



**PANAMA MARITIME AUTHORITY
General Directorate of Seafarers**

Merchant Marine Circular No. 268

To: Ship-owners/Operators, Company Security Officers, Legal Representatives of Panamanian Flagged Vessels, Panamanian Merchant Marine Consulates and Recognized Organizations (ROs), Masters of Panamanian Flagged Ships

Subject: Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006) – Minimum Rest Hours

References: Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006)

1. The purpose of this circular is to inform users of the Panamanian Registry about the new regulation pertaining to the minimum limits of rest hours for seafarers and other related matters.
2. The limits of minimum rest hours established on this Circular are applicable to all seafarers on board Panamanian flagged ships to whom the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006) applies.
3. The minimum rest hours shall not be less than:
 - (a) ten (10) hours in any 24-hour period; and
 - (b) seventy seven (77) hours in any seven-day period.
4. Rest hours may be divided into no more than two periods, one of which shall be at least six (6) non-interrupted hours in length, and the interval between consecutive periods of rest shall not exceed fourteen (14) hours.
 - a. Exceptions to the minimum limits of rest hours for seafarers are allowed in accordance to Regulation 2.3.13 of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC,2006), as long as these are recognized within a collective agreement or adjusted to the provisions established in the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 78 (STCW, 78), Amended. It may be taken into account more frequent or longer leave periods or the granting of compensatory leave for watchkeeping seafarers or seafarers working on board ships on short voyages.
5. The master of a ship shall have the right to interrupt and suspend the rest hours of the seafarers whenever it is required:

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- a. To ensure the immediate safety of the ship, persons on board or cargo, or to provide assistance to other ships or persons in distress at sea until the normal situation has been restored.
- b. To perform periodical exercises such as firefighting, lifeboat drills and others established by national and international regulations to be conducted in a manner that minimizes the disturbance of rest periods and does not induce fatigue.
- c. To perform imperative operational duties which are essential and unpostponable due to environmental or safety reasons or otherwise non-foreseeable when starting the voyage.

Once the normal situation has been restored, the master shall ensure that any seafarers who have performed work in a scheduled rest period are provided with an adequate period of rest.

6. Every ship shall maintain and post in an accessible place and at the disposal of the competent authorities, a table describing the working organization on board the ship, indicating at least for each position, the following:

- i. the schedule of service at sea and service in port
- ii. the minimum number of rest hours.
- iii. entry for each position or rank.

Such table shall adjust to each type of ship and be prepared by the shipowner or operator in accordance to the guidelines of the IMO/ILO and written in the working language or languages of the ship and in English.

7. All ships shall carry the daily records of the seafarers rest hours that shall serve as documentary evidence to prove effective compliance with the minimum rest hours of the seafarers.

The Panama Maritime Authority shall adopt a standardized template of the daily rest hours in accordance to the Guidelines of the IMO/ILO, with the purpose to ensure control and compliance, nonetheless, shipowners or operators may develop or adjust the registry of daily rest hour including electronic registries, as long as the criteria and minimum information established on the IMO/ILO Guidelines, are met.

The daily rest hours shall be written in the working language or languages of the ship and in English.

8. Seafarers shall maintain records of the daily rest hours concerning them, which shall be initialed by the master, or person authorized by him, and by the seafarer.

9. The master or the person appointed by him is required to establish and maintain the organization of proper and efficient watchkeeping periods, with the purpose to ensure compliance with rest hours, avoiding fatigue without risking the safety of the ship and crew at all times.

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10. Any seafarer to which the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 78 (STCW, 78), Amended is applicable, shall be subject to this Circular, regardless of in what ship they may be.
11. For your easier convenience, you can access online the table templates of the [Work Organization on Board](#) as well as the [Rest Hours Registry](#).

Any question can be directed to: labormar@amp.gob.pa or afundora@amp.gob.pa .

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