **MPA Port Marine Circular 27 of 2020**
- e) **MPA Port Marine Circular 32 of 2020**
- f) **MPA Port Marine Circular 38 of 2020**

Dear Shipowners/Operators/SRPS/Seafarers:

The purpose of this Marine Advisory is to provide shipowners, operators, seafarers' recruitment and placement services (SRPS) and seafarers with the current requirements for conducting crew change for cargo ships in the port of Singapore and for ship's crew visiting or working onboard vessels alongside wharves, in shipyards and at anchorages.

As Singapore settles into Phase Two of re-opening, the MPA has further updated and enhanced their crew change requirements among which includes crew from specified low risk countries/regions, further categorization of sign-on crew previously diagnosed with COVID-19, extended length of stay for on/off-signing crew from 48 to 72 hours at designated holding facilities, and pre-departure COVID-19 PCR tests for sign-off crew where applicable.

Crew change restrictions

With effect from 01 September 2020, MPA will consider the following circumstances for crew change applications:

1. crew whose employment contract has expired;
2. additional crew on board whose sign-off would not affect the safe manning of the ship;
3. change of crew due to the sale or purchase of ship;
4. personnel who are not part of the ship's crew such as superintendents and service engineers;
5. compassionate grounds e.g. death of family member; or
6. the crew is no longer medically fit to work onboard the ship

Requirements for signing-on crew

For signing-on crew, the crew and ship must fulfil the following requirements:

1. In general, all signing-on crew are required to serve 14-days Stay-Home-Notice (SHN) in the originating country/region. The crew should be properly isolated (individual room with dedicated toilet) with strictly no interaction with others (including family members) at his/her place of residence, or serve the SHN in a dedicated facility/hotel. The crew must record his/her temperature twice daily and monitor his/her health for respiratory symptoms such as cough and breathlessness. Temperatures $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ indicate a fever. The crew must maintain a temperature and health log for the 14 days of self-isolation. This log must be provided to MPA together with the application for crew change. Company must ensure the crew's compliance and include periodical checks on the crew during the SHN period. Company will be required to submit to MPA the company's SHN undertaking to ensure that the sign-on crew have complied with the SHN requirements;
2. Crew from specific low risk countries/regions will either no longer be required to serve the SHN or serve a shorter SHN of 7 days in the originating country/region prior to departure for Singapore. Please refer to Ministry of Health's (MOH) website (<https://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19>) for the latest list of low risk countries/regions;
3. The crew must have a negative result from a COVID-19 test ((PCR) type) taken at a government-approved or ISO 15189- accredited testing facility not more than 72 hours prior to the departure flight;
4. The crew shall be certified fit-to-travel by a doctor at his/her originating country not more than 24 hours prior to the departure flight;
5. During the entire crew change process, especially during the journey to join the ship in Singapore, crew may be in groups of not more than five (5) persons, but must remain in the same group, and there must be no interactions between the groups;
6. The crew shall only arrive Singapore to join his/her ship not more than two (2) days before the ship's departure from Singapore;
7. The crew must be transferred directly between the ship and point of arrival in Singapore. For crew who are not able to transfer directly from airport to vessel, company must have a booking for crew to stay at the designated holding facility for up to a maximum of 72 hours before signing on the ship;
8. Ships managers/agents must arrange meet-and-greet services for sign on crew arriving at Changi airport, to escort crew from the moment they disembark the plane to the point where they are handed over to the agent for the direct transfer to the ship or designated holding facility;
9. Crew who have recovered from COVID-19 must submit documentary proof of his/her past diagnosis of COVID-19 based on the earliest positive PCR test result. The guidelines are as follows:
 - a. If the date of the positive PCR test result is **21 days or fewer** before the date of arrival in Singapore, he/she will not be approved for crew change.
 - b. If the date of the positive PCR test result is between 22 to 90 days before the date of arrival in Singapore, the recovered crew need not serve the SHN at his/her originating country/region and take a COVID-19 PCR test within 72 hours before departure for Singapore.
 - c. If the date of the positive PCR test result is between 91 to 180 days before the date of arrival in Singapore, he/she must serve a 14-day SHN at his/her originating country/region. The recovered

crew need not take a COVID-19 PCR test within 72 hours before departure for Singapore, but if he/she develops symptoms during the SHN period, he/she must be tested for COVID-19.

- d. If the positive PCR test result is more than 180 days before the date of arrival in Singapore, he/she must serve a 14-day SHN at his/her originating country and take a COVID-19 PCR test within 72 hours before departure for Singapore.

Requirements for signing-off crew

For signing-off crew, the crew and ship must fulfil the following requirements:

1. Confirmation that the crew has not gone ashore in the last 14 days before disembarking the ship and has remained well throughout that period;
2. The crew shall be certified fit-to-travel by a doctor in Singapore not more than 24 hours before disembarking the ship;
3. Proof of expiry of employment contract or unfit-for-work medical report, where applicable;
4. Relevant documentation supporting required crew change (e.g. sale/purchase agreement of ship);
5. The crew must be transferred directly between the ship and point of departure in Singapore;
6. Ships, after signing off its crew and obtaining port clearance, need not remain in port until the sign-off crew have departed Singapore. Ship managers/agents shall be responsible for ensuring that the crew change is effected according to MPA's requirements;
7. If immediate transfer from ship to point of departure is impossible, crew are to be transferred to designated holding facility. The stay at the designated holding facility is for up to 72 hours;
8. MPA will facilitate pre-departure COVID-19 PCR testing for sign-off crew in Singapore in accordance with the prevailing national policy. Please refer to <https://safetravel.ica.gov.sg/pre-departure-test> for more information. Ship owners/managers/agents will bear the cost of the COVID-19 tests of their crew, where applicable.

For crew changes to take place safely, MPA continues to expect all owners, agents, ships and individuals to ensure that the COVID-19 preventive measures are followed strictly. Any breach will be taken seriously.

Ship owners/managers/agents must apply for crew change in Singapore by filling up the online form at www.mpa.gov.sg/web/portal/home/port-of-singapore/operations/crew-change. at least 14 days before the planned crew change. Crew change will be considered if the ship meets all prevailing requirements, and are in Singapore for cargo operations, bunkering and/or other marine services.

Requirements for ship's crew visiting or working onboard vessels alongside wharves, shipyards at anchorages

Before leaving the last port of call (before calling at the port of Singapore), the vessel's master, owner, manager or agent should ensure that any suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infected crew on board the vessel received proper medical treatment before leaving the port and starting its journey to Singapore.

All ships scheduled or intending to call at the Port of Singapore must immediately notify and seek approval to enter the Port of Singapore if there are suspected COVID-19 cases on board or if it had conducted crew change in the past 14 days before arrival in Singapore.

All vessels arriving in the Port of Singapore must submit the Maritime Declaration of Health (MDH) to the National Environment Agency's (NEA) Port Health Office 12 hours before arrival at Singapore Port.

The master of the ship is to conduct temperature checks for all passengers and crew members no earlier than 2 hours before arrival and provide the list of passengers/ crew members with temperature measured above 37.5 degree Celsius to the NEA Port Health Office.

Designated holding facilities

A self-contained Crew Facilitation Centre (CFC) at Tanjong Pagar Terminal was set up as of 01 September 2020. Three floating accommodations at the CFC will house signing-on crew that are waiting for their ships' arrival for up to 72 hours, and a quarantine facility to house close contacts of crew who are tested positive for COVID-19. There will also be an on-site medical service provider for healthcare services within the CFC. Please refer to reference (f) for details of the designated holding facilities for sign-on and sign-off crew.

For more information and frequently asked questions (FAQ), refer to references **a), b), c), d), e)** and **f)** above and to: <https://www.mpa.gov.sg/web/portal/home/port-of-singapore/operations/crew-change>

If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact RegsandStandards@liscr.com.

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