

Temperature checks, medical-grade air filters, public health officer role among NCL protocols



Norwegian Cruise Line's updated COVID-19 protocols include frequent daily touchless temperature checks, continuous monitoring, fogging of staterooms/public areas and medical-grade air filters.

[Anne Kalosh](#) | Jun 02, 2020

All cruise operators are enhancing health protocols, but only a handful have publicly detailed those, leaving passengers and travel advisors guessing for the rest.

Transparency

The standard reason for not going into detail is that **the science of COVID-19 changes almost daily, so things may be different weeks or months from now when ships are able to sail again**. But wouldn't it be reassuring to the traveling public to get at least some information, instead of being left in the dark?

In a breath of fresh air, NCL opted for transparency.

The line said reduced passenger capacity, online check-in and staggered embarkation times will alleviate crowding.

NCL assured all on-board activities will still be available, although operated at a reduced capacity and, in some cases, slightly modified to ensure safe social distancing. Buffets and beverage service will be full-service.

Enhanced screening

Passengers and crew will undergo enhanced pre-embarkation health screenings. Touchless temperature checks and continuous monitoring of passengers and crew throughout the voyage will help identify potential health issues. Checks will occur upon returning to the ship from a port call, prior to all activities in public venues and before meals.

Crew temperature checks will occur multiple times per day, and NCL said it's exploring on-board testing capabilities to allow crew to get the latest, most advanced form of COVID-19 testing at any time throughout their employment contract.

H13 HEPA filters

Ships will have H13 HEPA air filters to remove airborne pathogens. H13 HEPA is one of the highest grades of particulate air filter, catching 99.95% of all particulates 0.1 microns or larger. COVID-19 is 0.125 microns, or 25% larger.

Further, all staterooms, suites and public areas will be cleaned, sanitized and disinfected at an increased frequency, using electrostatic spray technology. The disinfectant used for fogging is hypochlorous acid, a non-toxic, powerful oxidant that effectively kills bacteria, spores and viruses. Comprised of elements such as water and salt, with an electric charge, it is natural and safe to use in open areas.

There will be continuous disinfection of public areas and high-traffic touch points, with continuous cleaning of elevators and public areas during on and off-peak hours.

Frequent handwashing, including when entering food and beverage areas, will be encouraged.

More medical staff and new public health officer role

A larger medical team, COVID-19 test kits on board and isolation rooms are other actions. A new on-board public health officer position will be responsible for overseeing sanitation and outbreak prevention initiatives as well as monitoring cleanliness.

Shoreside

Further, NCL said it would partner with destinations and tour operators to ensure sanitation protocols extend to the shoreside experience. Embarkation terminals will be sanitized continuously, and, where possible, fogged before and after each embarkation and debarkation.

Other operators who've provided detail about their new health and sanitation practices include **American Queen Steamboat Co.**, **American Cruise Lines**, **Bahamas Paradise Cruise Line** and, way back in early April, **Genting Cruise Lines**.