

Black Sea ports, Russia

New measures for COVID-19

19 March 2020

New strict prevention and control measures have been implemented by the Russian ports located on the Black Sea coast in response to the latest outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) in many countries and following the High Alert regime introduced in Krasnodar region from 15 March till 1 May, 2020.

Port administrations and immigration authorities follow the guidelines of the Russian Federal Service for Surveillance on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Wellbeing¹ (Health authorities also referred to as 'Rospotrebnadzor').

Health authorities regularly update a list of countries considered as 'coronavirus-affected' and requiring new measures, among which are screening, testing or disinfection necessary to obtain free pratique.

The first list of coronavirus-affected countries included Italy, Iran, People's Republic of China, and the Republic of Korea. The list was shortly afterward extended to France, Spain and Germany.

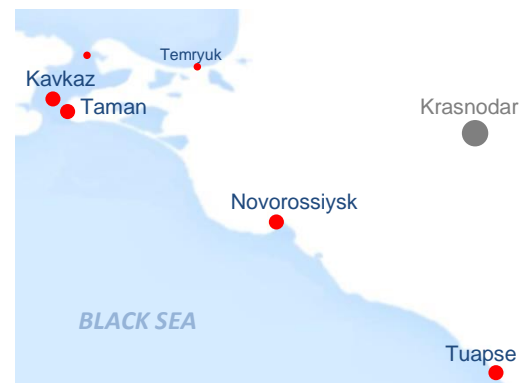
On 18 March Health authorities issued the new list of 141 countries² and clarified that the list was not final and control measures could be applied to vessels coming from any country, subject to the actual number of confirmed coronavirus cases in that country, condition of the crew, date of departure and other factors.

All vessels heading to the Russian Black Sea ports must be ready to comply with the requirements of Health authorities, which are subject to risk assessment on an individual basis, with a focus on the 14-day incubation period and health condition of the crew.

When at port, the vessels should follow the orders imposed by Immigration authorities and Harbour Master.

Although ports have different regulations in terms of the shore leave or sanitary control, there are some common procedures at **Novorossiysk, Kavkaz, Taman, Tuapse** (Black Sea) and **Temryuk** (Sea of Azov).

These main requirements can be summarized as follows:



1. Pre-arrival check of documents

Maritime declaration of health, crew list and list of the last ten ports of call are provided by Agents to Health authorities, Immigration authorities and/or Harbour Master not later than 2 days before vessel's arrival.

2. Shore leave

The shore leave is officially limited for the following persons:

- Citizens of the People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea, Italy and Iran arriving as crew members.
- Crew members – foreign citizens, who visited ports of Italy, People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea, and Iran during the last 14 days before arrival at Novorossiysk seaport.

On 18 March the immigration authorities at Taman port advised that the shore leave would be limited for all foreign citizens, including crew members and passengers.

In view of the newly updated list of 141 coronavirus-affected countries, similar restrictions may be applied to any vessel at the other ports.

¹ The English version of the website of 'Rospotrebnadzor' is not updated <https://www.rospotrebnadzor.ru/en/>

² Russia is also in the list of 141 countries circulated by Rospotrebnadzor on 18 March

3. Screening of the crew members

According to the algorithm of vessel's handling released by Health authorities on 10 March, the examination and temperature screening of the crew members may not be required when vessels come from epidemiologically safe country, 14 days have passed since vessel's departure from coronavirus-affected countries or after the last crew change with the new seafarers arriving from the affected country, ill persons are absent onboard.

Despite this official position, de-facto Health authorities tend to prescribe screening on vessels arriving from any country before free pratique is granted, and this measure also applies to vessels matching 'safe' criteria.

4. Testing for coronavirus

If presence of ill persons or persons allegedly infected is reported by vessel, or high temperature or other symptoms of respiratory disease are confirmed during screening, the vessel and crew are subject to the enhanced sanitary-quarantine control such as preliminary diagnostics, transportation of the infected person to a hospital for examination, medical tests and treatment, taking blood samples from the crew for further testing.

The only one regional laboratory dealing with COVID-19 is situated in Krasnodar, 140-200 km from the Black Sea ports. Coronavirus test results are available in 1-2 days, causing delays in obtaining free pratique.

5. Disinfection

Disinfection will be required in case of arrival of the vessel from coronavirus-affected countries within incubation period of 14 days and/or presence onboard the persons who arrived from these countries within 14 days, in the absence of ill persons onboard.

Disinfection will be followed by a temperature screening of the crew members before the vessel could pass the inward clearance formalities.

In case of presence of ill persons or persons allegedly infected onboard, disinfection will be carried out at outer roads or at sanitary berth under control of Health authorities.

Disinfection is arranged and paid by Ship's Agents.

Certificates of disinfection from the other countries are no longer accepted.