

U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION
Department of Homeland Security

AREA SEAPORT HOUSTON/GALVESTON

PUBLIC INFORMATION NOTICE

DATE:
March 31, 2020

NUMBER:
HOU-SEA-20-006

**FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION CALL:**
Duty Supervisor or Chief
713-454-8002

SUBJECT: Temporary Vessel Entrance and Clearance Procedures

Given the outbreak and continued transmission and spread of COVID-19 within the United States and globally, the Area Port of Houston/Galveston will *temporarily* modify normal procedures to provide vessel agents the **ability to present vessel scanned copies of vessel documents as part of the entrance and clearance packet (E&C).**

Vessel agents may still enter and clear vessels via established processes in each seaport.

All other vessel entrance and clearance procedures, such as 3171 filing, delays in arrival and departure notifications, diversions, and timelines, remain in effect.

Temporary entrance and clearance procedures will be effective immediately and will remain effective until a rescind notification is issued to the trade community. Temporary entrance and clearance procedures are not intended to establish a new practice by U.S. Customs and Border Protection, but provide a temporary process for vessel agents to minimize any potential impact or spread of COVID-19.

Please follow the steps below on presenting copies of vessel documentation to CBP:

1. Vessel Agent will advise Captain of requested pre-arrival documentation(s)(see sample below);
2. All documentation will be submitted via email to the vessel agent for review;
3. Upon vessels arrival, Vessel Agent will complete the E&C packet and annotate date and time of arrival on CBP Form 1300;
4. Vessel Agent will print and present copies of vessels documentation to CBP for processing. E&C processing can be completed at the vessel's point of entry (dock) or CBP offices.

DISCLAIMER: This information has been prepared for your convenience by the CBP officers at the Area Port Houston/Galveston. This material is intended to provide guidance. Recognizing that many complicated factors are involved in CBP matters, an importer may wish to obtain a binding ruling under 19 CFR Part 177. Reliance solely on this information may not be considered reasonable care. Importers are referred to Treasury Decision 97-96, which was published in the Federal Register of December 4, 1997, and in the CBP Bulletin of December 17, 1997, for in-depth information on the concept of reasonable care.

EMAIL SAMPLE TO SEND TO VESSELS:

Captain,

The local CBP Office will require the following documentation to be scanned and emailed to (Vessel Agent Email) in order to facilitate precautionary processing of vessels. The main goal is to limit exposure to one another.

For the health safety of both the crew and CBP personnel, the Chief Cook will be the only individual allowed to be with the CBP Agriculture Specialist when they do their ship store/refrigerator inspections.

1. *CBP 1300 Entrance*
2. *CBP 1300 Clearance*
3. *Last port clearance*
4. *CBP Form 1303*
5. *CBP Form 1304*
6. *I-418 Crew list*
7. *CBP I-259 (w/ all crew names)* **Note: All crewmembers will be detained on board**
8. *Vessel Registry*
9. *Vessel Load Line*
10. *Vessel Safety Equipment*
11. *Intl Tonnage Cert.*
12. *COFR*
13. *Tonnage Tax Receipts (if applicable)*

Questions comments and concerns about this notice should be directed to CBP Duty Supervisor, Chief or Watch Commander at 713-454-8002 or to the FUSION email box listed above.

/s/

Roderick W. Hudson
Area Port Director
Area Port of Houston/Galveston

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