

# Cyprus ship registry: updates on precautions for mariners in relation to COVID-19



29 April 2020

## Shipping & Transport, Cyprus

Further to Circular 03/2020, the Shipping Deputy Ministry has issued Circular 05/2020 informing the registered owners, charterers, ship managers and representatives of Cyprus-flagged ships of the following circular letters issued by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO):

- IMO Circular Letter 4204/Add 2 of 21 February 2020 containing the joint statement of the IMO and the World Health Organisation (WHO) on the response to the COVID-19 outbreak. While recognising the need to prevent the introduction or spread of the disease, the joint IMO-WHO statement notes that unnecessary interference with maritime traffic should be minimised. The joint IMO-WHO statement further highlights the importance of avoiding unnecessary restrictions or delay on port entry to ships, persons and property on board.
- IMO Circular Letter 4204/Add 3 of 2 March 2020 containing operational considerations for managing COVID-19 cases on board ships developed by the WHO. This document contains, among other things, guidance on:
  - pre-boarding and pre-disembarkation information;
  - pre-boarding screening;
  - crew education;
  - managing a suspected case on board;
  - disembarkation of a suspect case; and
  - development and activation of a written outbreak plan for passenger ships as well as obligations of shipowners to inform the authorities of the next port of call of any suspected case.
- IMO Circular Letter 4204/Add 4 of 5 March 2020 containing guidance for ship operators for the protection of the health of seafarers prepared by the International Chamber of Shipping in response to the COVID-19 outbreak to support all types of ship and help shipping companies follow advice provided by UN agencies, including the IMO, the WHO, the International Labour Organisation and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

Following a request from the European Commission's Directorate General for Health and Food Safety, interim advice for ship operators was prepared by an *ad hoc* working group.

As per Circular 05/2020, all owners and managers of Cyprus-flagged ships are advised to take note and implement the measures contained in the latest IMO circular letters and the interim advice for ship operators prepared at the request of the Directorate General for Health and Food Safety. Copies of said IMO circular letters as well as the abovementioned interim advice are attached to Circular 05/2020, a copy of which may be found here.

For any technical issues in relation to the spread of COVID-19 requiring special permission from the Shipping Deputy Ministry, applications may be submitted to the ministry and they will be considered on a case-by-case basis. **(1)**

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## Endnotes

(1) For further details on the initial Circular 3/2020 as well as possible effects of COVID-19 on contractual relations please see "Coronavirus – possible effects on contracts and precautions for mariners".

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