

Cruise Ship Color Status



CDC's Temporary Extension & Modification of Framework for Conditional Sailing Order (CSO) expired on January 15, 2022. CDC recommends that cruise ships operating in U.S. waters choose to participate in [CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships](#).

Summary of Recent Changes

February 09, 2022

Updated webpage to clarify the modifications of CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships, including color status definitions and thresholds.

What You Need to Know

- CDC recommends that cruise ships operating or planning to operate in U.S. waters choose to participate in CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships.
- Color status for ships participating in the program is based on data reported by cruise ships and relevant public health authorities.
- CDC's color-coding system gives travelers information they can use to make informed decisions before choosing to travel. Color status designations indicate the number of COVID-19 cases reported for each ship in the program, whether an investigation is needed, additional public health measures a ship is taking, and whether a ship has opted out of the program.
- "Gray" designated cruise ships are foreign-flagged cruise ships operating in U.S. waters that have chosen not to participate in CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships. These ships may have their own COVID-19 health and safety protocols, which **CDC has not reviewed or confirmed**. CDC cannot confirm the COVID-19 public health measures implemented on "Gray" designated ships. Therefore, CDC does not have information about precautions and interventions, such as mask use, crew testing, or vaccination status of travelers for these ships.



Cruise lines have until February 18, 2022, to inform CDC if they are participating in CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships. Until then, CDC encourages cruise lines to continue to follow all CDC public health measures for cruise ships, including reporting, testing, and infection prevention and control. Between now and February 18, all cruise ships in U.S. waters will continue to be assigned a Red, Orange, Yellow, or Green color status unless they inform CDC they are choosing not to participate in CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships. Additionally, cruise ships' vaccination status classification will reflect their vaccination status classification in effect prior to January 15, 2022, unless they inform CDC of a different status. On February 22, 2022, if cruise lines have not informed CDC of their decision to participate in the program, their ships will automatically be designated as "Gray" indicating they are not participating in CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise

Cruise Ship Status Dashboard

Cruise Ship Status Dashboard

Company

All

Cruise Line

All

Reset Filter

Legend

Color Status (Total Number of Ships)

Color	Count
Green	0
Yellow	22
Orange	25
Red	62
Gray	0

Cruise Ships Opted In

Reflects the number of cruise ships participating in CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships.†

20

Cruise Ships Opted Out

Reflects the number of cruise ships not participating in CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships.†

0

Vaccination Standard of Excellence Ships

Reflects the number of cruise ships sailing with 95% travelers who are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines.*

0

Highly Vaccinated Ships

Reflects the number of cruise ships sailing in U.S. waters with 95% travelers who are fully vaccinated

104

Company	Cruise Line	Ship Name	Current Voyage Type	Ship Color Status	Ship Vaccination Status	CDC Actions for Ships Reporting COVID-19 Cases
BAHAMAS PARADISE CRUISE LINE	BAHAMAS PARADISE CRUISE LINE	GRAND CLASSICA	Passenger-Carrying	Green†	Highly Vaccinated	N/A
CARNIVAL CORPORATION	CARNIVAL CRUISE LINES, INC.	CARNIVAL BREEZE	Passenger-Carrying	Orange†	Highly Vaccinated	CDC has started an investigation and ship remains under observation.
CARNIVAL CORPORATION	CARNIVAL CRUISE LINES, INC.	CARNIVAL CONQUEST	Passenger-Carrying	Yellow†	Highly Vaccinated	CDC is monitoring.
CARNIVAL CORPORATION	CARNIVAL CRUISE LINES, INC.	CARNIVAL DREAM	Passenger-Carrying	Orange†	Highly Vaccinated	CDC has started an investigation and ship remains under observation.

* **Vaccination Standard of Excellence:** The cruise line has committed to operate the ship with 95% passengers (including children) and 95% crew up to date with COVID-19 vaccines (i.e., fully vaccinated and received a booster dose, if eligible).

† Cruise ship has not informed CDC of their decision to participate in the COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships. This footnote will be removed after February 18, 2022, the deadline for cruise ships to decide on their participation in the program.

‡ The cruise line intends to operate the ship with a Vaccination Status of Excellence classification. The information will be updated once the cruise line notifies CDC that the ship has met this standard. Please check with the cruise line for more information about their vaccination policies.

Legend: Green: no reported cases of COVID-19 or COVID-like illness (CLI); Yellow: reported cases of COVID-19 are below the threshold for CDC investigation; Orange: reported cases of COVID-19 have met the threshold for CDC investigation; Red: reported cases of COVID-19 are at or above the threshold for CDC investigation; additional public health measures are in place; Gray: opted out of CDC's COVID-19 Program for cruise ships. CDC has not reviewed or confirmed the cruise ship's health and safety protocols.

Data source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships Operating in U.S. Waters

For more information: <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/cruise/cruise-ship-color-status.html>

EDC data as of 2/10/2022. Posted: 2/11/2022

Microsoft Power BI

Color Status Definitions

Green	No reported cases of COVID-19 or COVID-19-like illness (CLI).
Yellow [^]	Reported cases of COVID-19 are below the threshold for CDC investigation .
Orange [^]	Reported cases of COVID-19 have met the threshold for CDC investigation .
Red [†]	Reported cases of COVID-19 are at or above the threshold for CDC investigation . Additional public health measures are in place.
Gray	Opted out of CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships. CDC has not reviewed or confirmed the cruise ship's health and safety protocols.

[^] The “Orange” and “Yellow” ship colors were reversed for the COVID-19 program to go in a more logical color order.

[†] If CDC is considering assigning a cruise ship “Red” status, CDC may require ships to do one or more of the following:

- Test all passengers mid-voyage, and/or prior to the end of the voyage, regardless of the passengers’ vaccination status;
- Increase routine screening testing of crew;
- Require mask use by all passengers and crew indoors and crowded outdoor areas;
- Send written notification to passengers on the current, previous, and subsequent voyages informing them of the COVID-19 conditions and measures being taken to reduce transmission on board;
- Offer a full refund for the cruise to any passenger who decides not to sail on the subsequent voyage; and
- Submit specimens for genetic sequencing.

Cruise Ship Types

The color-coding system is only applicable to commercial, non-cargo, passenger-carrying ships with the capacity to carry 250 or more passengers and crew with an itinerary that includes an overnight stay on board or 24-hour stay on board for either passengers or crew (cruise ships) that meet one of the following criteria:

- 1. Foreign-flagged ^[1] cruise ships currently operating in U.S. waters; or
- 2. Foreign-flagged cruise ships currently operating outside of U.S. waters but planning to return to operation in international, interstate, or intrastate waterways subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; or
- 3. U.S.-flagged ^[2] cruise ships choosing to participate in CDC’s COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships*.

** U.S.-flagged cruise ships may follow CDC’s COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships at the cruise ship operator’s discretion. However, U.S.-flagged ships not following this program and operating exclusively in U.S. waterways will not be listed as “Gray” because these ships report cases to state and local jurisdictions. CDC cannot confirm the COVID-19 public health measures implemented on cruise ships not listed on CDC’s Cruise Ship Status Dashboard. Therefore, CDC does not have information about precautions and interventions, such as mask use, crew testing, or vaccination status for passengers and crew on these ships.*

[1] Cruise ships registered in a country other than the United States.

[2] Cruise ships registered in the United States.

Ship Color Status Determination

The process for CDC to determine a ship’s color status is based on the following criteria:

Ship Color Status Determination

- Step

1

COVID-19 program participation

Applicable ship types (*refer to the section above*) choose whether to participate in CDC’s COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships. Cruise ships opting into the program on a voluntary basis agree to follow all recommendations and guidance issued by CDC. Foreign-flagged cruise ships operating in U.S. waters will have a “Gray” color status if they choose not to participate in the program. U.S.-flagged cruise ships that choose not to participate in the program will not be listed.
- Step

2

Surveillance data collection

Cruise ships submit surveillance data on a daily basis when they participate in the program. CDC monitors data collected and determines each ship’s color status using surveillance data from the previous 7 days—regardless of voyage dates— and CDC’s investigation findings, as applicable.
- Step

3

COVID-19 investigation


CDC established an [investigation threshold](#) based on suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 on board cruise ships operating under the program. CDC uses the investigation threshold to determine when an investigation of a ship is needed and determine the appropriate color status of a ship. As part of the investigation, CDC will obtain additional information from the cruise ship, such as case exposure histories, details about [close contacts](#), proportion of travelers on board who are vaccinated for COVID-19, and the ship’s medical capacities. Any ship that meets CDC’s investigation threshold will be designated “Orange”. CDC will work closely with the cruise line and state and local health departments to consider multiple factors before assigning a “Red” status to the ship.

Gray Cruise Ships

Cruise ships with a “Gray” color status are foreign-flagged cruise ships operating in U.S. waters that have chosen not to participate in CDC’s COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships. These ships may have their own COVID-19 health and safety protocols, which CDC has not reviewed or confirmed. CDC cannot confirm the COVID-19 public health measures

implemented on “Gray” designated ships. Therefore, CDC does not have information about precautions and interventions, such as mask use, crew testing, or vaccination status of travelers for these ships.


Frequently Asked Questions

What’s the difference between the cruise ship vaccination status classifications? 

As part of CDC’s COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships, cruise ship vaccination status classifications are defined as:

- **Not Highly Vaccinated:** ships with less than 95% passengers and 95% crew who are [fully vaccinated](#).
- **Highly Vaccinated:** ships with at least 95% passengers and 95% crew who are [fully vaccinated](#) but less than 95% of passengers and 95% of crew are up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines.
- **Vaccination Standard of Excellence:** ships with at least 95% passengers and 95% crew who are [up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines](#).

Cruise lines that choose to participate in CDC’s COVID-19 Program must advise CDC of the vaccination status classification for each participating ship. Ships adhering to the “Highly Vaccinated” or “Vaccination Standard of Excellence” classifications must maintain these thresholds for each voyage.

What are the thresholds for each color status? 

When a cruise ship notifies CDC of suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 on board, CDC determines whether an investigation is needed based on a predetermined investigation threshold outlined below. CDC will continue to monitor the pandemic, work closely with cruise lines and state, territorial, and local health partners, and consider multiple factors to determine if and when threshold criteria should be revised.

Color Status	Threshold for Passenger Ships	Threshold for Crew-Only Ships
Green	Zero cases	Zero cases
Yellow	Less than 0.3% of total passengers and/or crew	Less than 1% of total crew
Orange	0.3% or more of total passengers and/or crew	1% or more of total crew
Red†	More than 0.3% of total passengers and/or crew plus <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustained transmission,• Multiple factors that overwhelm onboard medical and/or public health resources, or• Variants of concern are identified among on board cases.	More than 1% of total crew plus <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustained transmission,• Multiple factors that overwhelm onboard medical and/or public health resources, or• Variants of concern are identified among on board cases.
Gray	Not applicable	Not applicable

† If CDC is considering assigning a ship “Red” status, CDC may require ships to do one or more of the following:

- Test all passengers mid-voyage, and/or prior to the end of the voyage, regardless of vaccination status;
- Increase the frequency of routine screening testing of crew;

- Require mask use by all passengers and crew indoors and crowded outdoor areas;
- Send written notification to passengers on the current, previous, and subsequent voyages informing them of the COVID-19 conditions and measures being taken to reduce transmission on board;
- Offer a full refund for the cruise to any passenger who decides not to sail on the subsequent voyage; and
- Submit specimens for genetic sequencing.

How did CDC determine the threshold of COVID-19 cases for investigating a cruise ship?

The threshold for investigation was developed based on several factors, including the need for transparency while acknowledging that cruising is not a zero-risk activity. This investigation threshold gives CDC and the cruise industry the ability to work closely together to protect the health and safety of those on board and in communities. CDC's objectives for establishing the threshold included reducing ongoing COVID-19 transmission between voyages and ensuring medical resources on board are not overwhelmed. This threshold may be modified for future voyages based on lessons learned from passenger voyages, the evolution of the pandemic, or other factors.

What does CDC do during a cruise ship investigation?

If a cruise ship participating in CDC's COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships is designated as "Orange," the ship meets CDC's investigation threshold. CDC notifies the cruise ship of the color status and reminds the cruise ship of CDC's [guidance on preventive measures](#).

CDC regularly reviews the number of reported cases and exposed close contacts for ships in "Orange" status. As needed, CDC may request additional information from the ship or discuss the situation with ship personnel or the cruise line's corporate office. If warranted, CDC inspectors can conduct in-person inspections to verify that all public health interventions are being implemented as recommended to control onboard transmission.

Additionally, CDC may require the ship to do one or more of the following:

- Test all passengers mid-voyage, and/or prior to the end of the voyage, regardless of the passengers' vaccination status.
- Increase the frequency of routine screening testing of crew.
- Require mask use by all passengers and crew indoors and in crowded outdoor areas.
- Send written notification about the increased number of COVID-19 cases on the ship to passengers on the current, previous, and subsequent voyages.
- Offer a full refund for the cruise to any passenger who decides not to sail on the subsequent voyage.
- Submit specimens for genetic sequencing.

What happens if there are cases of COVID-19 reported on board a voyage?

CDC will investigate cruise ships that reach the investigation threshold for COVID-19 cases among crew or passengers. As part of the investigation, CDC will obtain additional information from the cruise ship, such as case exposure histories, details about [close contacts](#), proportion of travelers on board who are vaccinated for COVID-19, and onboard medical resources.

CDC will work closely with the cruise line and consider multiple factors (e.g., increase testing and reinforce mask use) before assigning a "Red" status to the ship.

If a "Gray" ship reports a COVID-19 outbreak among passengers and/or crew, CDC may consider issuing a No Sail Order and may require the ship to remain in port until the outbreak is resolved.

Should I be concerned if the ship has a “Gray” status?

Given the high rates of transmission during the COVID-19 pandemic, CDC currently [recommends](#) that everyone avoid travel on cruise ships, including river cruises, worldwide, regardless of their vaccination status. However, if you do plan to travel on a cruise ship, it is important to be aware of what these color designations mean. Cruise ships with a “Gray” color status have chosen not to participate in CDC’s COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships. This designation means that CDC has not reviewed or confirmed the cruise ship operator’s COVID-19 health and safety protocols. CDC cannot confirm the COVID-19 public health measures implemented on “Gray” designated ships. Therefore, CDC does not have information about precautions and interventions, such as mask use, crew testing, or vaccination status for these ships.

Should I be concerned if a cruise ship status is “Yellow” or “Orange”?

Given the high rates of transmission during the COVID-19 pandemic, CDC currently [recommends](#) that everyone avoid travel on cruise ships, including river cruises, worldwide, regardless of their vaccination status. However, if you do plan to travel on a cruise ship, it is important to be aware of what these color designations mean. If a ship is designated “Yellow”, it means that the ship has reported that less than 0.3% of its passengers and/or crew members have COVID-19 and CDC is monitoring the situation. If a ship is designated “Orange”, it means that the ship has reported that 0.3% or more of its passengers and/or crew members have COVID-19 — enough for CDC to need to investigate. Cruising will always pose some risk of COVID-19 transmission. Therefore, public health measures, including mask use, testing, and vaccinations, will continue to play a role in reducing the spread of COVID-19. CDC recommends that all travelers (passengers and crew) be vaccinated and [stay up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines](#).

Why did CDC change the definitions for “Orange” and “Yellow” ships?

CDC amended its color-coding system for CDC’s COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships to align with its revised investigation threshold. The “Orange” and “Yellow” ship colors were reversed for the COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships to go in a more logical color order.

Why do ships that opt into CDC’s COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships need to routinely test all crew members, including those on “Green” ships?

As part of CDC’s COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships, the purpose of testing is to quickly identify cases of COVID-19 (and test and quarantine their close contacts who may or may not be vaccinated against COVID-19) to prevent ongoing transmission between voyages.

What does it mean if a cruise line or cruise ship is not listed on the color status table above?

The color-coding system is applicable to foreign-flagged cruise ships currently operating in U.S. waters or planning to return to operation in waterways subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, regardless of whether they have chosen to participate in CDC’s COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships. For the purpose of the program, cruise ships are defined as commercial, non-cargo, passenger-carrying ships with the capacity to carry 250 or more passengers and crew with an itinerary that includes an overnight stay on board, or a 24-hour stay on board for either passengers or crew.

Additionally, the color-coding system is applicable to U.S.-flagged cruise ships that have chosen to participate in CDC’s COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships.

If a cruise line or cruise ship is not listed, it could mean that the ship is U.S.-flagged and sailing **only** in U.S. waters and has chosen not to participate in the program, the ship is not operating or intending to operate in U.S. waters, or the ship doesn’t meet the program definition of cruise ship.

What is a “support” cruise ship? How does CDC designate a color status to a “support” ship?



“Support” ships are used by cruise lines when they need additional space to isolate crew members who test positive for COVID-19 and to quarantine crew close contacts. Cruise ship operators may use an additional ship that does not have passengers on board (i.e., a crew-only ship) as part of their health and safety protocols.

A ship’s color status is only determined by the case’s transmission risk on board an individual ship.

Example 1: Crew Member X tests positive on Ship A and was transferred to Ship B (“support” ship) to isolate.

CDC would assign Crew Member X as a COVID-19 case on Ship A. CDC does this because Crew Member X was identified on and may have spread the virus (i.e., transmission risk) to others while on Ship A, before being moved to Ship B for isolation. Crew Member X will be isolated on Ship B, so there is little risk of spreading the virus to others on Ship B.

Example 2: Crew Member Y is identified as a close contact of Crew Member X on Ship A and was transferred to Ship B (“support” ship) to quarantine. Crew Member Y becomes symptomatic and tests positive while in quarantine on Ship B.

CDC would assign Crew Member Y as a COVID-19 case on Ship A. CDC does this because Crew Member Y was exposed to COVID-19 (i.e., transmission occurred) on Ship A, before being moved to Ship B for quarantine. Crew Member Y would be quarantined on Ship B, so there is little risk of spreading the virus to others on Ship B.

Example 3: Crew Member Z tests positive while working on Ship B.

CDC would count Crew Member Z as a COVID-19 case on Ship B. Crew Member Z was infectious (i.e., transmission risk) while working on Ship B, so there is risk of spreading the virus to others on Ship B.

When CDC determines a ship’s color status, are all travelers included?



The following persons are not included when determining a ship’s color status:

- Travelers who book a cruise and test positive for COVID-19 on the day of embarkation and never board the ship, or
- Newly embarking crew members who test positive during their embarkation quarantine period.

However, if CDC is notified by state or local health departments of passenger cases occurring within 5 days after disembarkation, these cases may be included when determining a ship’s color status.