



Planning to Sail with Royal Caribbean Singapore Anytime Soon? Read this First.

Description

Cruises to nowhere have been a big hit since the pandemic started, but should you choose to sail with Royal Caribbean (RCI) anytime soon, you may want to be prepared for the following scenarios to avoid disappointment.

1. Be prepared to be denied boarding, even if you're certified fit for travel.

In the past year, there have been multiple incidents of passengers in Singapore who were denied boarding at the port for the following reasons:

- [being a frontline healthcare worker](#)
- muscle ache (on arm, after taking a booster shot)
- [pregnancy \(less than 23 weeks\)](#)
- [prior recovery from bronchitis](#)
- [recovered from a sore throat over a week ago](#) (from eating overly hearty foods)

In some of those cases, the passenger(s) were able to produce medical documents showing that they were certified fit to travel, with some even having a negative PCR test result from the day prior *which has a 99% accuracy rate vs. the 82% of ART tests.* So what was the one thing these denied guests had in common?

See #3 below.

2. Do not expect a fair medical screening at the port.

Most of us would expect a certain level of professionalism when it comes to any screening conducted by a doctor.

But in Royal Caribbean's case, we've seen their doctor conclude for a sore throat based solely on a 98% oximeter reading and a 36.4C temperature. *Except that this is not how you assess for a sore throat?*

Arrival at the Departure Port

This was what we requested for, as given to us, nor were we allowed to go to an external doctor right now.

Mandatory pre-boarding health screenings will be conducted at the port and procedures will be in place during boarding. These procedures are important for all signs and instructions given to you in the port. Failure to do so will be a breach of our Guest Health Safety and may result in denial of boarding with no compensation of any kind paid to you.

The pre-boarding health screening will include as a minimum, verification of your health declaration questionnaire and a temperature screening. You may also be required to undergo a COVID-19 antigen test. If any of the information you have provided to us indicates that you have been exposed to COVID-19 or of having contracted COVID-19, you will be required to undergo a health screening process at the port. This will be conducted by a medical professional but will not be limited to, temperature screening, swabs taken from the nose and throat, and the verification of any fit to travel requirements for those who are High Risk Guest.

You must provide clear and accurate information at all times during your interaction with our service providers who support the provision of the services necessary to ensure your safety. You must cooperate with our staff and those service providers throughout the health screening process. Failure to do so will be considered a breach of our Guest Health Safety and may result in you being denied boarding with no compensation of any kind paid to you. The screening and testing process will be provided to you in good time ahead of your departure.

We reserve the right to deny boarding to any guest exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, including COVID-19, or whose health screening results show they may have COVID-19 or other diseases. Guests who show or experience symptoms of a viral (including respiratory or gastrointestinal illness) or infectious illness may be denied boarding without consultation with our medical staff.

Present tense. And not "someone who had exposure in the last 10 days may be denied boarding"

If you're hoping for a fair medical evaluation at the port, you may want to manage your expectations again.

This was exactly what happened in our case, and even when we escalated it for investigation, RCI repeatedly avoided our questions as to how this could be medically accurate. For more background context, you can [read my story here](#).

3. Be careful with what you answer on the Health Questionnaire.

The one thing that all of the above denied cases had in common was that they had answered a "yes" to one of the questions on the health questionnaire.

24 hours before you board, you'll be asked to filled up a health questionnaire on the Royal Caribbean app which will look something like this:

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Sunetra Biswas



Healthy cruising starts with you

In the last 14 days, have you experienced any significant:

Fever/chills (99.5 F/37.5 C or greater)

Yes

No

Difficulty breathing

Yes

No

Sudden loss of taste or smell

Yes

No

Sore throat

Yes

No

Nausea / vomiting

Yes

No

Diarrhea

Yes

No

Headaches

Yes

No

Fatigue / muscle aches

Yes

No

Cough / nasal congestion

Yes

No

Will you be more than 23 weeks pregnant at any time during the cruise?

Yes

No

Note how the language used is in past tense, meaning that **even if you are currently well but have experienced any of the listed symptoms in the past 10 days**, you're supposed to declare it in full honesty whether or not your symptoms were due to COVID-19 or something else.

Except that once you do, you'll likely be denied boarding. I've raised this to RCI's executive management team (and that of other cases, aside from mine) too, but while RCI avoided this question when we asked, the **Singapore Tourism Board has since confirmed it as RCI's policy**:

STB CRUISE (STB)

Thu, F

to STB, me ▾

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for sharing more details.

As part of their boarding policy, Royal Caribbean International (RCI) does not accept passengers who declare last 10 days prior to embarkation.

The problem is, this is not being communicated online. Note how this is in stark contrast to what Royal Caribbean communicates instead:

COVID-19 SUPPLEMENTARY TERMS AND CONDITIONS (“COVID-19 Terms”)

If we consider that, because of your health circumstances your booked cruise or others, we will contact you to explain our reasons and discuss any available options.

Please note that we may share with or receive from third party medical information and/or samples you provide to us for the purpose of assessing your health stage in the booking process, prior to attending the port, at the port, and during the cruise.

Denial of Boarding

Please note that you will be denied boarding (and your travelling party may be re-boarded) if:

- You test positive for COVID-19 prior to boarding including at home, at a travel agency, or at a port terminal.
- You display any symptoms of COVID-19 on arrival at the port terminal including 37.5C, newly developed cough, loss or change to your sense of taste or smell, or other symptoms of an infectious disease, at our medical staff’s sole discretion.
- You live in an area that is put into lockdown (including regional lockdown) on the day of your cruise;
- You live with or have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or displaying (any) symptoms of COVID-19 in the three weeks prior to your cruise;
- You have travelled outside of Singapore in the 14 days prior to boarding.

If you are denied boarding for any of the reasons above, you will be entitled to a refund of the cruise fare and any other applicable charges.

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Besides a positive testing result, are there any other circumstances that a travelling party would not be able to board the ship?

A

Aside from a positive test result, certain circumstances may lead to a denial of boarding for the following reasons:

- Failure to affirmatively state a willingness to comply with our safety and public policies
- Prior to boarding, or at any time during the voyage, failure to comply with our safety and public policies
- Refusal to wear face masks in violation of applicable law or regulations
- A guest who is unable to provide verifiable evidence of a negative SARS-CoV-2 test result
- A guest who provides a negative SARS-CoV-2 test result which we, in our sole discretion, determine is unreliable
- Multiple temperature readings that equal or exceed 37.5 degrees Celsius
- Symptoms outlined in the Health Questionnaire are observed or documented
- Contact tracing reveals close contact with someone with COVID-19
- Refusal to submit to secondary health screening; or a secondary health screening recommendation by the personnel conducting the secondary health screening

So ultimately, it is up to you as to whose words you wish to believe.

Of course, **while I don't advocate lying on your health questionnaire, there have been many incidents that show folks with a "yes" regardless of the cause were flatly denied.**

You seldom see me complain about stuff here on this blog unless there's a clear PSA statement to be made, which is why I've left my story out ([you can read it on Instagram here if you're curious about the specific details](#)). And in this case, as much as we were disappointed by the lack of professionalism we encountered with Royal Caribbean, subsequent conversations with readers showed that this has been ongoing for over a year, which isn't right.

That's why I've chosen to make this public, because I think anyone who is sailing with them soon deserves to know in advance that this is how RCI operates.

That way, you'll know what to do to avoid having your holiday plans go up in smoke.

P.S. Royal Caribbean has denied to answer the following questions:

- *Is it Royal Caribbean Singapore's policy to not allow recovered patients (not from COVID19) to board?*
- *Is it Royal Caribbean's standard practice to deny passengers on medical grounds without a relevant medical evaluation, even if they are able to produce medical documents showing that they are certified fit to travel?*
- *Is it true that all frontline healthcare workers are not welcome aboard your ships?*

Personally, I find their lack of response to be rather telling, but you can judge for yourself too.



News

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Photo screenshot from @djjaderasif on Instagram.



Videos

Speaking to *Mothership*, a Royal Caribbean spokesperson was denied boarding due to the nature of her job as a crew worker.

"As part of Royal Caribbean's stringent health & safety protocol, all guests must complete a health questionnaire prior to boarding, including mandatory PCR testing. Guests must declare whether they are experiencing any COVID-19 related symptoms, and if they have had contact with anyone who has COVID-19 or is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. They will also need to disclose recent travel history and health history. In order to board the ship, guests must pass a health screening. Jade Rasif, who was due to sail with us, had indicated that she was in contact with COVID-19 patients due to the nature of her job as a health care worker. As a result of this declaration, she was not allowed to board. We have since reached out to Jade to offer her another safe opportunity to welcoming her onboard Quantum of the Seas soon."

Does that mean Jade Rasif will only be allowed to board if she quits her job as a healthcare worker?

Category

1. Family
2. Insurance

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