



National Standard Operating Procedure

NSOP 505

COVID-19 - Seagoing Personnel

Purpose

The purpose of this national standard operating procedure (NSOP) is to outline the direction for seagoing personnel relating to COVID-19, including suspected exposure and mandatory rapid testing requirements.

Procedure

Employees are required to complete the COVID-19 Canadian Coast Guard Health Screening Questionnaire (as per [CCG Circular 08-2022](#)) prior to boarding. Employees must keep their supervisor informed of any changes in their health situation.

As recommended by Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada, screening procedures for seagoing employees include COVID-19 mandatory rapid testing.

- During the off-cycle, employees will be required to self-test only in the week prior to arriving for duty, regardless of whether the employee is sick or not. A minimum of 3 tests should be taken at least 1 day apart, and should include a test 24 hours ahead of arriving for duty. Employees will also be tested immediately prior to boarding, using "Abbott ID Now" wherever feasible.
- While on board, employees must test 3 times in the first 7 days. Testing can be subsequently suspended if there are no positives cases on the vessel. Planning for shore leave is permitted, even after the 7 days of testing has concluded. Testing can be extended to cover shore leave if/as necessary and this decision is to be taken using a risk-based approach as required, as determined by the Commanding Officer (or their designate) on an individual basis. Following the first 7 days, if any employee on board is symptomatic, testing for vessel staff should be resumed 3 times/week for the remainder of the shift. Supernumeraries are also required to test immediately prior to boarding, and are encouraged to follow the self-testing procedures described above for Fleet employees.

Regions will develop their respective implementation plans containing information regarding distribution of COVID-19 tests and related personal protective equipment (PPE), testing coordination, as well as return to work conditions.

All personal information collected is to be managed according to Protected B protocols.

Procedure for seagoing personnel

Step	Procedure
1.	<p>1. If the employee is experiencing an onset of any of the following symptoms, which may be attributed to COVID-19¹:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) new or worsening cough b) shortness of breath or difficulty breathing c) temperature equal to or over 37.5°C d) feeling feverish e) chills f) fatigue or weakness g) muscle or body aches h) new loss of smell or taste i) headache j) abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting k) feeling very unwell <p>In this case, they must submit to COVID-19 Canadian Coast Guard Health Screening Questionnaire (as per CCG Circular 08-2022).</p>
2.	<p>1. At home, if employees fail the COVID-19 Canadian Coast Guard Health Screening Questionnaire, or if their rapid test indicates a positive test result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. they must not come to work 1.2. they must refer to their local public health authority for available direction on self-isolation, quarantine and return to work conditions 1.3. to return to work after testing positive for COVID-19, employees must have completed self-isolation (minimum of 5 days), be both asymptomatic and either have a negative rapid test result or clearance from the Commanding Officer or Marine superintendent (or their designate) using a risk-based approach 1.4. to return to work after close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or close contact with someone who is experiencing new COVID-19 symptoms, they must be asymptomatic and have completed self-isolation (minimum of 5 days) or have received clearance from the Commanding Officer or Marine superintendent (or their designate) using a risk-based approach 1.5. they must keep their supervisors informed of any changes in their health situation

¹ [Health Canada – Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Symptoms and treatment](#)

Step	Procedure
	<p>1.6. while in isolation, or when employees return to work, they must continue to abide by sanitation measures</p> <p>2. At sea, if employees fail the COVID-19 Canadian Coast Guard Health Screening Questionnaire, or if their rapid test indicates a positive test result, they must be treated as a presumptive case of COVID-19.</p> <p>2.1. An employee considered exposed to, or suspected to have COVID-19 must immediately be given a mask to protect others around them. The employee must be confined to their cabin or sent home, as appropriate.</p> <p>2.2. An employee suspected to have COVID-19 must remain in their cabin to protect others. A supervisor or the bridge must be advised that they have developed symptoms and need to be evaluated.</p> <p>2.3. Unless in critical condition (respiratory distress), do not bring an employee suspected to have COVID-19 to the vessel's clinic.</p> <p>2.4. The person in charge of assessing the employee suspected to have COVID-19 should do a subjective assessment (by phone or without close contact).</p> <p>2.5. If an employee suspected to have COVID-19 remains on the vessel, they must have bathroom access. Appropriate PPE (mask and gloves) must be worn when going to/from the bathroom. Ideally, this bathroom should not be shared with other employees. If an employee shares a bathroom, it must be disinfected after each use. The best practice is to put the toilet lid down before flushing. If possible, allow circulation of air between bathroom users to reduce concentration of any aerosols present.</p> <p>2.6. When alone in an isolation room, the employee suspected to have COVID-19 may remove their mask.</p> <p>2.7. Contact with others on board the vessel must be limited.</p> <p>2.8. Required PPE for a designated person entering a room for physical examination of a patient with COVID-19 symptoms include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a mask b) a long-sleeved protective gown or disposable coverall (for example, Tyvek²) c) gloves d) eye protection or face shield
3.	Physical distancing between employees must be exercised as far as practicable on board the vessel.

² When there is a risk of getting wet during operations and waterproof protection is required, the disposable coverall (for example, Tyvek) is the best choice.

Step	Procedure
4.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The onboard rescue specialist or the marine first responder is to contact the local telemedical assistance services for advice on assessment, quarantine and testing. 2. Local public health authorities must also be consulted to ensure a continuity of care for the employee and mitigate the spread. 3. Should the rescue specialist or marine first responder require close contact with an employee suspected to have COVID-19, they must follow NSOP 502 COVID-19 - Instructions for Rescue Specialist and Marine First Responders in Assisting a Suspected COVID-19 Patient.
5.	<p>The Commanding Officer must notify the Regional Operations Centre (ROC) of the situation and a preliminary A-to-E Report is to be sent immediately.</p>
6.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vessels will arrange through the ROC the best way to get an employee suspected to have COVID-19 off the vessel if required. 2. The Commanding Officer or supervisor will advise the employee suspected to have COVID-19 to provide an update of their testing and next steps once they have left the vessel. 3. Refer to NSOP 526 COVID-19 Canadian Coast Guard Contact Tracing Activities to initiate contact tracing.
7.	<p>To reduce the possibility of further spread in the community, anyone on board the vessel is to remain on board until the situation is fully assessed.</p>
8.	<p>Workspaces used or occupied by employees suspected to have COVID-19 are to be disinfected as per NSOP 518 COVID-19 - Cleaning and Disinfection Routine of the Workplace. If the rescue specialist donned PPE for close contact with the employee suspected to have COVID-19, they must follow NSOP 502 COVID-19 - Instructions for Rescue Specialist and Marine First Responders in Assisting a Suspected COVID-19 Patient.</p>
9.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If there is no suspected reoccurrence of COVID-19 on board, resume regular operations. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. If further COVID-19 occurrences arise, contact the ROC immediately. 2. The Commanding Officer will use a risk-based approach together with the ROC to determine the appropriate next steps as the situation evolves.

It is normal to be concerned about the COVID-19 pandemic, especially if you or those you know are directly affected by the situation. If you have any concerns and would like to talk to someone, contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at 1-800-268-7708 and/or speak directly with your supervisor.

Enquiries

Enquiries regarding this procedure should be directed to:

Director, Operational Personnel and Force Generation
dfo.cgopm-gcgpq.mpo@dfo-mpo.gc.ca



Marc Mes
Director General, Fleet and Maritime Services