



MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE

PORT MARINE CIRCULAR  
NO. 26 OF 2020

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Shipping Community

**ENHANCEMENT TO CREW CHANGE FOR CARGO SHIPS UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE PORT OF SINGAPORE, TO MINIMISE RISK OF COMMUNITY SPREAD OF THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) IN SINGAPORE**

1 The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) recognises the critical role that seafarers play in global seaborne trade, as well as the importance of crew change to safeguard the health and safety of seafarers sailing on board ships. Following the tightening of entry of short-term visitors to Singapore, MPA continued to facilitate crew change under the following special circumstances:

- a) the crew has served his/her maximum time on board (and no further extension of the employment contract is granted by the flag State)
- b) compassionate grounds (e.g. death of family member)
- c) the crew is no longer medically fit to work on board the ship

2 MPA appreciates the collaboration with shipping companies to effect the many cases of crew change. Our procedures have also allowed us to attend to crew that require emergency medical care.

3 MPA has since worked closely with the Singapore Shipping Association (SSA), Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU), Singapore Organisation for Seamen (SOS) and the industry as well as other government agencies to enhance the existing procedures.

4 In addition to the special circumstances mentioned in paragraph 1, the following circumstances will also be considered in allowing crew change for cargo ships in Singapore:

- a) crew whose employment contract has expired
- b) additional crew on board whose sign-off would not affect the safe manning of the ship
- c) change of crew due to the sale or purchase of ship
- d) personnel who are not part of the ship's crew such as superintendents and service engineers

5 The requirements for crew change are revised as follow:

Signing-off

- a) confirmation that the crew has not gone ashore in the last fourteen (14) days before leaving the ship, and remained well throughout that period
- b) fit-to-travel medical certificate issued by a doctor in Singapore
- c) proof of expiry of employment contract or unfit-for-work medical report, where applicable
- d) relevant documentation supporting required crew change (e.g. sale/purchase agreement of ship)

Signing-on

- a) confirmation that the crew has been in quarantine for at least 14 days prior to departing his/her home country and has been well throughout that period
- b) COVID-19 test (polymerase chain reaction (PCR) type) with negative result at his/her home country not more than 48 hours prior to his/her departure flight
- c) fit-to-travel medical certificate issued by a doctor at his/her home country not more than 24 hours prior to his/her departure flight

Transfer Arrangements

- a) the crew must be transferred directly between the ship and point of arrival/departure in Singapore
- b) the ship will not be allowed to depart Singapore until the sign-off crew has departed Singapore and/or the sign-on crew has boarded the ship

6 Ship owners/managers/agents should apply for crew change in Singapore by writing to [shipping@mpa.gov.sg](mailto:shipping@mpa.gov.sg) and [pms@mpa.gov.sg](mailto:pms@mpa.gov.sg) at least 14 days in advance of the planned crew change.

7 MPA is also exploring other initiatives relating to crew change, with SSA, SMOU, SOS, industry and government agencies. These include development of a guidebook on crew change procedures in Singapore and the chartering of dedicated flights for crew change.

8 This circular supersedes Port Marine Circular No. 19 of 2020.

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