



REPORTING INFECTIOUS DISEASES

If a vessel is on an international voyage and wishes to enter a port, it is very important that it is clear whether there is an infectious disease on board. If the captain of the vessel suspects that there are one or more patients on board with an infectious disease, he must report this to Port of Harlingen (+31 517 412512) and to the pilot before boarding,

This is in accordance with article 50 of the Wet Publieke Gezondheid (Public Health Act): The captain of a vessel on an international voyage who wishes to put into a port and has knowledge or a serious suspicion that there are one or more cases of illness on board his ship that suggest a disease of an infectious nature which could pose a serious threat to public health will ensure that the port authority and the pilot who comes aboard are informed of this as soon as possible, but prior to arrival. In the event of a report, Port of Harlingen will coordinate the subsequent steps.

Criteria

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that captains should make a report in the event of the following criteria:

Fever that persists for several days, and may be accompanied by:

- Prostration
- Decreased awareness
- Glandular swelling
- Jaundice
- Cough or shortness of breath
- Unusual bleeding
- Paralysis

One of the following symptoms, with or without fever:

- Any skin rash
- Severe vomiting (other than seasickness)
- Severe diarrhoea
- Epileptic fits

(source: Maritime Declaration of Health)

Maritime Declaration of Health

The captain must complete and sign the Maritime Declaration of Health. The international standard form must be completed for this. The standard form asks for:

- The date up to which the Ship Sanitation Exemption/Control Certificate is valid;
- Number of passengers and crew.

Alongside the standard form, the following questions are posed:

- Has any person died on board during the voyage other than as a result of an accident?
- Is there or has there been any case of illness on board during the international voyage which you suspect to be of an infectious nature?
- Has the total number of ill passengers during the voyage been greater than normal/expected?
- Is there currently an ill person on board?
- Has a doctor been consulted?
- Are you aware of any situation on board that could lead to infection or spread of disease?
- Have any sanitary/hygiene measures been applied (such as quarantining, isolation, disinfection, decontamination)?
- Have any stowaways been found on board?
- Is there a sick animal or pet on board?

The captain will inform the agent, pilot (+31 596 618188) and Port of Harlingen (+31 517 412512) if the answer to any of the above questions is 'yes'. The captain must e-mail the Maritime Declaration of Health to haven@portofharlingen.nl. The completed form must be retained on board and must be available for inspection at all times. The person responsible for medical care on board the vessel must be available to answer additional questions.

Reporting infectious disease

The international standard form as included in the appendix is used to complete the Maritime Declaration of Health.

Staff in ports under the control of Port of Harlingen

If pilots, agents, customs officials, police officers, military police officers or other staff in the ports are aware of indications that a patient with an infectious disease is on board a vessel, they must ask the vessel to contact Port of Harlingen. The aforementioned staff can also discuss an indication of an infectious disease with Port of Harlingen themselves. Port of Harlingen will ensure that the issue is raised with the correct partners.

Infectious diseases

Under the Wet Publieke Gezondheid (Public Health Act), a notifiable infectious disease must be reported to GGD Fryslân (Friesland Municipal Health Service), Infectious Diseases Department. In the event of an infectious disease, Port of Harlingen will always make a report to GGD Fryslân.

GGD Fryslân

Harlingertrekweg 58

8913 HR Leeuwarden

+31 88 22 99 222 (weekdays between 08.00 and 17.00)

Outside office hours the report can be made via Port of Harlingen (tel. +31 517 412512).