



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

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**31 January 2020**

**MARINE ADVISORY: 03/2020**

**SUBJECT: NOVEL CORONAVIRUS GUIDANCE**

**TO: Shipowner/Operator/Recognized Organizations, Crewing Agents**

On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

The Liberian Administration recognizes the potential threat to seafarers and vessels calling at ports in countries directly or indirectly affected by the outbreak.

**General information:** China is placing restrictions on travel to and from Wuhan the center of the Novel Coronavirus outbreak and other countries are screening persons traveling by air and sea into and out of the country, cases of the virus are being reported in other countries.

The new virus is a Coronavirus, which is a family of viruses that include the common cold, and viruses such as SARS and MERS. This new virus was temporarily named “2019-nCoV.” The USA’s CDC states that human **coronaviruses** are most commonly spread between an infected person and others via: —the air (from viral particles from a cough or sneeze); —close personal contact (touching or shaking hands). The incubation period is up to 14 days.

Companies, managers, crewing agents, etc. are encouraged to promulgate information to ensure that seafarers, passengers and others onboard ships are provided with accurate and relevant information on the coronavirus outbreak and on the measures to reduce the risk of exposure if they are likely to be engaged on ships trading to and from ports in coronavirus-affected States. Guidance available.

**Preventive measures:** Vessel Owners, Company Security Officers, Designated Persons Ashore, Masters and SSOs of Liberian Ships trading in areas which are experiencing an outbreak of 2019-nCoV are encouraged to implement measures to prevent the spread of the virus.

Seafarers calling at Chinese ports are advised to wear masks and take precautionary measures to avoid getting infected and prevent its potential spreading.

When entering Chinese ports, seafarers may be required to remain on board their ships and disembark their vessels only where absolutely necessary.

It is reported that local Chinese authorities are requiring all vessels to report the temperature and condition of vessel’s crew before entry into the port.

Ships' crews are also advised to alert the authorities in the event coronavirus is suspected on board, and take precautions to reduce the possibility of the spread of any virus, including minimal interpersonal exchanges with persons from ashore, avoiding contact with people who show symptoms of flu or high temperature and taking care of personal hygiene including more frequent handwashing, etc.

The provisions contained in the Ship Security Plan which provide a framework for establishing preventive measures against security incidents may also be effective in preventing the spread of the virus to ships and seafarers. These include conducting a risk assessment prior to entry into an affected port, assessing the preventive measures taken by those ports, and diligent application of access controls. Such measures may serve to support other actions aimed at preventing the spread of 2019-nCoV and thus enhance the safety of seafarers and persons with whom they may come into contact.

1. Only those cleared by the port authorities should be allowed on board.
2. Limit visitor access to the vessel and to the crew as much as possible.
3. Avoid shaking hands.
4. Wipe down areas and items visitors have touched or may have touched with disinfectant wipes and/or sprays.
5. Hand-washing is the best way to reduce the risk of infection being transmitted from one person to another:
  - a. hands should be washed before and after every contact with a patient, using alcohol-based gels or liquids rather than soap to disinfect the hands;
  - b. the use of gloves does not replace the need for hand-washing.

**Suspected infection:** Actions to take when a seafarer or passenger is suspected of being infected with 2019-nCoV.

1. Suspected infected seafarer or passenger (see Table 23.2 of "International Medical Guide for Ships" issued by the World Health Organization).
  - a. Isolate the infected person in a single-berth cabin: door may be open; masks to be worn within one meter of patient.
  - b. Contacts to wear disposable gloves; for close contact (e.g. to bathe or turn the patient); plastic overalls or aprons also essential
2. Vessel operators and Masters are reminded that they are required to report sick seafarers prior to entering port.

The following links provide advice and guidance to seafarers and shipping (non-exhaustive list):

- [International Maritime Health Association \(IMHA\) advice for shipping companies on the new type of coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\)](#)
- [IMO Circular Letter No. 4202 – Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\)](#)
- [USCG Novel Coronavirus Precautions](#)
- WHO issues advice on international travel and health. This information is regularly reviewed and updated by WHO and can be found at the following address: [www.who.int/ith/updates](http://www.who.int/ith/updates)



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Additional information can also be found at:

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/01/1056031>

[https://www.who.int/ith/other\\_health\\_risks/en/](https://www.who.int/ith/other_health_risks/en/)

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/01/1056031>[https://www.who.int/ith/other\\_health\\_risks/en/](https://www.who.int/ith/other_health_risks/en/)

The publications listed below may also be helpful:

WHO International Health Regulations

WHO Guide to ship sanitation International Medical Guide for Ships

We recommend checking with the Port Agents and Authorities for further information especially when calling on ports in China, Hong Kong, and Singapore and other port areas where the infection has been reported. We also recommend reviewing the following:

- WHO: [www.who.int/ith/2020-24-01-outbreak-of-Pneumonia-caused-by-new-coronavirus/en/](http://www.who.int/ith/2020-24-01-outbreak-of-Pneumonia-caused-by-new-coronavirus/en/);  
[https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/23-01-2020-statement-on-the-meeting-of-the-international-health-regulations-\(2005\)-emergency-committee-regarding-the-outbreak-of-novel-coronavirus-\(2019-ncov\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/23-01-2020-statement-on-the-meeting-of-the-international-health-regulations-(2005)-emergency-committee-regarding-the-outbreak-of-novel-coronavirus-(2019-ncov))
- Hong Kong: <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202001/22/P2020012200982.htm>
- Singapore: <https://www.mpa.gov.sg/web/portal/home/media-centre/news-releases/detail/1a8e0ea3-4a09-4a66-8357-12e1ff06d534>

Please contact the Safety Department at [safety@liscr.com](mailto:safety@liscr.com) if you have any questions.

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