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## PACIFIC PRAWN FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

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*The following document has been prepared in response to ensuring the risk of exposure to COVID 19 and the transmission of the virus is minimized in the Pacific Region Commercial Prawn Fishery. This document is based on the WorkSafeBC guidance for developing COVID 19 mitigation plans and procedures. WorkSafe BC will not be reviewing or approving the plans of individual vessel, but during a WorkSafe BC inspection they will ask vessel masters about the steps you have taken to protect your workers. You must ensure that workers understand the measures taken to reduce risk. The following is a general document that may need to be tailored by vessel masters depending on their specific operations.*

# COVID-19 Health & Safety Plan for the Commercial Prawn Fishery

This COVID 19 Plan has been developed to reduce the risk of exposure and transmission of COVID 19. The Plan has four components:

1. Type of operation
2. Procedures
3. Policy
4. Additional Information

### TYPE OF OPERATION

Prawn vessels generally operate in two distinct ways: Day boats (where crew commute to and from vessel each workday); and live-a-boards (crew housed on vessel). The important differences between the two in terms of procedures are:

Day boats - Physical distancing needs to be maintained; if physical distancing cannot be maintained then modifications to vessels may need to be made such as adding partitions or plexiglass barriers. If modifications cannot be implemented, then consider the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks and gloves.

Live-a-boards – Physical distancing does not have to be maintained if the Crew and vessel master consider themselves a “household unit”.



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### PROCEDURES

#### THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS YOU CAN DO:

**WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN!**

**DON'T TOUCH YOUR FACE!**

**SNEEZE INTO YOUR ELBOW!**

**CLEAN AND DISINFECT SURFACES AND COMMON TOUCH AREAS OFTEN!**

**DO NOT SHARE WORK GLOVES OR RAIN GEAR!**

#### Pre-trip

- Ensure vessel is thoroughly cleaned and disinfected
- Ensure vessel is adequately equipped with appropriate PPE
- Ensure safe work procedures have been updated to accommodate any changes in operating procedures because of COVID-19
- Compile a list of shoreside contact numbers for all ports and services that may be visited and ensure they can accommodate your needs (fuel docks, grocery stores, offload facilities, etc.)
- During gear maintenance (while not on vessel) follow physical distancing guidelines and develop work-site specific procedures for hygiene (e.g. hand washing facilities, washroom)
- If traveling to/from vessel daily for pre-season preparation work (regardless if live-a-board or not) the following procedures should be followed\*:
  - Maintain physical distancing
  - Avoid engaging in any social activities to and from the work site
  - If possible, prepare and bring meals and beverages from home
  - Avoid sharing galley table

\*note this above procedure applies to day boats at all times including when engaged in fishing.



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### Entering ports and docking

- Only enter port for essential operations (to unload, resupply, safe tie up, etc.)
- If safe and practicable to do so anchor out overnight
- If possible, vessels should anchor out when there is a wait to unload or access a service dock. Use the VHF radio to coordinate with other waiting vessels, as to the order of service at fuel/ice/bait/unloading facilities to ensure physical distancing
- Do not tie alongside other vessels unless absolutely necessary

### Fueling

- Pre-arrange arrival with fuel dock and confirm tie up procedures
- Follow fuel dock COVID-19 refueling procedures
- Crew members should remain on vessel
- Maintain physical distancing
- Use gloves to handle fuel hose and be cautious of common touch points
- After fueling wash hands/gloves
- Disinfect all common touch points

### Provisioning vessel

- When possible order food and supplies for delivery to vessel or dock
- Maintain physical distancing from delivery person
- If necessary to enter into stores, offices, or service areas, dispatch the minimum number of crew required. Wash hands prior to departure and on return, ensure physical distancing
- After handling goods, wash hands immediately
- Crew not designated to the delivery of consumables should remain clear until the entire process is completed

### Offloading/loading bait

- Pre-notify plant of arrival
- Follow plant COVID-19 protocols
- Each crew member should be aware of their roles and responsibilities
- Maintain physical distancing



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- Do not allow plant workers to board the vessel.
- Avoid debarking the vessel during unloading process
- Wash hands/gloves at commencement of unload and completion of unload.
- Clean and disinfect all surfaces and common touch points on vessel

### Boarding by Service Providers

**Note - Observers/Samplers/Service Providers may be prohibited from boarding fishing vessels by DFO Order. This order may change prior to fishery opening date so procedures have been developed. In addition, the Service Providers may also have company protocols in place to ensure their safety and that of the harvesting crew. Please adhere to and respect the best practices as adopted by the Service Provider, in support of the adaptations necessary to facilitate the operation of our fishery in the context of COVID-19.**

- Permission to board the vessel will be given by the vessel master.
- Prior to allowing the sampler to board ask the following:
  - Do you have a fever and a cough?
  - Do you have a fever and breathing difficulty?
  - Are you the subject of a provincial/territorial or local public health order?

If sampler answers yes to any of the above, then deny boarding.

- Once sampler is on board, direct them to hand washing station or hand sanitizer to clean hands
- Identify an area of the vessel for the sampler to work that maintains physical distancing
- Wash and disinfect all surfaces and equipment the sampler will be using
- Direct sampler to designated area of the vessel, where they are to remain until it is time to leave the vessel
- The service provider shall be directed off the vessel as soon as the appreciated service has been completed
- All contact points on the vessel by the sampler must be washed and disinfected immediately after sampler disembarks
- Crew members are to wash and disinfect hands/gloves after sampler disembarks



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### POLICIES

- Visitors
  - Visitors are strictly prohibited from boarding vessel
- Leaving vessel
  - Crew members must have approval from vessel master prior to disembarking vessel.
  - While disembarked, social distancing must be maintained

**In addition to the above document, vessel masters are required to:**

- **Have a plan to deal with workers who may start to feel ill while at work, including who they should notify and how they will travel from workplace to their home.**
- **Develop a communication plan to inform crew of the COVID-19 measure in place and provide training.**

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

#### **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting must be a priority on vessels to reduce the risk of disease transmission. Cleaning with soap and water and disinfection should be done as often as possible with a minimum of at the beginning of each workday, before eating, and at the end of the day. Commercial disinfectants are available, when using follow manufactures instructions. A bleach solution of 20ml bleach per litre of water also works as a disinfectant.

#### **Symptoms of COVID-19**

Symptoms include fever and cough, fever and difficulty breathing. Anyone who suspects they may have COVID-19 can take the online self-assessment tool at <https://bc.thrive.health/>.

Workers who suspect they may have been exposed to COVID-19 or are experiencing symptoms may also call HealthLinkBC at 811 to speak with a registered nurse and to determine any necessary next steps.

*This document in no way represents all the responsibilities or activities associated with mitigating and dealing with the risk of COVID-19, however, this serves as a template for best practices as we know them today. This is a fluid document and subject to change. To be socially responsible everyone needs to participate and cooperate. We trust our crews are like minded in our attempt to keep everyone safe and healthy during these challenging times.*