



Ministry of Health and Social Security

Grenada Cruise Ship Protocol

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V4

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A. Risks associated with Cruise Ships

The COVID-19 pandemic has far-reaching effects on maritime transport, as mass gatherings in a confined space offer increased opportunities for COVID-19 and other infectious disease spread. Cruise ships involve the movement of large numbers of people in settings where they are likely to have close contact with one another. Close-contact environments facilitate the transmission of respiratory viruses from person to person through exposure to respiratory droplets or contact with contaminated surfaces. Cruise ships may also be a means by which infected persons travel between geographic locations.

The nature of COVID-19 and the physical infrastructure constraints on cruise ships make containing potential outbreaks on board these ships an incredibly difficult task even with the best practices and procedures in place. Cruise ship travel poses public health challenges for many reasons. They travel rapidly from one port to another, which can lead to the introduction of communicable diseases (CD) by embarking passengers and crew members, as well as from local populations to travelers.

Diseases can then spread quickly to other passengers and crew members on the ship in the relatively closed and crowded environment. In addition, diseases can be transmitted to local populations when unwell passengers or crew disembark at ports of call. The average age of a cruise ship traveler is 45-50 years, with senior citizens representing approximately one-third of passengers. However, many cruises have now become popular with other age groups and passengers often include children and pregnant women. These 2 latter groups are also at risk- for acquiring communicable diseases and having more severe symptoms.

In addition to the increased risk of disease spread on the ships, the influx of large number of passengers (2000 - 3000/persons/ship) from different countries, some of whom may be asymptomatic, possibly carrying different variants into 'virgin' populations that have not been fully vaccinated, as well as the fact that vaccinations have not been shown to fully stop disease transmission, poses increased risk to countries. Stringent measures must be implemented to ensure healthy, and COVID-19 negative persons embark, disembark, and that Public Health measures of masking, social distancing and hand hygiene are carried out by passengers and crew whether vaccinated or not.

Summary of minimum requirements for cruise ships

Minimum requirements recommended for all ships for safe cruise sailing to protect the Caribbean population and its visitors:

1. Proof of a negative PCR, or Antigen test result taken 3 days, or no more than 72 hours, before boarding a ship (at start of voyage) for all vaccinated passengers, except children under 5 years old.
2. Full vaccination of all Crew Members (no less than 98%)
3. Full vaccination of all Passengers (no less than 95%)
4. Recommended vaccination for passengers 12 years and over.
5. All passengers must provide proof of vaccination upon disembarkation in Grenada to local authorities. This is an entry requirement for all non-nationals visiting Grenada.
6. Accurate reporting of all symptoms through the Maritime Declaration of Health form to the relevant team, that includes Port Health Officer (PHO), Chief Environmental Health Officer (CEHO), Chief Medical Officer (CMO).
7. Immediate reporting of any positive cases of COVID-19.
8. Demonstrated capacity on Ship to isolate, quarantine and test for COVID-19.
9. Ship capacity to range between 60-90% maximum, to promote social distancing.
10. Implement public health measures on ship: Hand sanitization, mask wearing, social distancing.
11. Provide detailed shore leave protocols.
12. Provide detailed homeporting protocols.

B. COVID-19 Vaccination

Accepted COVID-19 vaccines are those granted approval for emergency use by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Approved vaccines include:

- Oxford/AstraZeneca
- Serum Institute of India Covidshield (Oxford/AstraZeneca formulation)
- Moderna
- Pfizer/BioNTech
- Janssen (Johnson & Johnson)
- Sinopharm (Beijing)
- Sinovac CoronaVac

People are considered fully vaccinated two (2) weeks after their second dose of a 2-dose series, such as the AstraZeneca, Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or two (2) weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine.

All categories of individuals who interface with cruise tourism are required to be fully

vaccinated. These include but are not limited to:

- Dock workers
- Customs and Immigration

- Port security officers
- Ancillary workers (clerical staff, housekeeping, customer service officers, volunteers, etc.)
- Port Health Officers
- Tour operators and their staff
- Tour guides
- Taxi and tour drivers
- Vendors of all categories
- Entertainers of all categories
- Gift shop operators and workers

C. Requirements for cruise ships sailing to Grenada

1. Operate at reduced capacity of 60% to 90% to enable required social distancing.
2. Crew should be tested at least every 14 days once homeporting in Grenada, and the log of the results should be made available to port health officials for examination before pratique can be granted.
3. Provide the complete itineraries, inclusive of country of origin before sailing of all persons assessed by the medical team on the cruise ship.
4. Immediate reporting of any possible case of infection, including all persons with influenza like illness (ILI)/suspect COVID-19 cases via the Maritime Declaration of Health (MDH) to the CMO and port health authority 24 hours (and 4 hours if any change) before arriving at the next port of call. The ship's agent forwards the report to the Ministry of Health.
5. Each ship must have a written contingency plan/outbreak management plan for the prevention and control of possible cases of COVID-19, including management of ill patients on board.
6. Ensure all medical staff on board are trained in the appropriate use of PPE and on the management of COVID-19.
7. Ensure all staff are fully informed about COVID-19 and what to do if a case is suspected on board and have access to enough personal protective equipment (PPE).
8. Ensure access to adequate laboratory testing capacity for SARS-CoV-2 on board and/or through arrangements with shore side laboratories. (PCR is preferred, if Rapid Antigen test is being used, all negative tests in symptomatic individuals must be tested by PCR).
9. Ensure facilities and procedures on board for quarantine, isolation, care and treatment of suspect and confirmed COVID-19 cases and contacts.
10. Ensure agreed arrangements are in place if needed for patient transfer and testing.

11. External arrangements must be in place for airlifting severe COVID-19 cases and other ill persons to other countries for relevant care and treatment if this is not available locally.
12. Provide clear documentation of the ship's plan and measures to the Ministry of Health and arrive at consensus before sailing. A cruise call may be cancelled if the outlined conditions in this protocol are not met, or if one (1) or more cases of COVID 19 is reported.

D. Passengers boarding a cruise ship (initial boarding)

1. Symptomatic and potentially exposed passengers should not be allowed to board i.e. Any person experiencing symptoms compatible with COVID-19, or if identified, anyone who has been in contact during the last 14 days with a confirmed case of COVID-19, or anyone who is tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 by PCR or Rapid Antigen would not be accepted on board cruise ships.
2. Proof of negative PCR or Antigen test taken 1-3 day's prior boarding is required for anyone ages 5 years and over.
3. Proof of full vaccination (no less than 95 % of passengers) is required. Children under 12 years of age are exempt from the vaccination requirement.
4. Cruise lines should have and clearly communicate their exclusion criteria to all stakeholders; passengers, agents, governments, etc.

E. Public health measures during initial screening and boarding

The Public Health authority shall ensure compliance with COVID-19 protocols.

1. Screening and boarding of persons should be done by family clusters.
2. Physical distancing of six (6) feet between family clusters should be maintained during screening and boarding.
3. All persons (including children) will be required to wear face masks that cover the mouth and nose.
4. Hands must be sanitized at entry and throughout the boarding process.
5. Verbal or written screening should be done to determine whether persons have had signs or symptoms of COVID-19 or a known exposure to a person with COVID-19 within the past 14 days.

6. Boarding of passengers should be denied if they are suspected of having COVID-19 because they have symptoms, a temperature of 100.4°F or greater, or had exposure to a person with COVID 19 within the previous 14 days.
7. Passengers should provide proof of a negative COVID-19 PCR test, taken 1–3 days before boarding for departure on a specific journey, even if they are fully vaccinated.
8. Positive COVID-19 cases should NOT travel.
9. Proof of full vaccination shall be provided to local authorities by passengers and crew upon disembarkation. Passengers and crew disembarking should walk with proof of vaccination to provide to local authorities upon disembarkation. QR codes are accepted.

F. Requirements for crew

1. All crew boarding cruise ships, at least 98%, must have certification of the full vaccination status (using WHO-approved vaccine).
2. Proof of negative COVID PCR test taken 1-3 days prior to embarkation.
3. Quarantine for 14 days with PCR testing after 7 days.
4. Regular testing (PCR/antigen tests), or immediately if experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms.
5. Boarding of a crew member should be denied if testing, vaccination and screening checks are not met.
6. Crew members will only be allowed to disembark in Grenada for Bubble Tours, or in the event of an emergency.

G. Public Health Measures While on Board Ship during Cruising

1. Social/physical distancing of six (6) feet shall be maintained between family clusters throughout the ship.
2. Ensure proper and frequent hand washing or the use of alcohol based hand sanitizer (>60% ethanol/isopropyl alcohol) to sanitize hands.

3. There should be enhanced and ongoing cleaning and sanitizing of ships, especially high touch areas.
4. Maintain proper travel history and medical logs.
5. Immediately separate persons who are symptomatic (placed in isolation) and their primary contacts.
6. Port health officers should be allowed to board ships to ensure compliance with COVID-19 protocols.

H. Surveillance and Reporting of Illnesses

Cruise lines should immediately report any of the following events to the port health authority and local agents:

1. Outbreaks of **Acute Respiratory Illness/flu-like illness** (exceeding 0.1 cases per 1,000 traveler days) among passengers or crew members.
Threshold Calculation: $n = (0.1)(p \times d) \div 1,000$. The actual number of ill cases reported should be greater than "n" to be considered an outbreak.
2. **SARS-CoV 2/COVID-19 positive**: Any case must be reported immediately. One (1) case is considered an outbreak.
3. **Acute Gastroenteritis (AGE)** outbreak:
 - a. More than 2% of passengers and/or crew - Grenada reserves the right to not grant pratique.
 - b. Under 2% only healthy persons may be allowed to disembark.
4. **Acute Flaccid Paralysis, Fever & Hemorrhagic/Neurological symptoms/Jaundice**: One (1) case MUST be reported immediately.
5. **Hospitalization** (ashore or at sea) caused by, or suspected to be associated with, flu-like illness onboard the vessel.
6. Any **death**, including those caused by, or suspected to be associated with, flu-like illness, that occurs aboard a cruise ship.
7. Any events that constitute a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). e.g., COVID -19

In any given event the public health authority in Grenada shall decide whether to board the cruise ship, investigate and grant pratique.

I. International Health Regulations (IHR) - Port Health surveillance

1. In the pandemic setting for IHR, it is recommended that only the Port Health Officer should board any cruise ship to grant pratique. This is to reduce the number of persons being exposed. The Port Health Officer will uplift all necessary documents for the other parties involved e.g., Immigration, Customs, and Agent, and deliver them in a strategic location. Customs and Immigration clearance can be collected by the ship security two (2) hours prior to departure, from the port security office.
2. The Port Health Officer should be granted access to the ship's medical unit(s) and be provided with all the relevant logs for examination upon request.
3. Information on the number of persons quarantined, isolated and deaths should be made available.
4. Public Health Officials should be granted access to interview cases and contacts if deemed necessary.

J. Documents to be reviewed by the Public Health Officer

1. Maritime Declaration of Health
2. Ship Sanitation Exemption Control Certificate
3. Medical log at the ship's health center that provide information for the last 7 days:
 - o Number of Covid 19 cases
 - o Covid 19 testing log (PCR and/or Rapid antigen)
 - o Number of Influenza like illnesses
 - o Number of diarrhoea cases
 - o Number of other diseases of public health significance

The Port Health Officer in the exercise of his duties may:

1. If Covid 19 cases, notify the Chief Environmental Health Officer (CEHO)/Chief Medical Officer (CMO) immediately and report findings.
2. Compare the number of Influenza Like Illnesses cases to the outbreak threshold (1.38 cases per 1,000 traveler days)
3. If Food Borne diseases (diarrhoea) exceed 2% of the ship's population notify the CEHO or CMO immediately.
4. If any of the above is identified in 1, 2 and 3 above, confirm with CEHO and CMO before free pratique granted.
5. If the Port Health Officer (PHO) is satisfied that after conducting risk assessment there are no public health threats on board, or if present, sufficient measures were taken to control the risk, only then free pratique can be granted.

6. Ship will provide name of passengers, age, sex and nationality. Public Health officials will verify vaccination status of passengers on Bubble Tours with manual verification checks on disembarkation.
7. Only fully vaccinated passengers, or children under the age of 12, will be allowed on Bubble Tours.
8. Request from the agent or captain a copy of the cruise ship's Covid 19, Influenza Like Illnesses and food Borne Disease outbreak protocols for each arriving cruise line/ship.

K. Public health measures during disembarkation in Grenada

Ship medical personnel shall ensure compliance with COVID-19 protocols.

1. Screening of persons will be done by family clusters.
2. Physical distancing of six (6) feet between family clusters must be maintained during screening and disembarkation.
3. All persons (including children) will be required to wear face masks that cover the mouth and nose.
4. Hands must be sanitized at exit and throughout the disembarkation process.
5. Verbal screening will be done to determine whether persons have had signs or symptoms of COVID-19 or a known exposure to a person with COVID-19 within the past 14 days.
6. Disembarkation of passengers should be denied if they are suspected of having COVID-19 because they have symptoms, a temperature of 100.4°F or greater, or had exposure to a person with COVID 19 within the previous 14 days.

L. Tours

1. Cruise passengers will be allowed to go on pre-arranged ("bubble") tours
2. Sites must be approved and certified pure, safe and vaccinated.
3. Tour operators must be fully vaccinated
4. All employees and vendors at sites must be fully vaccinated.

5. No unauthorized vending will be permitted at the sites visited. Appropriate security should be in place to prevent unauthorized activities.
6. All taxi and tour drivers and operators(whether on land or sea) handling cruise passengers must be fully vaccinated.
7. All tour guides must be fully vaccinated and certified. Physical distancing (6 feet), wearing of face masks that cover the mouth and nose and frequent sanitization of hands should be adhered to throughout the tour.
8. Foot tours outside of approved sites will not be permitted. Cruise passengers will not be allowed to roam freely and to enter sites shared with the general public.
9. The tourism authority should identify areas on beaches where cruise passengers will be permitted to use freely. Cruise passengers will not be allowed to interact with the general public while on the beach.
10. All watersport operators and beach vendors must be fully vaccinated and granted permission by the tourism authority to provide services to cruise passengers while they are on the beach.
11. All equipment and other multi-use items should be appropriately cleaned and sanitized prior to being redeployed for use by other individuals.
12. All tour operators must ensure that the public health measures of proper mask wearing, appropriate physical distancing where practical and sanitization of hands are adhered to by customers and employees.

M. Shopping

1. Consideration should be given to establishing temporary vending sites that are closed to the general public and where only fully vaccinated vendors may be allowed to operate.
2. All businesses to be visited by cruise ship passengers should receive approval from the tourism authority and have arrangements in place to handle visits while adhering to health protocols. These arrangements include full vaccination of staff, separation of cruise passengers from the general public and measures to avoid crowding.
3. All shopping facilities must ensure that the public health measures of proper mask wearing, physical distancing and sanitization of hands are adhered to by customers and employees.

N. Public health measures during Embarkation after stops in Grenada

1. Boarding of persons should be done by family clusters.
2. Physical distancing of six (6) feet between family clusters must be maintained during the boarding process.
3. All persons (including children) will be required to wear face masks that cover the mouth and nose.
4. Hands must be sanitized at exit and throughout the disembarkation process.

O. Emergency medical assistance

Grenada has limited ICU capacity per population and will be challenged to accommodate the additional demands that cruise tourism can potentially generate in the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Non-COVID Patients:

1. Cruise passengers and crew requiring emergency medical assistance for Non-COVID-19 related issues will be accepted based on the country's capacity to manage the patient's condition. In the event that appropriate medical care is not available locally, the cruise ship/agent shall make arrangements to airlift the patient(s) to a center where care will be provided.
2. All passengers requiring transfer will be tested for SARS CoV 2 prior to leaving the ship.
3. The accident and Emergency Department at General Hospital should be contacted (440 - 2051) to secure the ambulance service to transfer patients to the hospital or airport.
4. The ship's agent should arrange for a Pure Safe Travel approved taxi to carry family members to the airport if they are allowed to accompany the patient on the same flight.
5. The costs associated with the transfer, medical treatment and airlift will be borne by the passenger, cruise line or agent. It is recommended that passengers and crew have adequate travel/health insurance coverage to address any contingencies.

COVID patients

1. Transfer to hospital of COVID-19 cases will be allowed in emergency situations where lifesaving interventions are required for severe/critical cases. Individuals with mild or moderate COVID-19 symptoms shall continue to be isolated on the cruise ship.
2. All cruise ships and/or agents should have pre-arrangements for evacuation (airlift) of COVID-19 cases to home port before embarking.

3. The accident and Emergency Department at General Hospital should be contacted (440 - 2051) to secure the ambulance service to transfer patients to the hospital or airport from the ship.
4. The costs associated with the transfer, medical care and airlift will be borne by the passenger, cruise line or agent. It is recommended that passengers and crew have adequate travel/health insurance coverage to address any contingencies.