



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**GUIDELINES ON SHIPS CREW CHANGE
AND SEAFARERS REPATRIATION WHILE OBSERVING MEASURES TO PREVENT
TRANSMISSION OF COVID-19 AT THE PORT OF MOMBASA**

DEVELOPED JOINTLY BY:

**MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT,
MINISTRY OF HEALTH MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND CO-ORDINATION OF NATIONAL
GOVERNMENT AND THE KENYA SHIPS AGENTS ASSOCIATION**

JULY, 2020

1.0 INTRODUCTION

These guidelines have been developed following calls from the local shipping community as well as the International Maritime Organization to Governments, Maritime Administrations and other Authorities to allow for the exchange of crew in port following the stoppage in March 2020 as part of measures to prevent the importation of covid-19 through the seafarers calling the Port of Mombasa, or vice versa.

The Government of Kenya, in close cooperation with the International Maritime Organization, World Health Organization, Development partners and the local shipping sector has developed the following guidelines to allow for the exchange of ships crew in the port of Mombasa following the freeze on the same in March 2020 as part of the COVID-19 mitigation strategies developed nationwide.

These Guidelines take cognisance of the humanitarian crisis that seafarers are currently facing, particularly those who have completed their contract period while serving on board seagoing merchant ships in accordance with their employment contracts, those with other emergencies or even those who can no longer work on board.

The Guidelines focus on all stages of the crew change administration and are aligned with the IMO Circular Letter No. 4204/Add 14 on Recommended Framework of Protocols for Ensuring Safe Ship Crew Changes and Travel during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of these Guidelines are:

- i. To ensure a co-ordinated embarkation and disembarkation process for seafarers;
- ii. To set up measures and procedures to facilitate safe crew change during the pandemic; and
- iii. To establish the safe COVID-19 transmission prevention measures to be taken by those interacting with the seafarer during the crew change.

3.0 CIRCUMSTANCES FOR ALLOWING CREW CHANGE

Crew change at the Port of Mombasa will be allowed for the following categories of seafarers

- i. Seafarers who have completed their employment contracts in accordance with the seafarer employment agreement;
- ii. Seafarers who are no longer medically fit to work on board ship;
- iii. Seafarers wishing to sign off on compassionate grounds; and
- iv. Seafarers whose sign off does not affect the safe manning of the ship

4.0 GENERAL PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING APPROVAL FOR CREW CHANGE

In order to obtain approval for crew change at the port of Mombasa, the following general procedures must be observed;

- i. Application for approval in the attached form must be lodged at Kenya Maritime Authority with supporting documentation at least three working days before the crew change;
- ii. Approval given for sign on/sign off in collaboration with other GoK Agencies;
- iii. Based on i. and ii above Crew can now sign on/sign off
- iv. All relevant authorities notified of successful sign on/sign off.

4.1 Procedure for Sign –on

- a) The identified crew to sign-on must have been in self-quarantine in their home country at least 14 days before scheduled sign on date;
- b) Crew must submit **covid-19 negative test certificate** carried out within 96 hours before travel
- c) The receiving ship must or scheduled to be in Kenya prior to arrival of the crew;
- d) The crew must have an okay to board letter from the shipping line
- e) At the airport, crew temperature must be taken and confirmed at below 37.5 degrees (if above 37.5 degrees, measures must be taken in accordance with Port Health protocols);
- f) After Immigration and customs clearance, the crew shall be received by the Ships Agent and directed to the approved transport vehicle;
- g) Crew arrives on-board ship;
- h) Agent notifies the Authorities and Kilindini Joint Operation Centre (JOC) of the arrival on-board of the crew by email

4.2 Procedure for Sign -off

- a) The identified crew to have a confirmed flight out of the country within 72 hours of the ships arrival.
- b) All documents required to be provided, including temperature history, seafarer employment agreement or proof of reason for sign off;
- c) Crew to be cleared by the Port Health, Immigration and Customs Authorities, and duly signed crew change request form provided;
- d) Crew boards the designated transport vehicle;
- e) Crew arrives at airport, clears with Immigration;
- f) Agent notifies Authorities and JOC by email of the safe departure of the crew

NB: Kenyan crew returning home shall be dealt with on a case by case basis to determine if they are required to go for mandatory quarantine.

5.0 MITIGATION FACTORS DURING THE CREW CHANGE

The following mitigation measures have been put in place to prevent the possible spread of the virus either to the general population or to the seafarers onboard:

To minimize the risk of importation and spread COVID-19 in Kenya, it is a requirement that the Crew is transferred directly between the ship and the point of arrival/departure.

- a. Where it is not possible to effect direct transfer to the airport, the seafarer will be accommodated at an approved holding facility as directed by Port Health. However, the seafarer can stay at the designated holding facility for a maximum of 72 hours unless in exceptional circumstances and with prior approval from authorities;
- b. Ships Agent receiving the sign-on crew at the airport shall provide a fresh face mask and hand sanitizer;
- c. The approved transport vehicle shall provide sanitizing facility to the sign on /sign off crew; and
- d. Mandatory Temperature screening shall be undertaken on crew upon disembarkation from the plane.

6.0 DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The following documents will be required and must be submitted to Port Health in order to obtain approval for sign on/sign off;

6.1 Sign-on

- i) Crew temperature record for the last 7 days;
- ii) Crew declaration on self-quarantine before departure to Kenya;
- iii) Ships Agents declaration on crew fitness to travel; and
- iv) Application for approval of crew sign-on shall be on the Company letterhead.
- v) Certificate showing negative result for COVID-19 test carried out within 96 hours before travel **MUST** be provided

6.2 Sign –off

- i) Application for crew sign off to be made on Company letterhead
- ii) Confirmed outbound air ticket to be provided;
- iii) Crew temperature record for the last 7 days to be provided;
- iv) Master/Agent Declaration on crew fitness to travel to be provided;
- v) Evidence of reason for sign off (e.g. Seafarer Employment Agreement,); as enumerated in 3.0
- vi) Copies of crew passport;
- vii) Declaration that crew did not go ashore in the last 14 days;
- viii) Ship’s Declaration of Maritime Health.

7.0 CREW CHANGE TRANSPORT PROVIDERS

Ships Agents are advised to use only transport providers vetted and approved by the Ministry of Health for the transfer of crew from the ship to the airport, from airport to ship, from ship to holding facility or from holding facility to the airports;

The transport providers must adhere to the guidelines provided on safe transport of crew including the number of crew to be carried, sanitization, provision of masks and other personal protective equipment;

The following measures must be taken by the transport provider;

- i. Wear a mask at all times;
- ii. Observe 1.5m social distancing requirement
- iii. Sanitize and disinfect seats/interior prior to receiving the next crew onboard;
- iv. Ensure all the crew sanitize their hands once in vehicle/launch; and
- v. Sanitize and disinfect seats/interior after each crew drop off.

8.0 HOLDING FACILITIES AWAITING DEPARTURE/TRANSFER ONBOARD

- i. Agents must only use the holding facilities (hotels) approved by the Ministry of Health in consultation with the Kenya Ships Agents Association.
- ii. The facilities have been assessed and advised on protocols to be observed in mitigating the spread of Covid-19.
- iii. The crew using the approved facilities must adhere to the guidelines and protocols in place during their stay at the facilities.

9.0 SHORE LEAVE/VISIT TO MISSION TO SEAFARERS CENTRE

Crews' shore leave is hereby suspended, pending development of protocols and procedures.

10.0 CONCLUSION

The procedures outlined above are intended to accord facilitation for seafarers to embark and disembark from ships while mitigating the possible spread of the covid-19 to the seafarer or to the general public. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to review the guidelines at any time, in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

The local enforcement authorities will be part of the implementation of these guidelines and in this regard the Government reserves the right to take legal action on any ships agent or crew member who may be found in contravention of Kenyas Public Health laws and the protocols laid down in these guidelines.

With the co-operation of all stakeholders already involved in this process and the Ministry of Transport's leadership, the Republic of Kenya is confident of being able to effectively conduct crew changes for both local and international seafarers.



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

SHIPS CREW CHANGE REQUEST

Instructions

1. This form is to be filled by the ships agent and submitted to the Kenya Maritime Authority for approval
2. One form is to be used for one ship application, including in case here more than one crew member is signing on/off, and where the request is for both sign on and sign off.
3. All supporting documents must be attached with the application

PART 1: COMPANY INFORMATION

Name of Ships Agent.....

Contact Email Address.....

Contact Telephone No.....

Person in charge Name/Mobile Phone No.....

PART 2: SHIP INFORMATION

Ship Name, Flag and IMO No

.....

Expected date and time of arrival

.....

Expected date and time of departure

.....

Last Port of Call

Next Port of Call

PART 3: CREW INFO

Type of Request (Sign on/sign off/Both.)

Crew Name/Nationality

.....

(Indicate name, nationality and whether sign on/sign off) for all the crew)

	SURNAME, Other Names	Nationality	Passport No.	Sign On/Off
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

PART 4: DECLARATION

1. I declare that the information provided herein is true and correct at the time of submission, a
2. I will provide information should there be any change in the information provided (e.g. change of Ship's ETA, ETD)
3. I undertake to abide by all the conditions imposed on the approval for crew change at the port of Mombasa.

Name, Signature, Date

.....

Ships Agency & Company Stamp

.....

PART 5: APPROVAL (FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

Approved/Not Approved.....

Remarks/Conditions