

British Virgin Islands Ports Authority

Cargo Vessel Pandemic Plan



Approved May 11, 2020

BVI Ports Authority Board

Introduction

In those situations when the British Virgin Islands is challenged with a pandemic or infectious disease, the British Virgin Islands Ports Authority would find it appropriate to enhance the normal screening procedures of the handling of cargo vessel operations. For better management, safety and security, all cargo entering the territory during the pandemic shall be redirected to the main island port at Port Purcell. Responding to the unique manner in which a pandemic operates and thrives, the measures detailed in this Plan is designed to assist in safeguarding the residents of the British Virgin Islands against the spread into the British Virgin Islands through the cargo port.

Rationale

To provide guidance to Agents, Shipping Operators and other Stakeholders regarding established procedures and protocols to be followed during a pandemic.

Maritime Health Declaration (MHD)

The Maritime Health Declaration *must* be submitted to the British Virgin Islands Ports Authority and the Department of Environmental Health no later than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the vessel entering the British Virgin Islands waters (Territorial waters). The contact information for submitting is detailed in the section entitled Contact Information on page 9 of this document.

When

This Plan shall become active once a pandemic notice is issued by the British Virgin Islands Health Emergency Operating Center (HEOC) and shall replace all normal operating procedures until such time as the HEOC advises otherwise and the return to normal operating procedures is re-established by the BVI Ports Authority.

Approved Cargo

Approved cargo includes all consumable, medical, fuel, and any other items deemed by the HEOC and classified as essentials goods. Information regarding approved cargo can be

extended during the pandemic as deemed necessary by the government of the Virgin Islands. A general list will be published on the ports website (www.bviports.org) along with this document. During the pandemic, vessel operations will be thoroughly scrutinized and only cargo that is documented on the manifest that was received by the BVI Ports Authority prior to arrival of the vessel will be accepted into the territory. The Agent shall notify by email any changes in the vessel scheduled arrival time a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours in advance.

Responsible Persons

The Managing Director or his/her designee is responsible for the execution of this Plan.

Execution of Procedures

During a pandemic, the arrival of cargo vessels entering the territory must be directed to the main island port at Port Purcell for screening and clearance processing.

Notice of Arrival

The Agent must provide notice of arrival a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours before arriving in the territorial waters. The following documents must be submitted both to the BVI Ports Authority and Department of Environmental Health who shall review the documents and determine whether the vessel is fit for clearance into the territory. All of the necessary documents itemized below must be submitted a minimum of seventy-two (72) hours prior to the vessel arriving in territorial waters.

Required Documents

1. Document showing how a pandemic or infectious disease is handled by the vessel (Pandemic Plan).
2. A history of the voyage from point of origin (other docks of visitation, and whether the crew took precautionary measures to protect vessel's personnel, medical attention and if they left the vessel).

-
3. The master of the vessel must provide information regarding any change in the vessels' crew since the origination of the voyage, inclusive of identifying crewmember that have left or joined.
 4. Pre-arrival forms.
 5. Vessel-shore safety checklists.
 6. Cargo transfer agreement information.

All documents must be forwarded via email with the originals made available for inspection upon arrival.

Vessel Arrival

The Master of a vessel shall in accordance with the Ports Regulations, upon entering in territorial waters display from a conspicuous place on the vessel the appropriate quarantine signal and that signal shall not be hauled down until the relevant agency has granted approval to do so. The BVI Maritime flag (red) shall also be displayed while the vessel is in territorial waters. The Agent is required to make contact with the pilot regarding servicing.

Transfer of Documents from Vessel/ Servicing

1. No one from port side is authorized to embark a cargo vessel generally. In exceptional circumstances, the Managing Director may give approval otherwise, the exception being emergency agencies, HM Customs and Immigration that can enter the vessel as required within the Laws of the Virgin Islands and their specific Pandemic Plans.
2. The Agent and Master at the time of the exchange must be adorned in approved for purpose facemask and gloves during the exchange of the vessel documents. The

exchange shall occur at the gangway with the Master of the vessel standing on the gangway and the Agent on the apron.

3. Crewmembers of a cargo vessel, during a pandemic shall not be allowed to disembark the vessel. The Agent is required to organize servicing of the vessel by local staff or alternatively the Agent can request assistance through the BVI Ports Authority at the time the Application for Berth is being made.
4. The Master of the vessel and Agent is required at all times to adhere to all measures imposed by local authorities while the vessel is in territorial waters. These measures are not limited to, border control inspection, sanitary health inspection, disinfection/sanitization of the cargo/vessel to the satisfaction of the local authority and administer medical assistance and quarantine if necessary of the crew, while the vessel remains in territorial waters.

Notice of an Ill Crew Member while the Vessel is berthed

1. The Agent/Master shall notify the BVI Ports Authority and the BVI Health Services Authority, who will provide information to the Agent and BVI Ports Authority as to how to proceed. In some circumstances the advice/information requiring medical assistance can be generated from the Department of Environmental Health to the BVI Health Services Authority.
2. Personnel responsible for processing the affected vessel upon arrival, shall be required to wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to safeguard themselves against infection/transmission.
3. If it is determined by the BVI Health Service Authority that the crew requires admission to the hospital, the BVI Health Services Authority will inform the vessel's crew and BVI

Ports staff of the necessary precautionary measures to be taken before, during, and after disembarkation from the vessel.

4. The BVI Ports Authority will cordoned/secure the berth area and if deemed necessary move other vessels that may be berthed in close proximity.
5. The Department of Environmental Health, HM Customs, and the BVI Ports Authority together will make a decision on what will happen to the cargo.
6. The Agent shall be informed by the BVI Ports Authority as soon as a decision is taken.

Vessel Clearance/Delivery of Cargo

1. Once a vessel is at the berth and there are no medical concerns, the normal process of clearance shall prevail unless where other direction is provided for under special circumstances and the Law.
2. The vessel's crew shall deliver the cargo onto the gangway and the transfer is made from there by the Agent onto the landside to be tallied and moved into the designated storage area. The normal signing off as an agreement of delivery of item, quantity, and condition shall ensue.
3. Once the vessel's cargo has been successfully delivered, the normal departure process shall prevail. The vessel must receive a Port Clearance from BVI Ports Authority and a Customs Clearance from HM Customs prior to departing the facility. This signals the completion of the cargo delivery process and the vessel's application to depart the cargo facility.

-
4. Vessels will not be allowed to overnight at the cargo facility, unless special permission is granted by the Managing Director.

Sanitization/De-contamination and Organization

The BVI Ports Authority will:

1. Ensure daily frequent sanitization and weekly extensive cleaning of common areas on the cargo facility.
2. Make available to staff and port users, hand sanitizer and hand wash stations.
3. De-contamination of the facility when required with lead assistance from the Department of Environmental Health and BVI Fire and Rescue Service. Agents shall be responsible for de-contamination of cargo.
4. Will organize service areas in line with the physical distancing and healthy environment protocols.

Potential Exposure – Ports Staff

Based upon observation/information anyone who is suspected of being exposed or infected shall:

1. Be encouraged to seek medical assistance by contacting the Medical Health Hotline at 852-7650.
2. Information the department manager and Human Resources Manager. The Human Resources Manager shall be responsible for documenting, investigating, following up and providing recommendation for treatment of the situation.

Potential Exposure – Ports User

Based upon observation/information anyone who is suspected of being exposed or infected shall:

1. If observed prior to entry that an individual is displaying signs, communication will be made to the BVI Health Service Authority advising of the situation.
2. Denial of access can be made if a persons does not satisfactorily pass the health check list requirements by the HEOC.

If on the Cargo Facility

3. Be encouraged to seek medical assistance by contacting the Medical Health Hotline at 852-7650.
4. Port Facility Security shall escort the individual from the facility and inform the Managing Director of the situation.

General Healthy Guidelines

1. Always wear a facemask while at the facility and engage in healthy hygiene.
2. Report any situations of un-wellness requiring medical assistance to any Ports staff.
3. Adhere to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette (e.g., cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, dispose of tissues in waste receptacles) as mandated by the specific health threat at the time.
4. Self-monitor for symptoms and seek re-evaluation from BVI Health Services Authority if respiratory symptoms recur or worsen.

Contact Information for Local Authorities

British Virgin Islands Ports Authority Deputy Managing Director, Ms. Oleanvine Maynard	(284) 494-3435 omanard@bviports.org
HM Customs Acting Commissioner, Mr. Leslie Lettsome	(284) 494-3475 leslettsome@gov.vg
Department of Environmental Health Chief Environmental Health Officer, Mr. Lionel E. Michael	(284) 468- 5110 publichealthhd@yahoo.com ; zelmichael@hotmail.com
British Virgin Islands Health Services Authority Medical Health Hotline Director, Dr. Ronald Georges	(284) 852-7500 (284) 852-7650 rgeorges@bvihsa.vg
BVI Fire and Rescue Service Chief Fire Officer, Mr. Zebulon Mclean	(284) 468-4268 zmclean@gov.vg
Department of Immigration Chief Immigration Officer, Mr. Ian Penn	(284) 494-3471 ipenn@gov.vg