

April 22, 2020

Information for Charter Air Carriers Transporting Crew from Cruise Ships Affected by COVID-19

On April 15, 2020, CDC published an [extension to the CDC Director's No Sail Order](#) for cruise ships in the Federal Register. Under this order:

- Cruise lines require approval from CDC before allowing their crew to disembark and travel by air.
- Cruise ships are prohibited from repatriating their crew members using commercial transport.
- Repatriation of crew members should occur by foreign government- or industry-chartered private transport and flights, with measures in place to ensure those involved in transport are not exposed.

CDC has provided [interim guidance](#) to cruise lines that includes requirements for disembarking asymptomatic crew members for repatriation.

Charter air carriers contracting with cruise lines to transport passengers and crew from cruise ships affected by COVID-19 should ensure plans are in place to protect the health and safety of their crew members, including:

- Review [CDC's Interim Guidance for Airlines and Airline Crew: Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) ahead of time.
- Review joint Federal Aviation Administration and CDC [Updated Interim Occupational Health and Safety Guidance for Air Carriers and Crews](#).
- Fully inform air carrier crews of the risk of COVID-19 associated with the charter, including that some of the passengers on board the aircraft may have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Train air carrier crews on the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and other ways to [protect themselves from exposure](#), including hand hygiene.
- Ensure that sufficient PPE is on board for air crew use, comparable to the [Universal Precaution Kit](#) available on commercial aircraft.
- Ensure sufficient hand hygiene supplies and [EPA-approved cleaning and disinfection products](#) compatible with the aircraft are available on board.
- Ensure cruise ship medical staff have screened all passengers boarding the aircraft for symptoms compatible with COVID-19 (fever, cough, difficulty breathing).
- Ensure cruise ship staff have notified the transport operator of any groups that need to be transported separately because of different COVID-19 exposure status.
- Ensure, along with cruise ship staff, that aircraft passengers:
 - do not enter the public airport terminal
 - will not have a transportation layover exceeding 8 hours
 - will not take commercial aircraft after an initial charter flight
- Ask passengers on board the aircraft to wear face coverings at all times, to the extent possible.
 - Cruise lines should provide cloth face coverings to individuals disembarking or ensure that disembarking individuals have their own.
 - Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance
- Minimize to the extent possible the time that air crew members are in the passenger cabin.