

Alaska Cruise Restart FAQs

How many ships will come to Alaska this season?

Nine large cruise ships are currently scheduled to operate in the region with 78 sailings to take place through October 21, 2021. All sailings require CDC approval, so it is possible that these figures could change.

What is a “simulated voyage?”

A simulated voyage is a test cruise with volunteer passengers during which the ship demonstrates to the CDC the implementation of required COVID-19 mitigation protocols.

What is a “restricted voyage?”

A restricted voyage is a cruise that has obtained a CDC-issued Conditional Sailing Certificate and is conducted with paying passengers. Restricted voyages may also be referred to as “revenue voyages” or “passenger sailings.”

How can a cruise line start to conduct restricted voyages?

A cruise line may obtain a Conditional Sailing Certificate by first completing a simulated voyage. Thereafter, the ship can conduct a restricted voyage that is ‘open to all’ and does not have any specific requirement for vaccination levels of crew or passengers.

Alternatively, a cruise ship may bypass the requirement for a simulated voyage and obtain a Conditional Sailing Certificate by conducting a ‘highly vaccinated cruise’ with at least 95% of crew and passengers who are fully vaccinated.

Cruise lines must receive CDC permission to conduct any type of voyage, be it simulated or restricted.

How do we distinguish between the different types of sailings?

- **Simulated Voyages**
 - Simulated voyages, or test sailings, with volunteer passengers must be conducted for ships that are unable to meet the 95% vaccine threshold onboard.
 - Simulated voyages are designed to test the efficacy of the protocols onboard and provide an added layer of confidence in the cruise industry’s multi-layered approach to protecting public health.
 - Simulated voyages must carry at least 10% of the number of passengers the cruise line intends to carry aboard that ship on restricted voyages with paying passengers.
 - Ships that conduct a simulated voyage and subsequently receive a CDC-issued Conditional Sailing Certificate are not required to meet specific thresholds regarding vaccination of passengers or crew.

- **Open to All Cruises**
 - Following the successful completion of a simulated voyage, the CDC may grant a cruise line a Conditional Sailing Certificate to conduct restricted voyages with paying passengers.

- Open to All cruises are not required to meet specific thresholds regarding vaccination of passengers or crew and are therefore open to those who have not received a vaccine yet, including children under the age of 12.
 - The CDC requires stricter COVID-19 mitigation measures on cruises that are Open to All, including mask-wearing and physical distancing in all indoor locations, regardless of vaccination status.
- **Highly Vaccinated Cruises**
 - Highly Vaccinated cruises are required to verify that a threshold of at least 95% of all passengers and crew onboard are fully vaccinated.
 - Ships that meet this threshold for vaccination onboard are not required to conduct a simulated voyage in order to obtain a Conditional Sailing Certificate.
 - Because of the highly effective nature of COVID-19 vaccines, these sailings are also subject to fewer restrictions, such as mask-wearing and physical distancing requirements.

What are the differences in the CDC’s requirements for each type of sailing?

The chart below provides a general overview of some of the key differences in the CDC’s current requirements for passengers sailing on Highly Vaccinated cruises vs. Open to All cruises.

These requirements are subject to change. Specific, onboard policies may vary by line and by ship.

Requirements	Highly Vaccinated Cruises	Open to All Cruises
At least 95% of passengers and crew fully vaccinated	✓	N
Simulated voyage prior to approval for restricted voyage	N	✓
Enhanced onboard medical facilities and capabilities	✓	✓
Testing prior to embarkation*	N	✓
Testing prior to final disembarkation*	N	✓
Screening for symptoms of COVID-19 prior to boarding	✓	✓
Response, mitigation and control plan	✓	✓
Mask-wearing (onboard)**	N	✓
Physical distancing (onboard)**	N	✓
Cleaning and disinfection protocols	✓	✓
Self-guided exploration during port stops for passengers and crew**	✓	✓

**Unvaccinated passengers or passengers who are unable to show proof of being fully vaccinated are required to test for COVID-19 prior to embarkation and disembarkation regardless of the type of voyage.*

***Cruise passengers and crew are required to follow the local, state and country-specific requirements of the places they visit when onshore. Policies may vary across cruise lines relative to physical distancing and self-guided exploration during port stops.*

Why would a cruise line opt to conduct simulated voyages if they have the option to require vaccines for at least 95% of guest and crew and jump straight to restricted voyages?

The decision of which of the two pathways to take in order to obtain a Conditional Sailing Certificate is determined by the individual cruise line based on a number of factors. Some cruise lines may opt to pursue a hybrid approach, whereby some ships participate in simulated voyages and other ships meet the 95% threshold for vaccination and jump straight to restricted voyages.

Importantly, cruising is often a multi-generational, family activity. Children under the age of 12 are not yet eligible to receive a vaccine for COVID-19, which means that cruise lines that serve families with young children will likely be required to conduct simulated voyages for at least some of their ships.

Will cruise ships visiting Alaska sail at reduced capacities?

CLIA ocean-going cruise line members are committed to resuming operations responsibly, and part of that entails a phased and gradual restart of passenger sailings. Although specific capacity limits are not required, most CLIA ocean-going cruise line members are sailing at reduced capacities out of an abundance of caution and as part their commitment to a responsible resumption. Sailing at reduced capacities also allows for the implementation of increased spacing to facilitate social distancing, both onboard and at terminals. Capacity figures vary based on a number of factors, and determinations about onboard capacity are the purview of the individual cruise lines.

Will passengers be permitted to freely explore Alaskan destinations?

Under the CDC's requirements for the cruise industry, passengers are permitted to explore Alaskan destinations, whether they arrive as part of a simulated voyage or a restricted voyage. However, specific policies regarding shoreside activity may vary by cruise line. Moreover, simulated voyages will be shorter by nature, and are likely to carry fewer people. Alaskan communities should expect to see greater shoreside activity from those who arrive as part of a restricted voyage as compared to those who arrive as part of a simulated voyage.

Will the ruling in Florida affect cruise itineraries in Alaska?

No. The ruling in Florida is applicable only to cruise ships sailing to and from Florida ports. With that said, the ruling left the CDC's Conditional Sailing Order (CSO) in full effect (including from Florida ports) at least until July 18 and, in the meantime, ordered the CDC and the State of Florida back to mediation to seek a mutually agreeable solution. Although the final outcome remains to be determined, already-planned itineraries to and from Alaska will most likely not be affected.

What else should we know about the cruise industry's health and safety measures?

Cruise ships are fast becoming one of the few places where the traveling public can experience one of the highest levels of COVID-19 mitigation of anywhere in the world. More than half a million passengers have sailed onboard CLIA ocean-going cruise line member ships since last summer with protocols that have proven effective, even before vaccines were widely available. The successful resumption of cruise operations in other markets is a testament to the industry's commitment to a multi-layered, science-driven approach to protecting the public health of cruise passengers, crew and destinations.