

Execution of Disciplinary Actions in Response to the COVID-19 Epidemic – An Example of a Sanctioned Ship, Taiwan, 2022

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Abstract

In response to the COVID-19 epidemic, Taiwan quickly initiated border quarantine measures which were followed by the Central Epidemic Command Center for rolling corrections and contingency preparations. From May 4, 2020, ships entering Taiwan from overseas should provide a statement of COVID-19 Health Status Declaration of Crew Members on Board in addition to the Maritime Declaration of Health when arriving at the port. If the staff on board had suspected symptoms of COVID-19, the captain must immediately notify relevant departments such as Taiwan Centers for Disease Control (Taiwan CDC). In this article, we described a case of a ship that was sanctioned by the Taiwan CDC at Taichung Port failed to notify and violated the border quarantine measures and regulations when suspected cases of COVID-19 occurred on board. This is the first time that Taiwan CDC imposed sanctions on ships at international ports for violating the Communicable Disease Control Act. After the outbreak investigation, Taiwan CDC identified 7 confirmed cases. Because the captain of the ship did not report the health status of the staff on board accurately, Taiwan CDC issued penalties in accordance with the violation of the Communicable Disease Control Act and Regulations Governing Quarantine at Ports. Later, the punished captain and his ship company actively cooperated with the quarantine department and paid the fine. After the event, no further cases occurred on the ship. This event provided experience and an example in the face of violation of infectious disease prevention and control

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measures and regulations. We hope that the exercise of public powers cooperating with border quarantine policies would reduce the risk of disease transmission and ensure the health of the public.

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