

Palau International Ship Registry



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MARINE CIRCULAR 131.2

To: ALL SHIPOWNERS, MANAGERS, MASTERS, DEPUTY REGISTRARS AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS

Subject: GUIDELINES FOR FOOD HANDLING, STORAGE AND PREPARATION

1. Reference

- 1.1 Maritime Labor Convention, MLC, 2006, Title 3.2
- 1.2 Palau Maritime Regulations, Section 7.15

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The Palau Ship Registry Administrator is to provide guidelines on food handling, storage and preparation to ensure the health of all persons on board a vessel and addresses the Maritime Labor Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006) requirements that foods meet minimum standards for quality and be prepared and served in hygienic conditions.

3. Applicability

- 3.1 These guidelines apply to all vessels registered with the Palau flag to which the Maritime Labor Convention, 2006 applies.

4. Food, drinking water and catering

- 4.1 These requirements are supplemental to DMLC-I, the Republic of Palau Admiralty and Maritime, Title 7, and the Republic of Palau Maritime Regulations / 26-june-2012.
- 4.2 Seafarers shall be provided with adequate quantities of food and drinking water on board taking due regard of the number of seafarers on board, their religious requirements and cultural practices as they pertain to food, and the duration and nature of the voyage.
- 4.3 The food and drinking water provided on board shall be of appropriate quality and the food shall be within the expiry dates.
- 4.4 The food on board shall be of adequate nutritional value and variety.
- 4.5 The organization and equipment of the catering department shall be capable of providing the seafarers on board with varied and nutritious meals prepared and served in hygienic conditions.
- 4.6 Seafarers shall not be charged for their food and drinking water.
- 4.7 Qualifications of catering staff:
 - No seafarer under the age of 18 years shall be employed or engaged or work as a ship's cook.
 - All seafarers employed in any capacity as catering staff shall be properly trained or instructed for their positions and tasks to be performed.
 - All seafarers employed as ship's cooks shall have completed a training course or programme approved or recognized by the Administration, which covers practical



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cookery, food and personal hygiene, food handling, food storage, stock control, environmental protection and catering health and safety.

- The Administration may accept and a national certificate following:
 - ✓ A course completion certificate of a ships' cook training course approved by the Administration; or
 - ✓ a valid National certificate issued by a Party to MLC, 2006 which certifies completion of ships' cook training course in accordance with MLC, 2006, standard A3.2.4
 - ✓ The Administration recognizes that there are seafarers who have been serving as ships cooks prior to entry into force of MLC, 2006 and may not have attended a formal training course or program yet, but they possess the experience and knowledge to continue serving as ships cook. For these existing seafarers engaged as ships cooks, the Administration may accept an attestation from the shipowner or representative of the shipowner, that the seafarer engaged has seagoing service as a ships' cook of at least two (2) years in the last five (5) years and is trained, qualified and found competent for the position which covers practical cookery, food and personal hygiene, food handling, food storage, stock control, environmental protection and catering health and safety.

5. This Administration shall issue Special Qualification Certificates, if requested by the shipowner, where the seafarer serving as ships' cook meets the requirements in 4.7 above.
6. If the ship is not currently carrying or is not required to carry a fully qualified cook by the Administration, by virtue of the prescribed manning of less than 10 seafarers or the trading pattern, then anyone processing food in the galley shall be trained or instructed in areas including food and personal hygiene as well as handling and storage of food on board ship.
7. In circumstances of exceptional necessity, this Administration may issue a dispensation permitting a non-fully qualified cook to serve in a specified ship for a specified limited period, until the next convenient port of call or for a period not exceeding one month, provided that the person to whom the dispensation is issued is trained or instructed in areas including food and personal hygiene as well as handling and storage of food on board ship.
8. Food storage arrangements
 - 8.1 Ships shall be fitted with a sufficient number of temperature-controlled food storage and handling rooms for the number of persons on board and the duration of the voyage.
 - 8.2 The temperature of the deep freezers should be maintained below – (minus) 12 degrees C for storage up to one month. Longer storage periods require a temperature of – (minus) 18 degrees C or below. The temperature of chill cabinets, cold storerooms and refrigerators should not exceed + (plus) 5 degrees C.
 - 8.3 Cold storeroom doors including the deep freezers should be operable from inside.



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8.4 The food including meat, fish, milk and milk products, vegetables, fruit and dry provisions shall be safely and hygienically stored on the shelves with respect to stock rotation, segregation and spillages.

9. Drinking water supplies

- 9.1 The drinking water storage tanks shall be cleaned and disinfected during dry docks and wet docks or every two years, whichever is less, or more frequently, if drinking water tests results indicate contamination.
- 9.2 Drinking water loading hoses shall be flushed prior to each use and disinfected at least once at intervals of not more than six (6) months. The hoses shall be capped and stored correctly.
- 9.3 It is the shipowner's responsibility to ensure that drinking water taken on board is of appropriate quality. At regular intervals, verification monitoring of drinking water should be done in accordance with WHO Guide to Ship Sanitation to demonstrate that the drinking water is not contaminated with microbial and chemical hazards.
- 9.4 Monitoring of drinking water on board may be carried out by use of test kits. Prior to taking on drinking water at any port, a water quality report should be made available.

10. Guidelines for Food Handlers

- 10.1 Seafarers that are required to handle foods (i.e., those in the stewards department) should be free of any communicable disease that can be transmitted by food.
 - 10.1.1 Seafarers expected to be handling food and are diagnosed with, suspected of, or exposed to any communicable disease shall be restricted from working in any food or food-related areas or operations (i.e., working with exposed food, equipment, utensils, table linens, single-service/use articles or ware washing) until they are symptom free for a minimum of 48 hours.
 - 10.1.2 Communicable diseases that can be transmitted by food include but are not limited to: typhoid (*Salmonella typhi* bacteria), shigellosis (*Shigella* spp. bacteria), cholera (*Vibrio* spp. bacteria), intestinal disease (*Escherichia coli* O157:H7 bacteria) and liver disease (hepatitis A virus).
- 10.2 All persons should be restricted, until symptom free for a minimum of 48 hours, from working with exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, table lines, and unwrapped single service/use articles or ware washing, if they have the following symptoms:
 - 10.2.1 Boils, open sores, infected wounds, diarrhea, jaundice, fever, vomiting, sore throat with fever or discharges from the ear, eye, nose or mouth. These conditions should be reported to either the vessel's Master or medical staff, as appropriate. No person should be penalized for reporting illness. In addition, any cuts, spots or sores should be completely covered by waterproof dressings.
 - 10.2.2 Persistent sneezing, coughing, or runny nose that causes discharges from the eyes, nose or mouth.



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- 10.3 Food handlers must keep their hands, including fingernails, and exposed portions of their arms clean. Hands and exposed portions of arms must be cleaned immediately before engaging in food preparation, including working with exposed food, clean equipment and utensils and unwrapped single service/use articles; and
- 10.3.1 After touching bare human body parts other than clean hands and clean, exposed portion of arms;
- 10.3.2 After using the toilet room;
- 10.3.3 After coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, using tobacco, eating or drinking;
- 10.3.4 After handling soiled equipment or utensils;
- 10.3.5 During food preparation to remove soil and contamination and to prevent cross-contamination when changing tasks and when switching between working with raw food and working with ready-to-eat food;
- 10.4 All persons handling food should wear hair restraints (e.g., nets, beard restraints, hats, etc.) to prevent hair from contacting food, equipment and other items in the food service area and should be clean and tidy, wearing suitable protective clothing and footwear. The wearing of jewelry should be limited.
11. Guidelines for Food Preparation
- 11.1 Always defrost raw meat, poultry or seafood in a refrigerator. They should be placed on a drip pan so that they are not resting in the thawed liquid and stored in a covered container, separate from and below other foods in the refrigerator that may be exposed to risk of contamination.
- 11.2 For faster thawing, place food in a leak-proof plastic bag. Submerge it in cold tap water. Change the water every 30 minutes. Alternatively, microwave thawing may be used.
- 11.3 Meat, poultry and seafood should be thoroughly defrosted before cooking; and cooked immediately after thawing.
12. Guidelines to Avoid Contamination
- 12.1 Always segregate raw and cooked foods, keeping raw meat, poultry, seafood and their juices away from other foods during preparation and storage. When marinating raw meat, poultry or seafood, do so in a covered dish in the refrigerator.
- 12.2 Use separate cutting boards (color-coded boards help to keep them separate) and utensils for raw animal foods (i.e., meat, poultry, seafood, eggs and foods containing them) and produce or other foods. After cutting raw animal foods, wash cutting board, utensils and countertops with hot, soapy water or disinfectant (e.g., one (1) tablespoon of liquid chlorine bleach per one (1) gallon of water).



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- 12.3 Keep fruits and vegetables separate from ready-to-eat food until they are washed. Raw fruits and vegetables should be thoroughly washed in water to remove soil and other contaminants before being cut, combined with other ingredients, cooked, served, or offered for human consumption.
 - 12.4 Protect condiments from contamination by keeping in dispensers designed to provide protection or by using individual packets.
 - 12.5 Food handlers should avoid direct contact between hands and food by utilizing suitable utensils (e.g., deli tissue, spatulas, tongs and single-use gloves, etc.), and should be prohibited from using a utensil more than once to taste food that is to be served.
 - 12.6 Seawater should never be used in or near food or food preparation areas.
 - 12.7 Any food suspected of being contaminated by flies, cockroaches, rodents or other pests should be destroyed.
13. Managing Temperature Control
- 13.1 The danger zone for food contamination is between 4° C (40° F) and 62.8° C (145° F). In general, perishable foods should not be left in this temperature range for longer than absolutely necessary, and in no case should foods be left in this temperature range longer than two (2) hours, or where the temperature is above 32° C (90° F), longer than one (1) hour.
 - 13.2 In general:
 - Maintain hot food above 62.8° C (145° F);
 - Keep cold food below 4.4° C (40° F);
 - Keep frozen foods below -12° C (10° F); and
 - Reheat leftovers only one (1) time to a core temperature of 75° C (167° F).
 - 13.3 To destroy parasites in raw or partially cooked fish, other than shellfish, freeze throughout to a temperature of -20° C (-4° F), or below, for 168 hours (7 days) in a freezer; or -35° C (-31° F), or below, for 15 hours in a blast freezer. Certain fish in the tuna family may be excluded from this freezing procedure as can fish-related foods (e.g., gravlax, ceviche, fish carpaccio or sashimi) prepared in food processing plants that are certified parasite free.
14. Guidance towards food supplies and storage
- 14.1 Always load ships with the safest food available by selecting food suppliers that can demonstrate adequate controls over their foodstuffs and suitable transport to the vessel. Food should be clean, wholesome, and free from spoilage and adulteration, and otherwise safe for human consumption.



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- 14.2 Food should not be stored on the floor, including the kitchen, cooling and freezing room floors. Storage of food at least 15 cm (six (6) inches) above deck is recommended.
- 14.3 Maintain refrigerator temperature at 4.4° C (40° F) or below, and freezer temperature at -17.7° C (0° F) or below.
- 14.4 Raw meat, poultry and seafood should be kept in a covered container with a drip pan when refrigerated to avoid cross-contamination caused by liquid draining.
- 14.5 Cut and sliced fruits should be stored in sealed containers and placed in the refrigerator, unless used for immediate consumption. Cut, raw vegetables (e.g., celery or carrot sticks, cut potatoes and tofu) may be immersed in ice or water from potable water sources, but should be stored in the refrigerator until consumption.
- 14.6 Store canned products in a cool, clean and dry place (where possible around 10° C (50° F). Inspect canned products monthly. If they are past the expiration date, dispose of them. Also dispose of any dented, leaking, bulging or rusted cans.
15. Cleaning
- 15.1 To ensure that all parts of the food handling establishment are appropriately hygienic, a written cleaning and disinfection program is recommended. Daily, weekly and monthly inspections as well as daily temperature readings of cold storage units should be included in this program.
- 15.2 To protect food safety and provide for the proper cleaning of food, utensils and equipment, the food handling area should have an adequate supply of hot and cold potable water at all times.
16. Contact
- 16.1 Any inquiries concerning the subject for this Marine Circular should be directed to the Palau Ship Registry Administrator at technical@palaureg.com

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