

Fast-track Specification

NHS C19014:2022

Published: 2022-01-26

Language: English

COVID-19

Infection control measures for expedition cruises

Rev.1

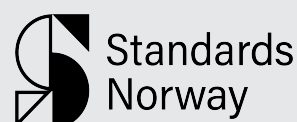
COVID-19

Smittevern for ekspedisjonscruise

Rev.1

Reference number:
NHS C19014:2022 (en)

© Standards Norway 2023



NHS C19014:2022

Publication information

Revisions to this document:

Revision 1 was published in English 2022-01-26. Clause 0, which was added in October 2021, was removed. Recommendations were updated.

NHS C19014:2022 replaces NHS C19014:2021.

ICS: 11

Copyright protected document

Unless otherwise specified, no part of this document may be reproduced or used in any form or in any way without written permission obtained in advance. This includes photocopies and electronic use, such as publishing on the Internet or an intranet. Any reproduction that violates this may lead to seizure, liability and/or legal prosecution. Requests related to reproduction are to be directed to Standard Online AS.

Contents

1	Background	1
1.1	General.....	1
1.2	Purpose	1
1.3	Scope	2
2	Responsibilities of the company	2
2.1	General.....	2
2.2	Planning	2
2.3	Training, information, and promoting greater awareness	3
2.4	Quality control of infection control measures	3
2.5	Nonconformity management	3
2.6	Evaluation	4
3	Infection control measures for expedition cruises	4
3.1	COVID-19 Certificate and pre-embarkation infection control measures.....	4
3.2	Infection control measures	4
3.2.1	General.....	4
3.2.2	Increased distance and reduced contact.....	5
3.2.3	Hand hygiene	5
3.2.4	Sneezing and cough hygiene.....	5
3.2.5	Cleaning.....	5
3.2.6	Ventilation.....	6
3.2.7	Sick persons.....	6
3.3	Use the “Smittestopp” app on your mobile	6
3.4	Specific infection control measures.....	6
3.4.1	General.....	6
3.4.2	Serving points and sanitary facilities.....	7
3.5	On-shore expeditions	7
4	General information concerning coronavirus, COVID-19, and infection	8
5	If infection is confirmed or suspected.....	8
5.1	General.....	8
5.2	Testing.....	8
5.3	Contact tracing.....	9
5.4	Quarantine and isolation.....	9
5.5	Isolation on a cruise vessel	9
6	Additional information.....	9
7	Safe expedition cruise.....	10
8	Checklists for infection control measures.....	11

COVID-19 – Infection control measures for expedition cruises – Rev.1

1 Background

1.1 General

This document sets out infection control measures for the proper and safe operation of expedition cruises during the COVID-19 pandemic in Norway. Similar guidelines have also been prepared for other areas, including restaurants, events, and cleaning.

The document is based on the Norwegian *Regulations relating to infection control measures etc. in connection with the coronavirus outbreak (the COVID-19 Regulations)*. This document is based on Norwegian laws and regulations, which also includes Svalbard. Laws and regulations of other jurisdictions may come into effect on cruises that cross into territorial waters of other countries.

The municipal health services are responsible for contact tracing and for notifying enterprises if visitors, customers, or employees are confirmed as being infected with COVID-19. The municipal health services are also responsible for determining the measures that are necessary, such as defining the close contacts of infected persons, who must therefore go into quarantine.

National and local requirements and recommendations are revised as more experience is gained and infection rates change. This means that the applicable requirements and recommendations may vary from municipality to municipality. Individual enterprises are responsible for monitoring and taking account of changes in requirements and recommendations, and for implementing the infection control measures described in this document.

This document has been prepared by Standards Norway in collaboration with the Association for Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO). The document will be revised by Standards Norway as needed.

1.2 Purpose

An awareness of infection control measures helps to reduce the risk of infection spreading. The purpose of this document is to provide the management and employees of enterprises with a knowledge of infection control and measures to promote safe daily operations, including:

- reducing the spread of infection;
- describing and safeguarding quality in infection control procedures;
- helping the company to maintain daily operations;
- ensuring infection protection for employees, passengers, and visitors;
- creating awareness and understanding of infection control measures;
- ensuring continual improvement to infection control measures.

Cooperation between employees, elected representatives, employee representatives and management is essential to the success of the implementation of and compliance with infection control. In addition, it

is important to ensure that customers and visitors have a good understanding of, and follow, the applicable infection control measures at all times.

1.3 Scope

This document specifies infection control measures and procedures for the operation of expedition cruises. The specifications are in particular aimed at operation in Norwegian waters, including Svalbard, but should also be applicable to expedition cruises in other areas.

Expedition cruising is ship-based adventure tourism based on smaller passenger vessels (typically carrying between 12 and 500 passengers) with flexible itineraries, focus on nature and destination learning experiences, and normally with a high ratio of staff to passengers.

The measures in this document are based on available knowledge concerning the spread of infection and an assessment of working conditions and tasks relating to the safe operation of expedition cruises.

The specification covers the following areas:

- the company's responsibilities, including planning, training and information, quality control, nonconformity management and evaluation;
- infection prevention measures to ensure the proper operation of expedition cruises.

2 Responsibilities of the company

2.1 General

In this document "the company" means the owner of the vessel or any other organization or person such as the manager, or the bareboat charterer, who has assumed the responsibility for operation of the vessel from the owner of the vessel and who on assuming such responsibility has agreed to take over all the duties and responsibilities imposed by the International Safety Management Code.

The company is responsible for ensuring that expedition cruises are organised and take place in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The company is responsible for ensuring proper operation that takes infection control into account, and for delegating responsibility for various tasks in connection with the infection control advice.

The company shall provide the necessary training and information to employees, subcontractors, and participants. Plans for infection control shall be adapted to local conditions and requirements in accordance with the advice given in this guide. The pandemic may be prolonged, and there will be a need to maintain various services and functions in society at the same time as infection control considerations are taken. Different phases of the pandemic and different spread of infection in the country may require adapted measures.

Everyone should exercise good infection control during the COVID-19 pandemic. This means that the key principles of infection control as described in this guide shall be observed both on board the cruise vessel and on shore during expedition cruise activities. Good cooperation between company, staff, and visitors shall be maintained.

2.2 Planning

When planning infection control measures, the company shall carry out a special risk assessment of all aspects linked to the cruise relating to infection control. This can be done in the same way as ordinary

HSE work, including identification and mapping of risks and the preparation of measures. Safety delegates and elected representatives should be involved in the risk assessment.

The company shall:

- ensure proper operation through the preparation of procedures for good hygiene and cleaning;
- ensure good training relating to infection control, and that all new procedures are made known to all employees. Particular attention shall be given to the use of temporary relief staff, seasonal workers, and workers who are not familiar with the company;
- consider the appointment of infection control officers at the workplace to ensure compliance with infection control measures in accordance with Clause 3;
- ensure continual improvement.

2.3 Training, information, and promoting greater awareness

Training shall be offered either by the company itself or in cooperation with others. Employees shall be obliged to participate in infection control training and necessary infection control measures.

The company shall establish a system to document that information and training have been provided.

Good information is key to ensuring good infection control at all levels. The company has overarching responsibility for educational work relating to infection control. The aim is to ensure a common understanding of, and compliance with, infection control procedures. Active efforts must therefore be made to create a safe working environment where employees can share experiences and give each other feedback with regard to whether procedures are unclear or being practised to varying degrees.

2.4 Quality control of infection control measures

The implementation of infection control measures shall be checked, documented, and reported to the responsible manager. The documentation shall be stored in the company's internal control system.

The following shall be clarified:

- the areas which are at risk, and which must be subject to controls;
- timing of control;
- frequency of control;
- who shall perform the controls.

There shall be procedures in place for monitoring the health situation onboard, in particular relating to symptoms of coronavirus infection. The procedures may include (automated) temperature scanning and/or coronavirus or antigen testing.

2.5 Nonconformity management

Nonconformities with respect to the infection control measures shall be managed via existing quality assurance systems. In the event of a nonconformity within infection control, the company shall:

- carry out an assessment of the nonconformity,
- implement measures to correct the nonconformity,
- follow up and document measures, and
- notify the authorities in the event of wilful or grossly negligent non-compliance.

Procedures shall be in place for employees to report nonconformities.

Notification of the authorities in the case of wilful or gross negligence shall take place in accordance with the *COVID-19 Regulations*.

2.6 Evaluation

The company is responsible for assessing whether the level of infection control that has been achieved is satisfactory and follows national and local requirements and recommendations. The effect of measures shall be evaluated, and procedures shall be revised as and when necessary. The company shall also assess the possible need for additional infection control measures. Further developments in the outbreak, updates to the knowledge base and experience from the industry may lead to a need for revision.

3 Infection control measures for expedition cruises

3.1 COVID-19 Certificate and pre-embarkation infection control measures

To minimize the risk of bringing coronavirus onto the vessel the following measures shall be in place, applying to all persons, including ship personnel, passengers, and visitors.

- 1) A valid COVID-19 Certificate shall be presented. A valid COVID-19 Certificate documents that the person is fully vaccinated or that he or she has fully recovered from COVID-19 during the last six months.
- 2) Anyone who is unable to present a valid COVID-19 Certificate, shall undergo pre-embarkation coronavirus or antigen testing and stay in quarantine until a reliable negative test result can be presented, bearing in mind the incubation period of the coronavirus, and following national quarantine and testing recommendations and regulations.

COVID-19 Certificates are issued by different entities in different countries. The validity of these certificates is determined by national legislation.

The company shall make a risk assessment to determine if further pre-embarkation measures are necessary to minimize the risk of bringing the virus onboard. It is recommended to require testing of all persons prior to embarkation.

Ship personnel shall undergo training concerning infection control procedures at the workplace, and the procedures shall be made clearly visible to all ship personnel.

All ship personnel shall be given special training concerning hygiene and cleaning procedures.

3.2 Infection control measures

3.2.1 General

All persons onboard a vessel where the measures in 3.1 are in place, may be considered one cohort (group). Specifications relating to distance and contact between people may consequently not apply as rigidly on the vessel as they would otherwise.

Based on a risk assessment the company shall determine if any further measures are necessary in addition to the infection control measures mentioned in this document.

3.2.2 Increased distance and reduced contact

- To reduce the risk of infection, keep at least 1 metre away from people of other cohorts, and 2 metres wherever possible.
- Avoid shaking hands, hugging and other physical contact.
- Avoid face-to-face close contact. Persons can pass each other and be present in the same area for a short period of time without any great risk of infection.
- Wear a face mask when recommended or required by the national or local authorities.
- A visor may be worn as a supplement to, but not instead of, a face mask or maintaining a good distance from other persons.

3.2.3 Hand hygiene

Avoid touching your face with dirty hands. This will prevent infection being passed via the hands to the eyes, mouth, and respiratory tract. Keep your hands clean and infection-free by touching the fewest possible points of contact.

- Practise good hand hygiene, preferably in the form of hand washing. Hand sanitising is an acceptable alternative where hand washing facilities are not available.
- Practise hand washing at least after every visit to the toilet, before and after working in the kitchen and eating, and otherwise as and when necessary.
- Hand washing with lukewarm water and liquid soap is effective in preventing infection. The washing process itself should take at least 40–60 seconds. Wipe your hands, preferably with disposable paper towels. If air dryers are used, these shall be thoroughly and frequently cleaned.

If ordinary hand washing is not possible:

- Coronavirus is sensitive to alcohol, and alcohol-based disinfection (hand sanitiser) is an option.
- Hand sanitiser shall be placed where there are no hand washing facilities: at entrances, at or in public areas and guests' dining areas, and numerous other readily accessible places.
- Alcohol-based disinfection is ineffective for visibly dirty or wet hands. Therefore, facilities should be made available for ordinary hand washing.

3.2.4 Sneezing and cough hygiene

- Sneeze and cough either into the crook of your elbow or into a paper towel which is then discarded. Wash or sanitise your hands afterwards.
- Avoid touching your face, especially your eyes, mouth, and nose.

3.2.5 Cleaning

- Cleaning should be done with ordinary cleaning agents and not those that contain ethanol, as these may cause damage to some surfaces.
- Have more thorough cleaning in exposed areas and contact surfaces.
- Toilets and washbasins should be cleaned frequently, at least daily during daily use. Wipe surfaces such as the toilet seat and taps on washbasins regularly, depending on how frequently it is in use.
- Disposable paper towels and soap shall be available.
- Air dryers shall be cleaned thoroughly and frequently.
- Rubbish bins shall be emptied regularly.
- Pay extra attention to cleaning in staff quarters, public areas, and guests' dining areas.
- Dining tables shall be cleaned with water and detergent after use.
- Equipment used by several people shall be cleaned after use.

The following important points of contact shall be cleaned particularly thoroughly:

- kitchenettes, coffee machines, dishwashers, etc.;
- payment terminals, phones, PC monitors and equipment, touchscreens, microphones, etc.;
- desks and tables;
- light switches, lift buttons, etc.;
- railings;
- door handles and surrounding areas;
- dispensers;
- taps and shower heads;
- toilets.

3.2.6 Ventilation

All rooms shall be adequately ventilated according to the individual room concerned.

3.2.7 Sick persons

It is important that even persons with mild respiratory symptoms (especially coughing and sneezing) do not report for work or in other contexts where they meet other persons. Most infection transmission occurs just before the first signs of the disease become apparent.

A person who falls ill after embarkation shall leave the vessel as soon as possible and move to a suitable location, such as a quarantine hotel. When applicable, the person shall move to an onboard isolation cabin (see 5.5). Sick persons shall cover their mouth and nose, and whenever possible keep 2 metres distance to others.

Some medical conditions and allergies cause similar symptoms to COVID-19. Individuals must themselves consider whether their symptoms could be caused by COVID-19 or whether they are solely due to another medical condition or allergy. In the event of doubt, the person should stay at home and be tested for COVID-19.

3.3 Use the “Smittestopp” app on your mobile

Health authorities of many countries have developed apps for mobile phones to assist with contact tracing. The Norwegian app is called “Smittestopp”.

Anyone who works or has shorter stays on the vessel is encouraged to have the “Smittestopp” mobile app, or the appropriate app in the country in question, in active use. The app will notify you of any close contact you have had with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. If you test positive yourself, you can help prevent the spread of infection by notifying others through the “Smittestopp” app. You will remain anonymous to others when you register a positive test result. Use of the app is voluntary.

3.4 Specific infection control measures

3.4.1 General

Ensure that all ship personnel, passengers, and visitors are able to follow the general infection control advice given by the authorities at all times. In areas where the infection rate is higher, the municipality may recommend or enforce the wearing of face masks where it is not possible to keep the recommended distance from others.

- Information on infection control measures shall be given to all passengers and visitors before travel commences.
- Information about all passengers and visitors shall be retained for two weeks after the end of the cruise for use in case contact tracing becomes necessary. If necessary, the contact information will be handed over to the municipal health services, which carry out the contact tracing.
- Avoid crowding around entrances and in the vessel. Consider adding markings to the floor around the premises to facilitate social distancing. People can pass each other and be present in the same area for a short period of time without any great risk of infection.
- If applicable, mark “one-way traffic”, and ensure separate entrance and exit to specific areas.
- Facilitate card payments or other electronic payment solutions.
- Facilitate good hand hygiene by encouraging all ship personnel, passengers, and visitors to hand wash or hand sanitise. Also consider the location of hand sanitising equipment.
- Points of contact shall be cleaned frequently. The frequency of cleaning shall be assessed by the company and depend on the type of contact point and number of people. Examples of contact points include touchscreens, door handles, railings, tabletops, and counters.
- Shared equipment shall be cleaned after use.

3.4.2 Serving points and sanitary facilities

The following applies to serving points:

- Wash hands and/or use sanitiser at entrances to dining areas.
- Clean contact surfaces (such as handles) on communal refrigerators and other equipment before, during and after mealtimes.
- Place paper towel dispensers, so that paper towels are available to avoid skin contact when using decanters and jugs.
- Clean dining tables with water and detergent after each table setting.
- Consider arranging furniture in communal areas so that the requirement for a minimum distance of 1 metre is met, if applicable.
- Equipment should only be touched if necessary and only by the intended user.
- Consider reducing the number of shared points of contact if you are providing for yourself.
- Ensure frequent cleaning of shared points of contact and communal cutlery. Where shared items such as seasonings, ketchup, etc. is used, these shall be cleaned frequently, and hand hygiene facilities should be readily available.

For sanitary facilities, the following shall apply:

- Carry out frequent cleaning, especially of points of contact.
- Wipe hands with paper towels. If air dryers are to be used, it is important that they are kept clean.
- Avoid queues wherever possible.
- Consider marking floors with distance measurements.

3.5 On-shore expeditions

No extra infection control measures are needed for on-shore expeditions outside of inhabited areas.

For expeditions in inhabited areas, the following shall apply:

- Respect local rules and regulations.
- Maintain physical distance when visiting local communities, in particular when meeting others indoor, keeping at least 1 metre distance.
- Consider wearing face mask, even if fully vaccinated.

For each on-shore expedition there shall be appointed a person who is responsible for knowing and informing about local rules and regulations, and for ensuring that the rules and regulations are followed.

4 General information concerning coronavirus, COVID-19, and infection

Coronavirus is primarily transmitted via air, droplets, or contact. The virus can survive from a few hours to several days, depending on the type of surface, temperature, sunlight, air exchange and air humidity.

COVID-19 is a disease caused by the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. COVID-19 symptoms are respiratory tract infection, fever, cough, breathing difficulties and loss of taste or sense of smell.

Coronavirus can be removed by cleaning with ordinary detergents. It is therefore not necessary to routinely use disinfection. However, if disinfection is used, visible dirt should first be wiped away using a cloth or paper towel. The disinfectant will otherwise not be effective.

The risk of infection rises with the length of time that people are together and the smaller the distance between people. One of the most important infection control measures is therefore to ensure a good distance between people who meet each other, and to reduce both the number of contacts and the frequency of contact. This will reduce the possibility of infection being transmitted. The four main measures to reduce the spread of coronavirus infection are:

- 1) greater distance between persons;
- 2) less frequent contact between persons;
- 3) good hygiene;
- 4) infected persons shall go into isolation or quarantine.

5 If infection is confirmed or suspected

5.1 General

The municipal health services and other health authorities are responsible for following up on cases of infection. This clause sets out the procedures that must be followed in such cases.

5.2 Testing

If a person has one or more COVID-19 symptoms or if a doctor suspects a person may be infected with COVID-19, coronavirus testing shall be arranged.

If a person has come into close contact with someone who is confirmed or suspected of being infected with COVID-19, testing and infection tracking shall be done according to national guidelines.

If possible, equipment for coronavirus testing should be available onboard. When testing onboard, municipal health services shall be informed of test results and which type of test has been used.

The municipal health services normally carry out the actual testing, but self-testing may be a supplement or in some cases an alternative. The municipality will explain the practical aspects of the test procedure. There is no need for a referral from a doctor to carry out a test.

5.3 Contact tracing

Infection tracking is the process of finding, informing and where appropriate following up or testing close contacts of persons confirmed as being infected with coronavirus. The purpose of systematic infection tracking is to help break the chain of infection. This work is carried out by the municipal health services, but the infected person may also inform close contacts in order to speed up infection tracking.

In order for infection tracking to be effective, the municipal health services require access to the contact details of possible close contacts. The company is required to collect and provide this information.

Infection tracking consists of three parts:

- Discussion with the person who has been infected in order to review the situation and identify close contacts.
- Provision of information to close contacts, explaining that they have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, and who may therefore have been exposed to infection.
- Follow-up of close contacts.

Anyone involved in contact tracing is subject to a duty of confidentiality when handling personal data.

5.4 Quarantine and isolation

Anyone who has or may have been in contact with an infected person may be required to go into quarantine for up to 10 days, following Norwegian regulations. Persons arriving in Norway from abroad may also be required to go into quarantine. Persons who are in quarantine shall avoid passing any infection on to others.

Persons with probable or confirmed COVID-19 disease shall be placed in isolation, either at home or in a medical institution or other suitable accommodation.

The health authorities are responsible for drawing up rules regarding quarantine and isolation. See Clause 6 for more information.

5.5 Isolation on a cruise vessel

If it is at all feasible, there should be dedicated cabin space on the cruise vessel to isolate any passenger or member of the crew who should test positive for COVID-19 or develop symptoms of COVID-19 during parts of the voyage when regular on-shore quarantine or isolation facilities are unavailable.

6 Additional information

Additional information about coronavirus and COVID-19 can be found on the following websites:

- At regjeringen.no: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/Koronasituasjonen/id2692388/>.
- At helsenger.no: <https://helsenorge.no/koronavirus/>;
- On the Norwegian Institute of Public Health's (Folkehelseinstituttet) website: <https://www.fhi.no/sv/smittsomme-sykdommer/corona/>;
- Specific information about quarantine and isolation: <https://www.fhi.no/nettpub/coronavirus/fakta/avstand-karantene-og-isolering/>;
- COVID-19 advice for the public from the WHO: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/>;

— *The COVID-19 Regulations*: <https://lovdata.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2020-03-27-470>.

Please note that the information may change over time. This also applies to the *COVID-19 Regulations*.

Information about other infection control specifications on Standards Norway's website:
<https://www.standard.no/smittevernveiledning>.

7 Safe expedition cruise

Organizations that undertake to follow the rules and implement the measures set out in this document may use the emblem shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1 – Safe expedition cruise

8 Checklists for infection control measures

These example checklists may serve as basis for checklists to be used within the company and onboard expedition cruise vessels.

Table 1 – Checklist for the company

Measure	Date	Completed	Comments
Provide information about infection control to all employees			
Establish a system for the provision of information about infection control to passengers and visitors			
Establish a system for infection control training of all employees and for documenting training			
Appoint infection control officers			
Establish a system for registration of employees, ship personnel, passengers, and visitors with regard to possible contact tracing			
Establish a system for checking of COVID-19 Certificates and for coronavirus or antigen testing			
Establish a system for monitoring the health situation onboard vessels			
Create plan for hygiene measures and cleaning			

Table 2 – Checklist for implementation of measures

Measure	Date	Completed	Comments
Make sure that pre-embarkation infection control measures are taken for all ship personnel, passengers, and visitors, including checking of COVID-19 Certificate and coronavirus or antigen testing			
Apply floor markings to ensure social distancing			
Make sure it is possible to maintain distance; if appropriate, mark “one-way traffic” routes			
Facilitate good social distancing in all premises; remove furniture if necessary			
Arrange for information notices on infection control, hand hygiene and sneeze and cough hygiene			
Post notices concerning the number of people that can be present in each room, where relevant			
Check that soap and sanitiser dispensers work and are replenished			
Ensure that all contact points and air driers are cleaned thoroughly			
Make sure that paper towels are available where needed			
Ensure good ventilation			

Table 3 – Checklist for employees and visitors

Measure
Do not board the vessel if you are ill, even with mild symptoms; leave the vessel or go to an isolation cabin if you become ill
Keep at least 1 metre apart from people that are not in your cohort, if possible 2 metres
Avoid unnecessary contact with others
Wear a face mask when recommended or required by the authorities
Remember good hand hygiene and sneeze and cough hygiene
Tell the appropriate person if you see anything that could or should be improved
Use the “Smittestopp” app on your mobile

Table 4 – Checklist for on-shore expeditions

Measure
Obtain information about local rules and regulations
Inform staff and passengers about local rules and regulations
Make sure that staff and passengers understand and follow local rules and regulations
Avoid free roaming; stay in groups
Wear face mask if this is recommended

- Norwegian Standard is adopted by Standards Norway and is a registered trademark.
- Other products from Standards Norway, such as technical specifications, workshop agreements and guidances, are published upon completion without formal adoption.
- Standards Norway can provide information about contents and answer professional inquiries.
- Questions related to reproduction are to be directed to Standard Online AS.
- Proceeds from the sale of standards constitute a major and crucial part of the financing of standardization work in Norway.
- More information about standardization, standards, courses, and other products can be found on www.standard.no.

Standards Norway
P.O. Box 242
NO-1326 Lysaker
Norway
Tel. +47 67 83 86 00
info@standard.no

www.standard.no

Standard Online AS
P.O. Box 242
NO-1326 Lysaker
Norway
Tel. +47 67 83 87 00
salg@standard.no

Reference number:
NHS C19014:2022 (en)

© Standards Norway 2023

