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DOT&PF/AMHS

## **PURPOSE**

To establish effective policies, procedures and practices to help mitigate the transmission of Covid-19 aboard AMHS vessels and to comply with the Federal Mask Mandate for Transportation, which was effective February 1, 2021, at 11:59 p.m. (Federal Mask Mandate) and updated on 6/10/21.

## **SCOPE**

This mitigation plan was designed to address customized service needs under Covid-19 pandemic and to comply with the Federal Mask Mandate. The plan has been developed with input from both shore side and shipboard personnel and by reference to the Federal Mask Mandate. Covid-19 presents a unique challenge for AMHS operations. This Plan reflects an effort to strike a fine balance between the service expectations and compliance with health mandates, CDC guidelines, and federal law as much as possible.

## **PHASES**

1. Circulate this mitigation plan among the contributors for additional comments, suggestions – completed.
2. Complete the action list, finalize and distribute the plan to all vessels – completed.
3. Evaluate effectiveness of the plan and make adjustments as needed - ongoing

## **FEDERAL MASK MANDATE (6/10/21 update)**

The Federal Mask Mandate requires AMHS, as a conveyance operator transporting persons into and within the United States and as an operator of terminal facilities, to use best efforts to ensure that passengers and those persons entering a terminal building or on the premises of its terminal facility wear a mask for the duration of their presence on an AMHS vessel and while in a terminal building or on terminal premises. Best efforts include:

- allowing terminal entry and vessel boarding only to those persons who wear masks;
- instructing persons that Federal law requires wearing a mask while inside any terminal building or structure and on a vessel, as the case may be, and that failure to comply constitutes a violation of Federal law;†
- monitoring persons in a terminal building, on terminal premises, and on a vessel for anyone who is not wearing a mask and seeking compliance from such persons;
- at the earliest opportunity, removing or disembarking any person who refuses to comply from the terminal building or premises or from the vessel, as the case may be; and
- providing persons with prominent and adequate notice to facilitate awareness and compliance with the requirement of the Federal Mask Mandate to wear a mask; best practices may include, if feasible, advance notifications on digital platforms, such as on apps, websites, or email; posted signage in multiple languages with illustrations; printing the requirement on transit tickets; or other methods as appropriate.

**† In accordance with the CDC's 6/10/21 update, an individual on an AMHS vessel or on terminal premises is not required to wear masks while outdoors. For purposes of this Plan, "outdoors" means an open-air area not confined by walls and a ceiling. With regard to: (1) a ferry, an outdoor area is the vessel's open deck area; (2) terminal premises, an outdoor area is the parking lot and staging area. (However, an individual in a vehicle must wear a mask when presenting boarding information or otherwise interacting with AMHS personnel who are within 6 feet of the vehicle and the vehicle's window is lowered.)**

**APPLICATION OF MITIGATION PLAN**

Onboard services on all AMHS vessels, in AMHS terminal buildings, and on the premises of an AMHS terminal facility:

**MASK DETAILS:**

*Mask* means a material covering the nose and mouth of the wearer, excluding face shields.

A properly worn mask completely covers the nose and mouth of the wearer. A mask should be secured to the head, including with ties or ear loops. A mask should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face. Masks do not include face shields. Masks can be either manufactured or homemade and should be a solid piece of material without slits, exhalation valves, or punctures. Medical masks and N-95 respirators fulfill the requirements of this plan and the Federal Mask Mandate.

The following attributes are additionally acceptable as long as masks meet the requirements above.

- Masks can be either manufactured or homemade.
- Masks can be reusable or disposable.
- Masks can have inner filter pockets.
- Clear masks or cloth masks with a clear plastic panel may be used to facilitate communication with people who are hearing impaired or others who need to see a speaker's mouth to understand speech.

The following do not qualify as adequate masks:

- Masks worn in a way that does not cover both the mouth and nose.
- Face shields or goggles (face shields or goggles may be worn to supplement a mask that meets above required attributes).
- Scarves, ski masks, balaclavas, or bandannas.
- Shirt or sweater collars (e.g., turtleneck collars) pulled up over the mouth and nose.
- Masks made from loosely woven fabric or that are knitted, i.e., fabrics that let light pass through.
- Masks made from materials that are hard to breathe through (such as vinyl, plastic or leather).
- Masks containing slits, exhalation valves, or punctures.
- Masks that do not fit properly (large gaps, too loose or too tight).

See CDC mask guidance at: <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/masks/mask-travel-guidance.html>

**ACTION PLAN****1. GENERAL POLICIES AND DEFINITIONS**

Below policies have been established to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus that causes Covid-19 onboard AMHS vessels. When testing is required it must be a RT-PCR or an Antigen test and not an antibody test. When the term **“a complete vaccination”** is used it means that all shots for the vaccine have been administered and a 14 day waiting period after the final shot has passed. Presently the vaccine shot series available to the public are as follows:

- Moderna – 2 shots
- Pfizer – 2 shots
- Johnson and Johnson – 1 shot

At this time AMHS is not requiring a third booster shot to satisfy “a complete vaccination”

## A. Prevention

- i. It is required that all passengers, crew, and officers wear a face mask for the duration of the voyage, except when outside in the vessel's open deck area. Signage requiring face masks, social distancing, and hand washing will be posted throughout the crew areas.
- ii. All passengers over the age of 2 and crewmembers are required to wear a face mask while boarding and onboard AMHS vessels except when in a stateroom or tent, in a designated smoking area, while eating, in a vehicle while loading/unloading \*(except when showing ID and boarding passes to the Purser or other designee), on the exterior/outside open deck area, or while underway in a vehicle on the car deck aboard Lituya. Reasonable accommodations will be made for passengers who are unable to wear a mask due to a disability. Signage requiring face masks, social distancing, and hand washing will be posted throughout the passenger areas.
- iii. Passengers are to bring their own face mask when boarding the vessel.
- iv. Additional face masks will be available for passengers and crew if requested (subject to availability).
- v. Only ticketed passengers will be allowed to board the vessel, no visitors or un-ticketed customers. (Members of DOT&PF staff and vendors approved for conducting work/business aboard the AMHS vessels are exempt from this requirement.)
- vi. All crew on operational ferries or ferries in yard status/layout will be required to have a negative test result for a test taken within 7 days (168hrs) before 12:01 a.m. on the day of the start of an assignment or the day of deadheading to an assignment. A valid CDC issued COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card showing a complete vaccination will be accepted in lieu of a negative test result (some vaccines require 2 shots to be complete). When in operation, crew on Lituya who are not vaccinated will undergo periodic testing, in lieu of pre assignment testing, that will be determined by the employer in consultation with DHSS.
- vii. Restriction to the vessel for all crewmembers has ended. When leaving the vessel normal protocol is in place for check-in check-out procedures per department heads and the vessel Master. Vessel crewmembers will observe community restrictions for going ashore if they are in place.
- viii. Passengers will be allowed ashore at all port calls if there are no community restrictions. Communities with restrictions will need to communicate restrictions to passengers via signage, media, or local enforcement personnel.
- ix. All members of DOT&PF staff and vendors approved for conducting work/business aboard the AMHS vessels (vaccinated or not vaccinated) will wear a face mask while aboard the vessel. Additionally, they will have their temperature taken to ensure there is no fever of 100. 4° F / 38° C or greater by checking in with the Purser or Masters designee. Crewmembers assigned to vessels in yard status/layout are not permitted to board operational vessels without permission from both the Vessel Master and the Operations Manager.

## B. Screening

- i. *Screening Crew for COVID-19:*
  - a) When crew report aboard the vessel at every crew change the purser will require evidence of a negative COVID-19 test result for a test taken within 7 days (168hrs) before 12:01 a.m. on the day of the start an assignment or deadheading to an assignment. There is a special provision for crewmembers who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 below in paragraph b) where testing will not apply. A valid CDC issued COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card showing a complete vaccination will be accepted in lieu of a negative test result (some vaccines require 2 shots to be complete) . The crewmember will also have their temperature taken (vaccinated or not vaccinated) to ensure there is no fever of 100. 4° F / 38° C or greater. This procedure will apply to deadheading crew members traveling **to** an assignment prior to boarding the vessel they are deadheading on. The negative test result will be accepted as sufficient testing when boarding the "assigned" vessel

if deadheading and transferring to another vessel. If transferring to another vessel, the deadhead pass and test result will be shown to the purser as evidence. A valid CDC issued COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card showing a complete vaccination will be accepted in lieu of a negative test result.

- b) Crewmembers who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 are exempt from testing requirements for a period of 90 days beginning from the date of onset of their symptoms or the date of their first positive test if the person was asymptomatic. (Crewmembers who develop new symptoms during the 90 day period must consult with a healthcare provider to determine if they need to be re-tested). Crewmembers who have previously tested positive must have a written release to return to work from the Public Health Department. On the back of their release the crewmember will document either the date of onset of their symptoms or the date of their first positive test result, whichever is earlier.
- c) The Purser will require crew members to fill out the AMHS Crew Reporting to Duty Form that is available on the AMHS Internal Resources site.
- d) There are special cases where crew who are required to obtain a negative test result are dispatched to an assignment while waiting on results to come in. In these cases, the Operations Manager, Port Captain, or Port Steward will forward authorization for the vessel to administer an antigen test when reporting aboard.
- e) The Purser will keep a list of those crew members asked to leave the vessel, these lists will be archived with dispatch in the crew list reports - amhs.vessel.crewlist@alaska.gov.
- f) Lists of vaccinated crewmembers shall **not** be maintained. However, the Master is authorized to generate and provide a list of vaccinated crew onboard to public health authorities when requested to assist with contact tracing efforts.

#### C. Social Distancing

- i. All social distancing protocols are followed where applicable, both onboard and while loading/unloading. Vessels will establish a clear and short announcement over the public address system for all departures emphasizing the importance of hand washing, face masks, and social distancing.
- ii. Minimize direct contact between employees and passengers, increase physical distancing.
- iii. Establish a one way traffic pattern around the vessel where applicable.
- iv. Place 6 feet apart markers/labels/direction signs on the deck where applicable.

#### D. Sanitation

- i. Place hand sanitizers/wipes at the entrance of service locations, elevators, rails, public restrooms/showers etc.
- ii. Daily touch-point sanitization (workstations, equipment, screens, doorknobs, restrooms).
- iii. Use only EPA approved disinfectants and sanitizers and follow instructions provided by the manufacturer; consult with Chief Steward or Passenger Services shore side office for chemicals approved to use on vessels.
- iv. Continue following previously established Enhanced Sanitation Protocols; refer to Passenger Services SOP 04.09 for specifics.

#### E. Food Service

- i. Continue following FDA regulations regarding Food Safety.
- ii. Install sneeze guards at service counters; hot/cold food lines, cashier counter, purser counter etc.
- iii. Post signage encouraging passengers to wash hands often, especially before and after entering food service areas.

- iv. Salad bars/buffets are allowed if hand sanitizers are used before touching shared utensils. Place a hand sanitizer dispenser on each end of the food line. Place signage to require passengers and crew use the sanitizer before touching the shared utensils.
- v. Use suitable utensils when dispensing ready-to-eat food such a **spatula**, tongs etc. (Food Code Section 3-301.11). Gloves are not a substitute for hand washing or hand hygiene.
- vi. Passengers will be allowed to consume their food in their cabins, if requested.
- vii. Food will be available for take away, using to-go boxes, if requested.

**F. Accommodations**

- i. AMHS will return to double occupancy crew berthing on applicable vessels. Crew rooms must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized at the end of an assignment and ready for the next occupants(s).
- ii. On mainline ferries two passenger cabins will be reserved as quarantine cabins and left vacant for emergencies
- iii. Each room will be disinfected after vacated by the occupant(s). Used beds will be stripped and re-made. All hard surfaces will be cleaned with disinfectant(s).
- iv. Foggers designed for room cleaning can be used to speed up this process. EPA approved disinfectants and sanitizers must be used when utilizing a fogger.
- v. A team of two crew members will clean each state room.
- vi. Place a cover sheet over the upper bunk beds to minimize excess use, replace the cover sheets each time after cleaning the cabin.

**G. While Underway**

- i. Vessels will refer the Passenger Services Infection Control Plan Version 4 located at the Purser Office for responding to Covid-19 symptoms while underway. At the beginning of the operating season and at each crew change;
  - a) The Purser will remind crew that a copy of the Alaska Marine Highway Passenger Services Infection Control Plan version 4 dated January 2020 is in the Desk Reference located in the Purser's Office.
  - b) Inform the crew of the location of the specific isolation area/stateroom identified by Chief Engineer.
- ii. A passenger who presents Covid-19 like symptoms while the vessel is underway will be isolated in the predetermined location and follow the Pandemic Response section (pages 13 – 17) of the Alaska Marine Highway Passenger Services Infection Control Plan Version 4 dated January 2020 and Coast Guard directions.
- iii. A crew member who develops any COVID like symptoms during a voyage is to isolate in their room, if they have one. If not, they should isolate in the vessel's predesignated location and follow the Pandemic Response section (pages 13 – 17) of the Alaska Marine Highway Passenger Services Infection Control Plan Version 4 dated January 2020 and Coast Guard directions.
- iv. The Master of the vessel will notify the Coast Guard as required of any potential Covid-19 cases and follow their directions along with the directions in the Pandemic Response section (pages 13 – 17) of the Alaska Marine Highway Passenger Services Infection Control Plan Version 4 dated January 2020. Master will also inform shore side managers once USCG is notified about the potential Covid-19 case(s).

**2. LOCATION SPECIFIC PROCEDURES**

Below is the list of location specific procedures that include but not limited to;

**A. Food Courts or Cafeterias**

- i. Install/place hand sanitizer/wipes dispenser at the entrance and exit of the food court/cafeteria.
- ii. Passengers order their food which is served by the cook and/or server as usual. Salad bars/buffets are allowed if hand sanitizers used before touching shared utensils. Place a hand sanitizer dispenser on

each end of the food line. Place signage to require passengers and crew use the sanitizer before touching the shared utensils.

- iii. Coffee and soda can be self-served by the customer but one customer in line at a time and equipment is wiped/sanitized often or a hand sanitizer dispenser is available by the coffee/soda station.
- iv. Daily touch-point sanitization (counters, equipment, reach-in coolers etc.)
- v. Condiments in single-use disposable packets only.
- vi. Fully sanitize tables and chairs after each group.

## **B. Dining Rooms**

- i. Waiter or cashier will take and/or serve the order wearing a face mask.
- ii. Salad bars/buffets are allowed if hand sanitizers are used before touching shared utensils. Place a hand sanitizer dispenser on each end of the food line. Place signage to require passengers and crew use the sanitizer before touching the shared utensils. Encourage passengers not to sit at the same table unless household members, companions, friends etc.
- iii. Waiter or the cashier will serve condiments, coffee, soda etc. unless there is a coffee/soda station available. Place a hand sanitizer dispenser on each end of the food line.
- iv. Sanitize or provide disposable menus or menu board.
- v. Fully sanitize tables and chairs after each group.
- vi. Daily touch-point sanitization (counters, equipment, reach-in coolers etc.)
- vii. Do not use tablecloths.

## **C. POS Stations (Cash Registers)**

- i. Install/place a hand sanitizer/wipes at the cashier counter.
- ii. Clean/sanitize hands after handling cash.
- iii. Daily touch-point sanitization (counters, equipment, screens etc.)
- iv. Clean/sanitize the credit/debit cards prior to handling and swiping.

## **D. Crew and Officer Messes**

- i. Stagger meal hours for crew when and where possible.
- ii. Establish distance between crew as much as possible; sharing the same table is OK.
- iii. Crew should be allowed to consume their food in their cabin if they must but not in public areas.
- iv. Food safety regulations and sanitation protocols must be followed.
- v. Salad bars/buffets are allowed if hand sanitizers used before touching shared utensils. Place a hand sanitizer dispenser at each end of the food line. Place signage to require passengers and crew use the sanitizer before touching the shared utensils.

## **E. Car Decks**

- i. Place 6ft distance markers on the car deck if possible.
- ii. Stagger car deck calls in order to spread the number of people on the car deck each time.
- iii. On all vessels, pets must remain on the car deck until their owner(s) disembark the vessel at their final destination.

## **F. Purser Foyers**

- i. Place markers on the floor for 6 feet of distancing.
- ii. Install/place hand sanitizers/wipes around the Purser counter.
- iii. Discourage forming lines at the Purser foyer, serve to a single cluster of passengers at a time.
- iv. Encourage only one member of a group to approach the counter where possible.

## **G. On the Ramp**

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- i. Place 6ft distance markers on loading areas where possible.
- ii. Discourage forming lines on the ramp, serve to a single cluster of passengers at a time.
- iii. Follow the screening process for both the crew and the passengers as described above in the screening section.

### **PROVISIONS**

This section will be used to inventory the provisions used for this plan. Information in this section will be updated periodically by Passenger Services. All cleaning supplies and PPE for COVID19 will be ordered through the Passenger Services Department.

Provision	Purchased	Distributed	In-Stock	Source
Face Masks (disposable)	75500	40000	35500	Open Market/State Inventory
Respirators (N95 or KN95)	1000	600	400	Open Market/State Inventory
Handmade Face Mask	560	560	0	Local Producer
Cloth Face Mask	4000	4000	0	MARAD and EOC

### **METRICS AND EVALUATION**

This section will be used to monitor the effectiveness of this plan. Adjustments will be made as necessary.

Vessel	Action Item	Effective (Yes/No)	Reason(s) (if not effective)	Suggestions (if not effective)
MAT/KEN	BEL Departures	No	Procedural Inconsistencies	Vessel personnel help with screening inside the terminal
ALL	Deadheading Crew	No	Clarification Needed	Test prior to deadheading to an assignment
ALL	5 Day Crew Testing	No	Results not timely	Expand to 7 Day Testing
ALL	Contractors/Vendors	No	Clarification Needed	Temperature Checks
KEN	PPE/Cleaning/Social Distancing	Yes		
ALL	Added tents to prevention	No	Passenger in tents are isolated from others	Face masks not required in tents
MAT/KEN	BEL Departures	No	COVID19 Testing Vouchers Must Be Distributed To Passengers	Bellingham Terminal will distribute the vouchers at check in
ALL	Passenger Age Requirements for Testing	No	Update to State Mandate 10 relaxes testing requirements for passengers under the age of 11	Align AMHS Mitigation Plan with State Mandate 10

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<b>Vessel</b>	<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Effective (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason(s) (if not effective)</b>	<b>Suggestions (if not effective)</b>
ALL	Traveler Declaration Form repository for Bellingham departures.  Traveler Declaration Forms for the different travel categories	No	Clarification Needed	Traveler Declaration forms need to be delivered to the Ketchikan Terminal. Hyperlinks inserted in the Mitigation Plan to identify which declaration form needs to be used for the different categories of travel
ALL	Passengers not required to wear face mask in vehicle while loading	No	Passenger not socially distanced between Purser when showing ID and Boarding Pass	Add requirement for passengers to wear face masks while boarding and while in vehicle showing paperwork to the Purser
ALL	Negative test results for all crewmembers before starting an assignment	No	Per DHSS - Previously positive crew will not shed virus for 90 days but may test positive for a number of days after being released to return to work from Public Health	Modify crew testing requirements to reflect accommodation to previously positive
ALL	Yard/layup crew going aboard operational ferries for business or personal reasons	No	Increased risk to Operational ferries	Restrict unless special permission is granted from Vessel Master and Ops Manager
ALL	ACTION PLAN 1. B) iv not clear	No	Confusion with selecting proper passenger screening form	Modify header for clarity
ALL	Test types	No	Antibody Tests Unreliable	Define Test Type on page 1
ALL	Crew and Pax not allowed to go ashore	Yes, but changes requested	Need to address crew morale and car deck cleanliness	Allow crew and pet owners to go ashore on terminal property in KTN and JNU
ALL	2/1/21 Mask Policy for Passengers, Crew, and in Terminals	No	Mitigation Plan needs augmented Mask Policy to comply with Federal Mandate	Federal Mask Mandate 2/1/21 integrated into the AMHS Mitigation Plan
ALL	4/13/21 Screening procedures include only testing, quarantine, and symptoms	No	With the introduction of vaccines - screening procedures for passengers and crew should additionally include proof of vaccination as an acceptable mitigation.	Expand screening procedures to include the CDC issued COVID19 Vaccination Record Card

AMHS COVID-19 MITIGATION PLAN FOR ONBOARD SERVICES

Vessel	Action Item	Effective (Yes/No)	Reason(s) (if not effective)	Suggestions (if not effective)
ALL	4/13/21 Touch point sanitation procedures	No	New CDC guidance and advancements in cleaning agents diminish the need for hourly touchpoint sanitation.	Change hourly touch point sanitation to daily touch point sanitation to fall in line with the current science and guidance
SW Vessels	4/14/21 Terminal Property Crew breaks in the SW system	No	Crew assigned to vessels that operate in SW have no option for approved breaks on terminal property	Add options for crew to take approved terminal property breaks in Cordova, Homer, and Kodiak
ALL	5/20/21 PRC Testing only accepted	No	Antigen tests are now widely accepted as a means of effectively detecting the virus	Add Antigen testing to the approved screening test types for crew.
ALL	5/20/21 Passenger screening	No	Advances in vaccines and loosening of CDC restrictions warrant changes	Remove screening procedures for passengers
ALL	5/20/21 Crew restrictions	No	Restrictions need to be updated and loosened to conform to success with the Pandemic decline	Lift restrictions for crew per the MOU signed with the unions. 5/17/21
All	6/8/21 Crew restrictions	No	Restrictions need to be updated and loosened to conform to success with the Pandemic decline	Lift going ashore restrictions for all crew.
Mainliners	1/11/2022	No	Allowances for single occupancy crew berthing need to be adjusted to align with previous eases in restrictions	Return to double occupancy berthing that was in place prior to the onset of the pandemic
All	1/11/2022 Federal Mask Mandate updates	No	Updates to Federal Mask Mandate 6/10/21 required in Mitigation Plan	Updates made

Vessel	Action Item	Effective (Yes/No)	Reason(s) (if not effective)	Suggestions (if not effective)
All	1/11/22 Reinstating salad bar and buffet options.	No	Restrictions need to be adjusted to help improve life onboard while caring for safety.	Reinstitute salad bar and buffet services using protocol for safely handling shared utensils.

**CONTRIBUTORS**

This plan has been developed and updated by many staff, crew and officers who contributed time and expertise. A list of contributors is kept on file.

