



Quarantine Unit, Ministry of Health Sri Lanka

Title: Standard Operating Procedure for Disembarkation of Foreign National Crew from Vessels

SOP No.: PHS COVID-19 SOP-07

Version :04

Effective Date: 26.03.2021

Prepared by: Quarantine Unit, Ministry of Health

Standard Operating Procedure for Disembarkation of Foreign National Crew from Vessels

1. A request for a disembarkation of foreign national crew members should reach the Port Health Office via email before 72 hours of scheduled time of arrival. This should carry a formal and valid request, a copy of the passport, Health Declaration Form (HDF), the travel itinerary for repatriation and the 'Notice' from the agency which operate isolation centers for seafarers. The 'Notice' should include the approval obtained from the Secretary to the Foreign Ministry, the availability of a slot in the Isolation Center (IC – a transit quarantine centre for seafarers) and the vehicle number of the designated vehicle to be used.
2. The decision for granting health clearance for disembarkation will be taken case by case basis by the Port Health Officer (PHO). Considering the health risks, the PHO may accept or reject the request for disembarkation as per their judgmental decision.
3. Needs to obtain routine health clearance for the vessel of the disembarking crew members to berth or for operations at OPL/Anchorage from PHO.
4. PHO will grant health clearance for disembarkation referring to documents and the same information will be disseminated to relevant authorities including Sri Lanka Ports Authority, Department of Emigration and Immigration, Sri Lanka Customs and Sri Lanka Navy and to the agency which operates IC.
5. The representatives of the agent who accompany the foreign national crew members, should wear recommended Personnel Protective Equipment (coverall/overall, masks, face shield/goggles, head cover, disposable gloves, head cover). They should maintain physical distance and practice hand washing/hand sanitizing frequently. They should use plastic document folder which can be disinfected.
6. Then the disembarked foreign national crew members should be sent to the designated IC by an approved vehicle under an escort by Sri Lanka Navy. At the IC, COVID 19 -PCR sample collection should be done on Day One by a Ministry of Health approved Private Sector laboratory for Covid-19 PCR testing. It should be pre-arranged by the Local Agent.



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7. The off-signers should be kept in separate rooms in the IC until the PCR test results are available. A copy of PCR test results of all off-signers should be sent to the relevant Port Health Office.
8. Off-signers with negative test results should be kept in the same IC until the departing flight is available. They are not allowed to go out of the IC.
9. The off-signers whose test results are negative can be discharged by the In-Charge of the IC and sent to the airport according to the flight schedule by a designated vehicle under the escort of security forces. It is not necessary to keep foreign national crew members for 14 days in IC and should be repatriated as early as possible.
10. If the test result of a foreign national crew member becomes positive, they should be sent to a Health Ministry approved Intermediate Care Centre operated by a Private Hospital. In such an event, Agent/IC should coordinate with the area Medical Officer of Health (MOH) and PHO to transfer the patient to the Intermediate Care Centre by a vehicle arranged by the Local Agent. The Driver, Assistant and the patient should wear required PPE (face mask, face shield, overall, gloves, shoes/boots, head cover). This should be notified to the (chepid@sltnet.lk,samithag@hotmail.com) and Quarantine Unit (quarantinelk@gmail.com)of Ministry of Health.
11. Crew members of barges/boats and other persons travelling in the barges/boats to facilitate the crew change should wear recommended PPE (face mask, face shield/goggles, coverall/overall, disposable gloves, and head cover) and should take all precautions during the crew transfer process and the barges/boats should be disinfected after each embarkation/disembarkation under the supervision of the Sri Lanka Navy. The crew members should be registered with the PHO.
12. If a disembarked foreign national crew member who was transported in the barge/boat becomes positive, PHO should assess to identify the close contacts of the positive seafarer who travelled to facilitate the disembarkation and they should be mandatorily home quarantined for 14 days under the supervision of the area MOH where the crew member resides. List of the close



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contacts should be emailed to Epidemiology Unit (chepid@slt.net.lk, samithag@hotmail.com) by PHO. PHO should email the details of close contacts to the relevant area MOH where the close contacts reside. Should not use the public transport to transport the close contacts to their homes and they should be transported in a separate vehicle arranged by the boat/barge operator. In instance where positive seafarer was transported, the barge/boat should be disinfected by the disinfection team of the Sri Lanka Navy.

13. Testing laboratory shall send all the results immediately to Epidemiology Unit (chepid@slt.net.lk, samithag@hotmail.com) and Quarantine Unit (quarantine.lk@gmail.com). If there is a positive result, testing laboratory shall immediately contact Dr. Samitha Ginige of Epidemiology Unit (0777664036) and give details immediately, followed by an email
14. All information should be recorded and updated in a general database maintained by the agency which operates the IC. The data base should be accessible online to all relevant authorities.
15. The health clearance is subjected to the approval/clearance of other relevant authorities but it is advisable to get the health clearance before proceeding to get the clearance from other authorities.
16. It is necessary to refer to the SOPs on Setting up and Maintenance of Isolation Centers for Seafarers (PHS COVID-19 SOP-08) and Transportation of Seafarers (PHS COVID-19 SOP-09) along with this SOP.
17. Although this SOP is applicable for routine events, Director Quarantine as the proper Authority under the Quarantine and Prevention of Diseases Ordinance or any other Proper Authority in the port and airport under the same ordinance has the powers to take judgmental decisions at any time for the best interest on prevention and control of diseases.
18. Any changes to this SOP will be published in the website of the Quarantine Unit as the next version.