



# Marine Safety Information Bulletin

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Fifth District  
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## Marine Transportation System COVID-19 Precautions

The U.S. Coast Guard continues to work alongside various federal, state, and local maritime stakeholders and public health officials to respond to the continuing novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This virus presents a serious public health threat to the United States and risks causing significant disruptions to the Marine Transportation System (MTS) and global supply chain. Resiliency throughout all parts of the MTS is key; from truck drivers, crane operators, and security guards, to vessel Pilot's, crews of 1200 foot foreign container vessels, and Masters of tugs, the nation is dependent upon our actions today.

All members of the commercial maritime community are urged to do their part to safeguard the MTS and reduce exposure to, and transition of, the virus. All persons, including critical infrastructure workers as noted in MSIB 11-20, are reminded to follow the latest guidelines and recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and state health departments. The MTS is dependent on each and every worker being vigilant; the health of our families, communities, and industries are inextricably linked

### Vessels:

Vessel owners, operators, and masters should implement procedures to help ensure the safety and security of their vessel crews, reducing impacts to vessel and port operations. Guidance for consideration:

- Develop screening procedures for arriving mariners, visiting personnel and current crew to identify symptoms of, and exposure to, a respiratory illness.
- Develop procedures to restrict visitors to limited and specific areas of the vessel as much as possible. This could include standing up a reception area on the main deck. Additionally, closely monitor and restrict outside access to living quarters as much as possible. Personnel allowed onboard vessels should be limited to pilots, port officials, including Coast Guard, Customs and Border Protection, and other law enforcement personnel, classification society surveyors, medical personnel, and necessary longshoremen while conducting cargo operations.
- Implement a stringent ship sanitation and disinfection regime. Particular attention should be paid to high-touch surfaces and common areas. Include pre-pilot boarding sanitation into this procedure to assist in reducing person-to-person spread. This would likely include: wiping down the entire wheelhouse with a bleach solution, including chart table, instruments, chairs, helm, consoles, radar control panels, ECDIS control panel, PPUs, VHF radios, binoculars, pens/pencils, etc.
- Restrict the personnel on the bridge while a pilot is embarked to only those essential crew; drinking and eating should be avoided.
- Develop procedures to report and manage ill personnel, including crew members and visitors.
- Ensure vessel crews are continuing to self-monitor for any symptoms and consider measuring temperature to identify when crew members are starting to exhibit symptoms.

### Facilities:

Facility owners and operators should implement procedures to help ensure the safety and security of their personnel, reducing impacts to port operations. Guidance for consideration

- Limit as far as possible the number of interactions between shipboard and terminal personnel to only those essential for operation and supply of the vessel.
- Ensure all workers are trained and have access to appropriate personal protective equipment if needed.
- Encourage cooperation between vessel crews and facility/port workers to develop and comply with screening protocols or procedures to address COVID-19
- Consider the installation of hand washing or hand sanitizing stations at the base of vessel gangways.

The Fifth Coast Guard District and four mid-Atlantic Coast Guard Sectors are poised to assist industry through this unprecedented time. Questions or concerns on compliance with federal regulations should be addressed to the local Sector, contact information is below.

**U.S. Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay**  
24-hour Command Center: (215) 271-4807  
[SecDelBayCC@uscg.mil](mailto:SecDelBayCC@uscg.mil)

**U.S. Coast Guard Sector Maryland-National Capital**  
24-hour Command Center (410) 576-2693  
[D05-SMB-SectorMD-NCR-SCC@uscg.mil](mailto:D05-SMB-SectorMD-NCR-SCC@uscg.mil)

**U.S. Coast Guard Sector Virginia**  
24-hour Command Center: (757) 638-6635  
[SectorVACC@uscg.mil](mailto:SectorVACC@uscg.mil)

**U.S. Coast Guard Sector North Carolina**  
24-hour Command Center: (910) 343-3880  
[SNCPrevention@uscg.mil](mailto:SNCPrevention@uscg.mil)

Please utilize the below resources to assist in developing a plan that is most effective for your specific operations. While it not an all-inclusive list, it provides a multitude of resources to assist during this challenging time:

- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- Coast Guard Marine Safety Information Bulletins: <https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Featured-Content/Mariners/Marine-Safety-Information-Bulletins-MSIB/>
- American Waterways Operators COVID Guidance: <https://www.americanwaterways.com/covid19>

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