



REGIONAL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTRE

MEDIA RELEASE

April 6, 2020

Transport Canada Mandatory Marine Measures to Combat COVID-19

qathet Regional District, B.C. – Transport Canada has issued new physical distancing orders for commercial marine operators in Canada to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

In a [news release](#) issued Sunday, April 5, Transport Canada advised that as of Monday, April 6, all commercial marine vessels with a capacity of more than 12 passengers must not engage in non-essential activities, such as tourism or recreation, until at least Tuesday, June 30.

BC Ferries and other essential passenger vessel operators, including water taxis and barge operators, must immediately reduce the maximum number of passengers that may be carried on board by 50 per cent in order to support the two-metre physical distancing order, or must implement alternative actions to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 among passengers on board their vessels, such as keeping people in their vehicles or enhancing cleaning practices. Ferry and essential passenger vessel operators are also advised that health checks should be conducted where feasible on every passenger before they board, for trips longer than 30 minutes, in accordance with the Public Health Agency of Canada.

These measures apply to all commercial passenger vessels in the region including BC Ferries, as well as all water taxi and barge operators servicing Savary, Lasqueti and Texada islands.

Enforcement action for failing to abide by these new measures could include fines of up to \$5,000 per day for an individual and \$25,000 per day for a vessel or corporation, as well as criminal sanctions, which include up to \$1 million in fines and/or up to 18 months imprisonment.

These measures are being implemented Canada-wide to secure the flow of essential goods and services to communities dependent on marine transportation, and to reduce the spread of COVID-19 to isolated areas with limited healthcare resources.

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