

Black Sea ports, Russia – new preventive measures for COVID-19

11 March 2020

New strict prevention and control measures are being implemented by the Russian ports located on the Black Sea coast in response to the latest outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Italy, Iran and the Republic of Korea¹.

Port administrations and immigration authorities follow the guidelines of the Russian Federal Service for Surveillance on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Wellbeing² (*hereinafter referred to as 'Rospotrebnadzor'*).

The present preventive measures at the main Black Sea ports are different.

Novorossiysk

In accordance with the Harbour Master's order No.1079/0141 dated 05 March 2020, the shore leave is temporarily limited for the following persons:

- Citizens of the People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea, Italy and Iran arriving as crew members.
- Crew members – foreign citizens, who visited ports of Italy, People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea, and Iran during the last 14 days before arrival at Novorossiysk seaport.

On 10 March 2020 Novorossiysk office of Rospotrebnadzor issued a notice No.23-10-23/04-686-2020 about handling of vessels in connection with coronavirus threat. The notice is addressed to Harbour Master, state authorities and Shipping Agents.

Despite the fact that the wording of this notice is recommendatory in character, local Rospotrebnadzor officials have clarified verbally that the requirements outlined in the proposed '*temporary algorithm*'³ of vessel's handling is mandatory and will be under their strict control.

The Harbour Master has not yet issued new requirements to comply with the procedures imposed by Rospotrebnadzor, which can be summarized as follows:

- Maritime declaration of health, crew list and list of the last port of calls are provided by Agents to Rospotrebnadzor not later than 2 days before vessel's arrival.
- Three groups of vessels are stipulated by Rospotrebnadzor

I. Absence of risk(s)

No special sanitary and anti-epidemic measures are taken when vessels come from epidemiologically safe country, 14 days have passed since vessel's departure from coronavirus-affected countries or after the last crew change with the new seafarers arriving from the affected country, ill persons are absent onboard.

II. Presence of risk(s)

Arrival of the vessel from China and other coronavirus-affected countries and/or presence and onboard the persons who arrived from these countries within incubation period of 14 days, in the absence of ill persons onboard, requires disinfection (at outer roads, if considered necessary by the authorities) with subsequent temperature screening of the crew members before the vessel could pass the inward clearance formalities.

III. Presence of ill persons infected / persons allegedly infected onboard

Disinfection at outer roads or at sanitary berth under control of Rospotrebnadzor representatives.

Additional information not stated in the latest notice from Rospotrebnadzor but confirmed verbally by the officials:

- Disinfection of vessels conducted before arrival at Novorossiysk might be accepted by Rospotrebnadzor, subject to consideration of the corresponding certificate.
- Vessels arriving from the country not affected by coronavirus are also subject to random visits of the sanitary services for screening of the crew members.
- In accordance with preliminary verbal information from the sanitary authorities the regime of emergency preventive measures associated with the coronavirus will potentially remain in force on the territory of Novorossiysk till the 1st of April 2020, with potential extension till June 2020.

¹ Italy, Iran, People's Republic of China and the Republic of Korea are referred to as 'coronavirus-affected countries'

² The English version of the website of 'Rospotrebnadzor' is not updated <https://www.rospotrebnadzor.ru/en/>

³ Exact translation of the original wording

Kavkaz

As of 11 March 2020, no special restrictions or measures have been announced yet.

At the beginning of March 2020, a vessel arrived from Italy before expiry of the 14-day incubation period for the coronavirus. The vessel entered the port and passed inward clearance formalities without delays or additional measures.

On 02 March 2020 the Harbour Master issued a notice No.272/24 addressed to the Owners about requirements for handling of vessels in accordance with Letter No.11-41/2184 dated 28 February 2020 from the Rostov regional Administration of Rospotrebnadzor. Disinfection of vessels was mentioned as part of enhancing sanitary-quarantine control of vessels coming from coronavirus-affected countries, although the Harbour Master office and Rospotrebnadzor have not yet issued further clarification of this procedure and other new precautions.

Tuapse

Following the general notice No.02/3060-2020-32 circulated by the Head Moscow office of Rospotrebnadzor on 28 February 2020 with respect to compulsory disinfection of all vessels arriving from coronavirus-affected countries, the Administration of Rospotrebnadzor in Tuapse region issued a requirement to Shipping Agents to conclude an agreement with the authorized disinfection company before 10:00 on 05 March 2020.

The detailed procedure of disinfection and other new measures are being prepared by Rospotrebnadzor and to be announced shortly.

Right now, temperature screening is implemented:

- All vessels arriving at Tuapse port are subject to a temperature screening of the crew members before commencement of the inward clearance formalities.

There are no any other special measures in force until further notice from Rospotrebnadzor.

Taman

Immigration authorities have temporarily restricted shore leaves for the following persons:

- Citizens of the People Republic of China, Republic of Korea, Italy and Iran arriving as crew members.
- Crew members – foreign citizens, who visited ports of Italy, People Republic of China, Republic of Korea, and Iran during the last 14 days before arrival at Taman seaport.

Additional information:

- In daytime the vessels are visited by the sanitary services for identification of the crewmembers or passengers displaying symptoms compatible with the disease by temperature screening and examination. There is no screening during the night shifts.
- A list of the previous ten ports of call must be provided by Agents to Immigration authorities.
- Although there is no official requirement for a 14-day quarantine at anchorage, at the beginning of March a vessel coming from one of coronavirus-affected countries was not allowed to proceed for berthing until the expected incubation period of 14 days had expired.

Summary

1. The other Russian Black Sea ports are likely to repeat new initiatives being adopted at Novorossiysk.
Apart from the optional disinfection of vessels at request of Rospotrebnadzor, as a minimum common requirement the shore personnel is expected to wear personal protective equipment while working onboard the vessels coming from coronavirus-affected countries.
2. How long?
Rospotrebnadzor officials in Novorossiysk say the regime of enhanced measures against COVID-19 spread will remain in force till 01 April 2020, with potential extension till June 2020.
3. Who will pay?
According to Rospotrebnadzor, disinfection is due to be paid by the Owners via Agents.
However, the cost of disinfection, compartments to be treated and other details are still uncertain.