

Guidelines for the prevention and management of COVID-19 cases on board private leisure boats after the lifting of restrictions against the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic

1. Purpose

The following guidelines apply to private leisure boats within the territory of Greece.

The following guidelines have been developed on the basis of scientific data on the spread of SARS-CoV-2 (spread from person to person via droplets or touch) and according to the guidelines published by the World Health Organisation (<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>), the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/covid-19-pandemic>) and the European Joint Action EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS (<https://www.healthygateways.eu/Novel-coronavirus>).

2. General recommendations

It is recommended that tourists using private leisure boats avoid remote destinations where it will be difficult to seek medical assistance, if necessary. This is particularly important in the case of tourists who fall into the category of vulnerable groups, according to the definition of the Greek Ministry of Health. Furthermore, it is recommended to avoid destinations in remote areas where there are no organised facilities for the provision of healthcare services.

3. Maximum number of passengers

The maximum number of passengers allowed on board private leisure boats is equal to the number provided by the relevant legislation in force from time to time.

4. Register of passengers and health status

All private leisure boats must keep a list of passengers and crew members, as stipulated by the provisions of Law 4256/2014 (published in the Official Government Gazette of the Hellenic Republic (FEK) A' 92), and this list must also include a contact number that will be accessible for the next 14-day period. This list of passengers must be available in electronic or printed form for inspection by port and health authorities.

Prior to boarding, all guests (each person outside the family / household of the owner) must either be tested via rapid antigen test (rapid test) or carry with them the results of a rapid test performed up until one day before boarding.

In the case of crew aboard the ship, all crew members must be tested via molecular diagnostic test when they first take up their duties. Furthermore, crew members must be regularly tested via molecular test or rapid antigen test (rapid test) at least every seven days.

In addition to the above, the Captain or Skipper of the vessel must keep a record of the health status of passengers. Crew members and passengers must measure their body temperature once daily and record it in a register of health status of persons on board the vessel. This register must be available in electronic or printed form for inspection by port and health authorities. In the event that this register does not keep record of the results of molecular tests, the crew, during the performance of its duties, must keep such results available aboard the ship, in electronic and printed format, for inspection by port and health authorities.

It is recommended that the crew members are vaccinated with the SARS-CoV-2 vaccine, whenever feasible, according to the priority groups specified by the Greek National Plan for COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage.

All guests and crew members who have been vaccinated for the SARS-CoV-2 are not exempted from the obligation to undergo testing via molecular or rapid antigen tests.

If a person on board the vessel manifests symptoms of COVID-19 infection (cough, fever, shortness of breath, rapid loss of taste (dysgeusia, ageusia) or smell), this must be recorded in the register of health status of persons on board and the emergency plan for management of a suspected COVID-19 case must subsequently be put into effect.

5. Report of suspected COVID-19 cases to the competent authorities

According to the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005), the Captain or Skipper of the vessel must immediately notify the competent authorities in the next port prior to the vessel's arrival of any likely risk to public health on board the vessel, including any case of illness for which there are suspicions of infectiousness. This requires the Captain or Skipper to fill out and submit, either online or by any other appropriate means, the Maritime Declaration of Health (MDH), which is attached as an Annex to these guidelines. Furthermore, the Captain or Skipper must also report to the competent port authority the number of persons on board the vessel (passengers and crew members). The Captain or Skipper is obliged to know to which authority he or she must report any potential case of infectious disease or any other risk to public health on board the vessel.

If a person on board the vessel (whether passenger or member of the crew) manifests symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection (which include one or more of the following symptoms: cough, fever, shortness of breath, sudden loss of taste (dysgeusia, ageusia) or smell), this must be immediately reported to the competent authority in the manner described above. It is very important to immediately notify the competent health authorities, in order to determine whether the port can provide the means for transporting, isolating, diagnosing via laboratory tests and treating a suspected COVID-19 case. The vessel may be commanded to sail to another port in the event of a lack of necessary resources, or

if it is necessary due to the medical condition of the suspected COVID-19 case. It is important to make all the necessary arrangements as soon as possible in order to minimise the stay of suspected cases on board the vessel.

6. Emergency plan for the management of suspected COVID-19 cases

All vessels must have an emergency plan for the management and isolation of suspected COVID-19 cases, in accordance with the guidelines issued by the National Public Health Organisation of Greece (*Guidelines for healthcare authorities and owners of vessels remaining in long-term mooring at ports (EU and EEA) during the COVID-19 pandemic*), which are available through the link below:

<https://eody.gov.gr/odigies-pros-tis-ygeionomikes-arches-kai-tous-foreis-ekmetalleyisis-ploion-poy-paramenoy-n-se-makrochronio-ellimenismo-se-limenes-ee-kai-eoch-kata-ti-diarkeia-tis-pandimias-covid-19/>

7. Management of a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case

If a person on board the vessel is a suspected or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 case, the competent port and health authority at the port of arrival and the National Public Health Organisation of Greece must be immediately notified. The management of a suspected case must comply with the guidelines issued by the National Public Health Organisation of Greece, which are described in the following link:

Guidelines for healthcare authorities and owners of vessels remaining in long-term mooring at ports (EU and EEA) during the COVID-19 pandemic: <https://eody.gov.gr/odigies-pros-tis-ygeionomikes-arches-kai-tous-foreis-ekmetalleyisis-ploion-poy-paramenoy-n-se-makrochronio-ellimenismo-se-limenes-ee-kai-eoch-kata-ti-diarkeia-tis-pandimias-covid-19/>

8. Adequate quantities and proper use of personal protective equipment

It is recommended that the vessel carries enough quantities of sanitisers, disinfectants, items of personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning products. The first-aid kit must also contain a digital infrared thermometer and a fingertip pulse oximeter. It is recommended that there are written instructions regarding the proper use of PPE and the crew of the vessel is properly trained in how to use them.

The members of the crew can find information about PPE and its proper use, in the context of their responsibilities on board the vessel, are available in English through the following link to the website of the European Joint Action HEALTHY GATEWAYS:

https://www.healthygateways.eu/Portals/0/plcdocs/EUHG_PPE_Overview_24_04_2020_F.pdf?ver=2020-04-27-141221-467

The National Public Health Organisation of Greece has issued instructions on the proper procedures for donning and doffing of PPE, including the best practices for PPE use, which are available through the links below:

- NPHO (EODY) – COVID-19 – Instructions for the use of facemask by the general public:
<https://eody.gov.gr/covid-19-odigies-gia-ti-chrisi-maskas-apo-to-koino>
- NPHO (EODY) – Sequence for donning and doffing PPE:
<https://eody.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/PPE-donning-doffing.pdf>

9. Recommendations for crew members and passengers

Visitors and crews on board the vessel

All visits on board the vessel, as well as gatherings of any kind that exceed the maximum number of persons on board the vessel, as specified in section 3 above, must be avoided. If the vessel is boarded by external work crews, the rule of safety distance of 1.5 metres per person must be maintained and the use of a facemask (e.g. community (non-medical) facemask or surgical facemask or high protection FFP2 respirator mask) is recommended for the members of the external work crew and the persons on board the vessel for the entire duration of stay of the external work crew on the vessel. In addition, the toilet and washing facilities must not be used by members of the external work crews.

Use of personal protective equipment

If the vessel is boarded by persons from two or more families/households, it is recommended that all persons on board the vessel wear a facemask (e.g. community (non-medical) facemask or surgical facemask or high protection FFP2 respirator mask) during their stay in the indoor and outdoor areas of the vessel. It is also recommended to wear a facemask (e.g. fabric facemask) during visits to indoor shore facilities.

It is recommended to use gloves during refuelling, docking and all other procedures that require contact with high-touch surfaces and equipment while there are no nearby facilities for handwashing, nor any hand sanitiser stations. Gloves must be worn and removed according to the instructions for proper use. It must be emphasised that the use of gloves cannot substitute for handwashing, and hands must be washed with soap and water or hand disinfectant before and after gloves are discarded.

Personal hygiene

Hands must be washed with soap and water. If hands are not visibly soiled, you may alternatively use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with 70% alcohol. It must be emphasised that the use of gloves cannot substitute for handwashing, and hands must be washed with soap and water or hand disinfectant before and after gloves are discarded.

It is recommended that hand sanitiser stations are installed at the entrances to indoor areas of the vessel. Proper respiratory hygiene must be observed, i.e. the mouth and nose must be covered with a handkerchief during sneezing and coughing, and afterwards, the handkerchief must be discarded in a

plastic bag and hands must be disinfected with hand sanitiser. For this purpose, it is appropriate for the vessel to make provision for the availability of respective equipment (handkerchiefs or paper towels, disposable gloves, plastic bags, etc.).

You must avoid touching your face, nose and eyes.

Social distancing

When visiting indoor areas and crowded outdoor areas of shore facilities, it is recommended to apply social distancing and keep a distance of 1.5 metres from other persons, and to also wear a facemask (e.g. community (non-medical) facemask or surgical facemask or high protection FFP2 respirator mask).

10. Ventilation and air-conditioning

It is recommended to ventilate all areas naturally, whenever and wherever feasible. In addition, and whenever applicable, the provisions of the circular issued by the Greek Ministry of Health with the title “*Measures for ensuring public health against viral and other infections during the use of air-conditioning units*”, in all cases of implementation must be complied with during ventilation, with emphasis on the non-recirculation of air, whenever feasible.

11. Cleaning and sanitation of areas

It is recommended to frequently clean the vessel during the journey, using cleaning products and disinfectants, with particular attention given to high-touch areas such as handles, railings etc., as well as bathrooms and toilets.

You can find instructions on the proper cleaning and sanitation of areas in the circular with ref. no. D1c/G.P./oik.21536 issued by the Greek Ministry of Health on 30/3/2020, regarding the “*Application of cleaning and disinfection measures on vessels in the event of transportation of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases*”.

12. Avoidance of face-to-face transactions

To the extent possible, it is recommended to prefer online transactions, orders, purchase of services, goods and equipment instead of face-to-face interactions, and to communicate via telephone.

13. Annexes

Annex 1