



**THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**  
**LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY**

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**MARINE ADVISORY: 25/2020**

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

**Ref: a) Center of Health Protection DH/PHD/P6/3002, latest update on 28 July 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 Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong Government announced on 26 July 2020 that crew change arrangements for passenger ships and cargo ships not conducting cargo operations in Hong Kong would be suspended with effect from 29 July 2020. The testing and quarantine arrangement for sea crew members of cargo ships coming to Hong Kong for cargo operation, air crew members and other persons exempted from quarantine requirement (exempted persons) arriving Hong Kong will also be tightened.

With effect from 29 July 2020, in accordance with the risk level of respective exemption categories, the Government will tighten the testing and quarantine arrangement for exempted persons as set out below.

**Crew change restrictions**

- (a) Crew change arrangements for passenger ships and cargo ships not conducting cargo operations in Hong Kong are suspended until the local epidemic situation is contained.
- (b) For cargo ships coming to Hong Kong for cargo operations, new exemption conditions will be imposed and the existing requirements will be tightened, including:
  - all crew members of these vessels should remain onboard the vessels during the stay of the vessels in Hong Kong waters and should not go ashore;
  - shipping companies/agents shall submit the Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) and Estimated Time of Departure (ETD) of vessel together with the details of the sign-on and sign-off crew to be changed (including their names and flight schedules) 72 hours prior arrival of the vessel for the Marine Department (MarDep)'s approval;
  - shipping companies/agents must report to the MarDep immediately upon receipt of information of any COVID-19 positive cases of their seafarers.

**Requirements for signing-on crew**

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

1. in-coming crew members should only arrive Hong Kong when their vessels are berthed in Hong Kong and should get onboard immediately upon arrival;
2. point-to-point transfer should be arranged by the shipping companies/agents for crew members to travel to and from the vessel. Use of public transportation which will serve the general public at the same time is prohibited, and crew members should wear masks during the entire journey, etc.;
3. crew members arriving Hong Kong at the Hong Kong International Airport to sign-on cargo ships must have a negative result of SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid test at an ISO 15189-accredited laboratory or a laboratory recognized by the Government where the laboratory is located with the specimen collected within 48 hours prior to boarding the flight to Hong Kong;
4. shipping companies/agents should declare on a letter of certification that the crew member concerned has been tested negative for SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid with the specimen collected within 48 hours prior to boarding the flight to Hong Kong. The letter should include an emergency local contact phone number for prompt contact with the concerned crew under emergency situation;
5. the crew is required to present MarDep's approval letter (as mentioned under (b) above), the negative test report (as mentioned under (3) above) and letter of certification (as mentioned under (4) above) to the staff of Department of Health (DH) when he/she enters Hong Kong. The shipping companies/agents should prepare at least one copy of the certification letter to be carried by each crew when arriving Hong Kong for submission to DH staff. Crew members who fail to present and submit the abovementioned documents to DH staff will be denied entry, and the shipping companies/agents concerned are required to arrange these crew members to fly back to their originating country(ies) forthwith;
6. shipping companies/agents should keep and if requested provide information on the transportation and logistics arrangement of the crew members (such as details of the flights taken by the crew concerned, license plate number and driver details of the vehicles used to transfer the crew members, exact time and location of the picking up/setting down of the transfers, etc.) for ease of contact tracing;

### **Requirements for signing-off crew**

For signing-off crew, the crew and ship shall fulfill the following requirements:

1. outgoing crew members who have completed their service onboard will be required to remain on the vessel during their stay in Hong Kong until transportation arrangement is made for them to travel directly to the airport to board flights for repatriation to their home countries so as to avoid contact with the local community
2. point-to-point transfer should be arranged by the shipping companies/agents for crew members to travel to and from the vessel. Use of public transportation which will serve the general public at the same time is prohibited, and crew members should wear masks during the entire journey, etc.; and

Upon satisfactory review of the information provided, the Administration will issue a letter authorizing the transfer operation.

If you have any questions please contact Regulations & Standards Department at [RegsandStandards@liscr.com](mailto:RegsandStandards@liscr.com); or telephone +1 703 790 3434.

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