
EXPLANATORY NOTE

These Regulations consolidate the Public Health (Ships) Regulations 1970, the Public Health (Ships) (Amendment) Regulations 1974 and the Public Health (Ships) (Amendment) Regulations 1978 which provide for public health control of ships arriving at or leaving ports in England and Wales.

Part I contains definitions of terms used in the Regulations. Provision is made for a form of International Vaccination Certificate against smallpox (Schedule 5).

Part II provides for the enforcement and execution of the Regulations by port health authorities and, in respect of waters of a customs port outside the jurisdiction of a port health authority, by the councils of the boroughs or districts abutting on the waters of the port (Regulations 4 and 5). Part II also provides for the preparation by Authorised Officers of lists of ports and other areas infected or believed to be infected with specified diseases (Regulation 6).

Part III relates to incoming ships. It provides for the inspection of ships, the examination of persons suspected of suffering from, or having been exposed to infection from, an infectious disease or suspected of being verminous; and in these and other similar circumstances authorises measures to be taken for preventing danger to public health (Regulations 7 to 10). Regulation 11 requires the master of a ship to give information about health conditions on board the ship and to notify circumstances likely to lead to the spread of infection. Provision is also made for radio messages to be sent and the signals to be used in given circumstances (Regulations 12 to 14) and for the completion in specified circumstances of a Maritime Declaration of Health by the master of a ship (Regulations 15 and 16). Regulation 17 imposes restrictions on boarding or leaving ships until free pratique has been granted. Regulations 18 to 20 provide for deratting ships and for the grant of deratting certificates and deratting exemption certificates. Regulations 21 to 32 provide for the detention and inspection of infected or suspected ships, the placing under surveillance of persons from infected areas, the removal of infected persons from ships and the application of such of the additional measures set out in Schedule 4 as are appropriate to specified disease subject to the International Health Regulations of a kind particularly dangerous to public health.

Part IV relates to outgoing ships. It provides for the examination, etc in prescribed circumstances of persons proposing to embark for a destination outside the United Kingdom (Regulation 33), and, after publication by the Secretary of State in the London Gazette of a notice declaring any place to be infected with diseases, the spread of which might endanger public health, special measures may be taken to prevent the disease spreading (Regulation 34).

Part V contains miscellaneous provisions concerning periods of surveillance, charges for services, and expenses of the health authorities enforcing the Regulations. It also contains savings for mails carried by a ship (Regulation 41) and for removal from a district of any ship whose master is unwilling to comply with the Regulations (Regulation 42).