



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Health  
**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

04 February 2020

**DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR**  
No. 2020- 0034

**FOR : Port Operators, Other Port Authorities, Shipping Agencies, Ship Handlers,  
and Concerned Manning Agencies**

**SUBJECT : GUIDELINES AT ALL SEAPORTS FOR PREVENTION AND SPREAD  
OF NOVEL CORONAVIRUS ACUTE RESPIRATORY DISEASE (2019-  
NCOV ARD)**

---

On 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the 2019-nCoV ARD as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). The WHO emphasized the urgent need to coordinate international efforts to investigate and better understand 2019-nCoV, to minimize threat in affected countries and to reduce the risk of further international spread.

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2020 President Rodrigo Duterte through the recommendation of the Inter - Agency task force for Emerging and Re-emerging Diseases issued a temporary travel ban for those travelers coming from China, including Hong Kong and Macau SAR.

In line with the directive of the President, the Bureau of Quarantine shall be implementing the following measures effective immediately at all seaport for all maritime vessels.

**A. For Cruise Vessel**

A.1 All Cruise Ships with passengers, regardless of nationality, from China, Macau and Hong Kong SAR or had passed through in the past fourteen (14) days are not allowed to dock at any Philippine port.

A.2 All Cruise Ships not calling on the ports of China, Macau and Hong Kong SAR within the last fourteen (14) days are allowed to dock in Philippine ports. They must undergo complete screening measures, submission of duly-accomplished Maritime Declaration of Health, and other pertinent documents related to 2019-nCoV ARD.

A.3 All Cruise Ships allowed to dock must declare all travel itineraries/excursions in the Philippines.



A.4 The master of vessel must report immediately any occurrence of flu-like symptoms (e.g fever, cough, colds, body weakness and difficulty of breathing). In an event of flu like manifestation arise, the master must immediately report to the Quarantine Medical Officer (QMO) for guidance on implementing infection prevention and control protocols to minimize the spread of infection on board.

A.5 The QMO will conduct triaging of case/s using current Case Definition. *(Please refer to Annex 1 Decision Tool for nCoV ARD Assessment for BoQ and Hospitals as January 30, 2020)*

A.6 No Filipinos are allowed to embark in any cruise ship going to China.

## **B. For Cargo Vessels**

B.1 All vessels calling from China, including Hong Kong and Macau SAR, in the past fourteen (14) days must be boarded at the quarantine anchorage.

B.2 Upon arrival at quarantine anchorage, the master of vessel must hoist at its foremast the yellow flag and inform immediately the Quarantine station at assigned port through ship agents. Strictly no embarkation/disembarkation policy.

B.3 Quarantine Boarding formalities shall ensue – the master of the vessel shall submit a duly accomplished Maritime Declaration of Health and BOQ shall issue *free pratique*. Other boarding formalities shall commence.

B.4 Vessels cleared at the first port of entry and calling another local port, which within the past 14 days travelled from China, Hongkong and Macau SAR, must be boarded at the designated Quarantine anchorage area by QMO, submit duly accomplished Maritime Declaration of Health and other pertinent documents.

B.5 The master of vessel must report immediately any occurrence of flu-like symptoms (e.g fever, cough, colds, body weakness and difficulty of breathing). In an event of flu like manifestation arise, the master must immediately report to the QMO for guidance on implementing infection prevention and control protocols to minimize the spread of infection on board.

B.6 The QMO will conduct triaging of case/s using current Case Definition. *(Please refer to Annex 1 Decision Tool for nCoV ARD Assessment for BoQ and Hospitals as January 30, 2020)*

B.7 Ship agent of Vessel with PUI situated in a non-competent port will arrange the immediate diversion of the vessel to the nearest competent port (Manila and Cebu) in the Philippine territory.

B.8 PUI in a competent port will be conducted to a dedicated hospital and the vessel will be declared as *affected vessel*. A confirmed laboratory result of case will



commence a 14-day quarantine at the anchorage and hoist the Lima flag. Day zero starts at the conduction of the PUI.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> day, the QMO will board the vessel, examine the documents, muster the crew and issue a *free pratique*. The master of vessel may then lower down yellow flag, and other formalities will commence.

### C. General Preventive Measures

C.1 Continue hygienic practices and sanitary measures at all times.

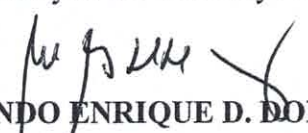
C.2 Waste disposal of vessels coming in from China, including Hong Kong and Macau SAR, in the past fourteen (14) days, are not allowed in Philippine ports.

For strict compliance.

This issuance may be changed depending on the evolving public health conditions.

All issuances inconsistent with any provision of this memorandum are deemed revoked, amended or modified accordingly.

By Authority of the Secretary of Health,

  
**ROLANDO ENRIQUE D. DOMINGO, MD, DPBO**  
Undersecretary of Health, Chief of Staff

