



Interim Guidance for Aircraft Cabin Staff on Management of Suspected COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus)

Screening for assessing need for suspicion of COVID-19

If a passenger on a flight from **any area** becomes noticeably ill with a fever and respiratory symptoms, the following action is recommended for the cabin crew:

- The passenger should be, as possible, isolated from other passengers and crew.
- The passenger should be asked to wear a protective mask, and those caring for the ill passenger should follow the infection-control measures recommended for cases of COVID-19 until screening questions have been asked to rule out whether such precautions are indicated.
- If the passenger is unable to wear a protective mask because of difficulty breathing, she/he should be asked to cover his mouth and nose with tissue/paper napkin when coughing. A plastic bag should be available to the passenger for used tissue/paper napkin.
- Identify one crew member that will attend to the ill passenger for the time being following the guidelines below “Attending to a passenger suspected of COVID-19.” This crew member should ask the passenger or a travelling companion the [screening questions](#).

If any response is YES, then proceed as for ill travellers from an affected area:

In-flight care of suspected case of COVID-19

If a passenger on a flight from an **affected area** becomes noticeably ill with a fever and respiratory symptoms, the following action is recommended for the cabin crew:

- The passenger should be, as possible, isolated from other passengers and crew.
- The passenger should be asked to wear a protective mask, and those caring for the ill passenger should follow the infection-control measures recommended for cases of COVID-19.
- If the passenger is unable to wear a protective mask because of difficulty breathing, she/he should be asked to cover her/his mouth and nose with tissue/paper napkin when coughing. A plastic bag should be available to the passenger for used tissue/paper napkin.
- Identify one crew member that will attend to the ill passenger during the remainder of the flight. Make sure the crew member follows the guidelines below “Attending to a passenger suspected of COVID-19”.

- A toilet should be identified and made available for the exclusive use of the ill passenger.
- The captain should radio ahead to the airport of destination so that health authorities are alerted to the arrival of a suspected case of COVID-19.
- On arrival, the ill passenger should be placed in isolation and assessed by port health authorities.

Attending to a passenger suspected of COVID-19 the crew member should:

- Wear a protective (surgical) mask.
- Wear disposable gloves, the gloves should not be washed and reused.
- Remove the mask after attending to the ill passenger. Disposable masks should be put in a plastic bag after each use and discarded after the flight when health care workers at the place of destination have taken charge.
- Remove gloves after attending to the ill passenger, discard into a plastic bag and close securely.
- Hands should be washed with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer immediately after gloves are removed.

This is to be repeated every time the passenger is attended to.

Cleaning of bodily fluids from a passenger suspected of COVID-19

- The crew member should wear disposable gloves and a protective (surgical) mask.
- Bodily fluids should be covered with paper napkins soaked in disinfectant and left untouched for a few minutes.
- Remove the paper napkins together with the bodily fluids, discard into a plastic bag and close securely.
- Remove the mask and discard into a plastic bag.
- Remove gloves and discard into a plastic bag.
- Hands should be washed with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer immediately after gloves are removed.

Disposal of garbage

Food tray, leftovers and tissue/paper napkins should be put in a plastic bag and securely closed, before being discarded.

Management of contacts of the ill passenger

If the immediate medical assessment of the ill passenger excludes COVID-19 as a possible cause of his/her illness, the passenger should be referred to local health care facilities for any necessary follow-up. If, however, the initial medical assessment conducted in the airport concludes that the passenger is a suspect or probable case of COVID-19 according to [case definitions](#), the following action should be taken:

Contacts

1. All contacts of the ill passenger should have already been identified during the flight. For the purposes of air travel a contact is defined as:
 - a. passengers sitting in the same seat row or within at least 2 rows in front of or behind the ill passenger;
 - b. all flight attendants on board;
 - c. anyone having intimate contact, providing care or otherwise having contact with respiratory secretions of the ill passenger;
 - d. anyone on the flight living in the same household as the ill passenger;
 - e. if it is a flight attendant who is considered to be a suspect or probable COVID-19 case, all the passengers are considered to be contacts.
2. Contacts should provide, to the health authorities, identification and details of address/[contact details](#) on a Passenger Locator Form valid for 14 days after the flight.
3. Contacts should be given information about COVID-19 and advised to seek immediate medical attention if they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 within 14 days of the flight. In seeking medical attention they should ensure that all those treating them are aware that they have been in contact with a suspected case of COVID-19.
4. Contacts should be allowed to continue to travel as long as they do not have symptoms compatible with COVID-19.

Other passengers

As a precautionary measure, passengers and cockpit crew not defined as contacts should also provide to the health authorities identification and address/contact details valid for 14 days after the flight, on a [Passenger Locator Form](#). They should be given information about COVID-19 and advised to seek medical attention if they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 within 14 days of the flight. These passengers and crew should be free to travel unless they develop any symptoms compatible with COVID-19.