



Office of
Deputy Commissioner
of Maritime Affairs

THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
Bureau of Maritime Affairs

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MARINE OPERATIONS NOTE 5/2009

Subject: Swine Flu Advisory

Ref: (a) World Health Organization Website: www.who.int
(b) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Website: www.cdc.gov

Dear Shipowners/Operators and Masters,

The recent outbreak of swine influenza has drawn much attention and caused concern worldwide. We have gathered recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO) for preventing infection and treating those infected. In addition, we have added our recommendations for preventing the spread of the infection to commercial vessels.

The symptoms of swine flu include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, diarrhea, and vomiting. In the past, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported with swine flu infection in people. Like seasonal flu, swine flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

Preventative Measures:

- Avoid close contact with people who appear unwell and who have fever and cough.
- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently and thoroughly.
- Practice good health habits including adequate sleep, eating nutritious food, and keeping physically active.

If you are in close contact with an ill person:

- Try to keep the ill person isolated from others, such as, providing a separate location in the ship. If this is not possible, keep the patient at least 1 meter in distance from others.
- Cover mouth and nose when caring for the ill person. Medical type masks that cover the nose and mouth can be bought commercially or made using the readily available materials as long as they are disposed of or cleaned properly.
- Wash your hands with soap and water thoroughly after each contact with the ill person.
- Try to improve the air flow in the area where the ill person stays. Use doors and windows to take advantage of breezes.
- Keep the environment clean with readily available household cleaning agents.

- If you feel unwell, have high fever, cough and/or sore throat:
 - Notify the Master immediately
 - Avoid contact with others
 - Rest and take plenty of fluids.
 - Cover your mouth and nose with disposable tissues when coughing and sneezing and dispose of the used tissues properly.
 - Wash your hands with soap and water frequently and thoroughly, especially after coughing or sneezing.
 - Inform family and friends (and shipmates) about your illness and seek help for household chores that require contact with other people such as shopping.

The vessel operator should check the updates available at www.who.int to see what countries are affected.

If a vessel is scheduled to call at ports where the swine flu may be active, owners may also wish to consider the following preventative actions:

- Crew members wear medical grade face masks and rubber gloves whenever in contact with shore personnel.
- Visitors are provided with medical grade rubber gloves and face masks when coming on board – distributed at the gangway.
- Restrict access to the vessel to only essential visitors and limit visitor access to only those locations considered necessary to their purpose on board. Prohibit access to food store rooms, mess-room, galley, or cabins.
- Visitors should not be served any meals, or drinks.
- After departing the port, the crew should disinfect all handrails, public toilets, tables, chairs, etc. which visitors may have been in contact with.
- Shore leave should be limited.
- Crew may be requested to increase personal hygiene, including frequent and thorough washing of hands with soap and water.
- If necessary, measure body temperature of all crew daily.

Please notify this Administration if the crew of any Liberian vessel falls ill and the number of able bodied crew members is below the requirements of the Minimum Safe Manning Certificate.

If you have any questions please contact Timothy M Keegan, +1 703 251 2409, or Sean Brett, +1 703 251 2434, or email safety@liscr.com.
