

SIU COVID-19 TASKFORCE UPDATE

COVID-19

Seafarers' International Union of Canada COVID-19 Taskforce Update November 15, 2021

SIU COVID-19 Taskforce

Chair: Josh Sanders, Vice-President Great Lakes and West Coast
Members: Charles Aubry, Vice-President St. Lawrence and East Coast
Chris Given, Director of Government Relations
Paul Macdonald, HQ Representative (Thorold)
Philippe Marchand, HQ Representative (QC)

I. Overview

As of November 12, 2021, the situation across Canada is as follows:

- 1,745,349 total cases
- 24,505 active cases
- 29,309 deaths

Top Cases by Province (Last 7 days):

1. Quebec: 4,360
2. Ontario: 3,759
3. British Columbia: 3,485
4. Alberta: 3,047
5. Manitoba: 1,164

Vaccinations:

- Those who are unvaccinated make up 83.8% of all COVID-19 cases in Canada
- Those who are partially vaccinated make up 5.4% of all COVID-19 cases in Canada
- Those who are fully vaccinated make up 6.0% of all COVID-19 cases in Canada
- 22.6 million achieved partial vaccination status, of which 49,028 (0.22%) were diagnosed with COVID-19 while partially vaccinated
- 21.0 million achieved full vaccination status, of which 57,684 (0.27%) were diagnosed with COVID-19 while fully vaccinated

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- As of last Friday, 73.96% of all Canadians are now fully vaccinated, while 77.68% have received at least one dose.

Transport Canada and the Government of Canada's COVID-19 vaccination mandate for the Canadian Marine Sector came into affect on October 30, 2021. [Interim Order No. 7 Respecting Passenger Vessel Restrictions Due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) mandates that all companies in the marine sector who operate a vessel that has a crew of 12 or more must implement a mandatory vaccination policy fleet-wide. Transport Canada is also recommending that companies who operate fleets with less than 12 on each vessel should also be implementing mandatory vaccine policies. The policy also states that all contractors coming aboard a vessel that has a vaccine mandate must also be vaccinated. Starting November 15, 2021, all persons, aside from passengers, who wish to board a vessel will be required to have evidence demonstrating that they received their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

Links:

<https://health-infobase.canada.ca/covid-19/epidemiological-summary-covid-19-cases.html>

<https://tc.canada.ca/en/ministerial-orders-interim-orders-directives-directions-response-letters/interim-order-no-7-respecting-passenger-vessel-restrictions-due-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

<https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/marine-safety/ship-safety-bulletins/measures-mitigate-spread-covid-19-canadian-vessels-foreign-passenger-vessels-operating-canadian-waters-ssb-no-17-2021>

II. The SIU's role in other COVID-19 related Groups

Your Union is involved in every high-level discussion taking place with regards to the marine sector and Transport Canada as well as communicating regularly with all of the Companies and union delegates to ensure best practices and information are shared as needed during these difficult times. Your union is currently in discussions with all of our companies to strengthen protocols in order to combat the more contagious variants of concern.

The SIU has continued to engage with government officials in public health at both the federal, provincial and regional levels to facilitate access to COVID-19 vaccinations in Canadian Ports.

Seafarers' International Union of Canada

200 – 1333 rue St-Jacques, Montreal, Quebec, H3C 4K2
T (514) 931-7859 F (514) 931-3667

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Discussions are underway to encourage governments to develop a roll-out plan that specifically addresses the need to recognize seafarers as a priority group for COVID-19 vaccine boosters, should health officials determine that booster shots become necessary annually. Through our efforts, the Government has recognized the critical role that Canada's seafarers play in supporting supply chains and we are hopeful that if future similar situations were to arise, the government would be in a better position to respond to the industry's needs to ensure our workforces remain healthy and able to carry on with their duties.

Any Certificate of Competency, that otherwise would have expired between October 1, 2019 and March 15, 2020 (but which was extended by previous Ship Safety Bulletins) is now further automatically extended until June 30, 2021. Any Certificate of Competency, that otherwise would have expired between March 16, 2020 and June 30, 2021 (but which was extended by previous Ship Safety Bulletins) will now remain valid until the earlier of; 15 months from the date of expiry on the face of the certificate, or December 31, 2021.

We encourage any seafarer seeking to renew their certificate of competency to do so.

You simply need to follow these 2 easy steps:

- Scan the relevant pages of your discharge book and signed testimonials, if applicable; and
- Send the scanned information by email to your local Transport Canada Marine Examination Centre.

Links for Updated Ship Safety Bulletins from Transport Canada related to COVID-19:

"Revised Temporary Measures Regarding Marine Personnel Certificates, Discharge Books, Marine Medical Certificates & Marine Counter Services" – SSB 04/2021:

<https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/marine-safety/ship-safety-bulletins/revised-temporary-measures-regarding-marine-personnel-certificates-discharge-books-marine-medical-certificates-marine-counter-services-ssb-no-04-2021>

Updated guidelines respecting the mobility of asymptomatic, presumed non-COVID-19-carrying* seafarers in the marine sector during the COVID-19 pandemic - SSB No.: 16/2021
<https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/marine-safety/ship-safety-bulletins/updated-guidelines-respecting-mobility-asymptomatic-presumed-non-covid-19-carrying-seafarers-marine-sector-during-covid-19-pandemic-ssb-no-16-2021>

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Measures to Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19 on Canadian Vessels and Foreign Passenger Vessels Operating in Canadian Waters - SSB No.: 17/2021

<https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/marine-safety/ship-safety-bulletins/measures-mitigate-spread-covid-19-canadian-vessels-foreign-passenger-vessels-operating-canadian-waters-ssb-no-17-2021>

III. COVID-19 Cases on SIU Vessels

As of November 15, 2021, the situation on board is as follows:

- 0 Vessels Currently Dealing with Active Cases
- 8 Vessels with Cases Previously on Board - Resolved and Returned to Operation
- 26 Confirmed Cases since Pandemic Started
 - 0 Active Cases
 - 24 Resolved Cases
 - 2 Deceased

If you are feeling unwell – please immediately alert your direct supervisor and the Captain of the vessel so that the proper precautions can be taken. It may not be a COVID-19 exposure, but all risks must be mitigated to ensure the health and safety of yourself and the rest of the crew. When a case occurs, the SIU has worked to ensure that members are isolated, receiving medical care and provided with support to ensure the process is as stress-free as possible.

If there is a situation occurring on board your vessel that you feel compromises your health or safety (breach of COVID-19 Company protocols, lack of PPE, unsafe visitors on board, etc.), please communicate these incidents to your ship's Union Delegate who can get in touch with a local SIU official. If the situation requires immediate attention, do not hesitate to contact the Union ASAP.

As the SIU has now had the unfortunate experience of dealing with COVID-19 on board a few vessels, we are compiling data and protocols from various responses to positive incidences in order to share best practices amongst the Companies and ensure protocols for dealing with COVID-19 on board the vessels are up-to-date and adequate to ensure our members health and safety remains the top priority.

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IV. Restrictions on Shore Leave

The SIU of Canada is happy to report that there are no shore-leave restrictions in any port across the country. If you choose to go ashore, please continue to follow public health guidelines, practice social distancing and wear your PPE to help protect yourselves and your crewmates.

*Please keep in mind that some Ports may be unavailable for shore leave based on local or Provincial restrictions outside of anyone's immediate control (Atlantic Bubble, Restricted Zones for inter-regional travel, etc.)

Note: This is subject to change at any time to reflect updated information as determined by local public health agencies and at the discretion of the SIU. Please be advised that the situation in certain areas are being closely monitored as COVID-19 cases are trending upwards and changes may need to be made quite rapidly.

V. Members Who are at Home or Returning to Work

Please ensure that you are following public health recommendations and doing your part to mitigate the possibility of exposing yourself or your families to COVID-19 when you are at home and not working. If you are planning for a return to work, or you are a sailing as a relief or any other position where returning home regularly, all measures must be taken to ensure COVID-19 is not brought back to your vessel and that you are in good health when joining.

The SIU **recommends** that all members returning to a vessel from STO, or joining a vessel as a relief, wear a non-medical mask for their first 14 days after returning to the vessel in order to better protect your fellow crew members from any potential exposure to COVID-19.

For information on non-medical face coverings and proper use, please visit the link:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/covid-19-safely-use-non-medical-mask-face-covering.html>

Most companies will require you to complete a COVID-19 Questionnaire about your current health, contact and travel history prior to boarding when joining a vessel. **Please complete**

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these questionnaires truthfully as otherwise you are putting the health of your crewmates in jeopardy. If your health changes after boarding the vessel, please alert a supervisor immediately so that proper precautions can be taken to ensure your health and protect your brothers and sisters on board.

The SIU reminds all members that they must follow Company policy regarding COVID-19. The above recommendations/opinions from the SIU COVID-19 Task Force may differ from Company policy