

Before Boarding a Domestic Ferry

Seven checks for the right ticket, terminal, status, weather, boarding conditions, connection buffer and fallback.

A practical guide + printable boarding card

PH-PF-03 • Fact-checked 26 October 2026 • Not an operating notice

Who can confirm what?

MARINA

passenger rules
and shipping policy

PPA / port

terminal and
port information

Coast Guard

maritime safety
and sailing directions

PAGASA

weather, gale and
cyclone products

Operator

your actual sailing,
ticket and boarding

Use this guide before leaving for the port. Recheck operator and authority notices close to departure.

What this guide solves

A destination name is not a boarding plan. A usable ferry plan identifies the operator, exact port and terminal, specific sailing, check-in method, baggage conditions and weather exposure.

This guide gives you seven checks to complete before travel. It does not certify a vessel, promise that a sailing will operate, or replace instructions from MARINA, PPA, the Philippine Coast Guard, PAGASA, the port or the shipping operator.

The one-page outcome

We are booked with [operator] on [service/vessel], departing [exact port and terminal] at [date and time]. We will arrive by [time] with [identity and ticket evidence]. The latest official status check is [source and time]. If the sailing changes, our first usable fallback is [plan].

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If any blank remains, keep the booking flexible and do not build a high-consequence same-day connection around it.

1 Name the exact service and place

Start with the operating company, not the booking site. Record the company actually operating the service and keep the reseller or agent name separately. A city or island name is not a terminal address.

Departure identity card

Field	Your confirmed detail	Evidence + time checked
Operating company		
Booking seller, if different		
Route on ticket		
Sailing date and time		
Vessel/service, if shown		
Exact departure port		
Terminal or pier		
Map pin / written address		
Operator contact channel		

Use the operator's current booking message and a current port or terminal source. Ask which passenger entrance to use when a port complex has several gates.

STOP SIGN — The ticket shows only a city pair and you cannot identify the operating company and exact terminal.

2 Protect the ticket and passenger identity

Use an official operator channel or a seller you can independently identify. MARINA's April 2026 announcement says its Ships E-ticketing Application System (SEAS) mandates online ticketing for covered domestic passenger ships and links ticketing with passenger manifests. Implementation can vary, so follow current operator instructions.

Ticket authenticity check

- Tie the website, app, counter or agent to the operator.
- Check that the payment recipient matches the expected seller or operator.
- Confirm the reference, route, date and passenger name.
- Know how to retrieve or reprint the ticket.
- Confirm whether a screenshot, live app or printed copy is accepted.
- Make sure every traveller appears as required.
- Keep passport and payment-card details out of shared itineraries.

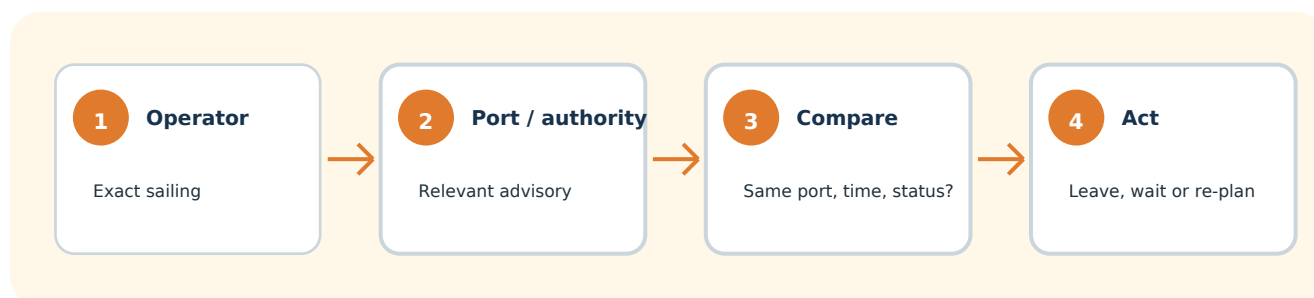
Evidence pack

- 1 Ticket or official confirmation
- 2 Payment receipt
- 3 Operator terms supplied with the booking
- 4 Required identification
- 5 Fare evidence claimed
- 6 Correction contact channel

STOP SIGN — A message asks you to pay a different personal account or link, while the official operator channel does not confirm the change.

3 Check status with two responsible sources

A timetable shows an intended service. It is not proof that the sailing is operating today. Check the operating company first, then a relevant port, terminal or official authority advisory.



Status log

When	Source	What it says	Saved?	Action
24-48 hours before	Operator		Yes / No	
Evening before	Operator / port		Yes / No	
Before leaving	Operator / port		Yes / No	
At terminal	Official board / counter		Yes / No	

Ask precisely: Is this exact sailing operating? Has the port, terminal, check-in time or service name changed? Is revalidation required? Treat forwarded screenshots and traveller comments as leads, not confirmation.

STOP SIGN — Your connection depends on a sailing whose operator cannot confirm the terminal or status.

4 Read marine weather for the route

Sun at the destination does not describe the water between the ports. Use route-relevant PAGASA products: Gale Warning; national or regional coastal-water conditions; and tropical-cyclone bulletins or warnings for shipping when relevant.

The High Seas and Offshore Waters Forecast is an additional source only when the route and forecast area make it relevant. It is not the default for every short domestic crossing.

Weather reading card

Question	Your answer
Waters / seaboard crossed?	
Gale warning active?	
Cyclone warning for shipping?	
Bulletin issue time?	
Next bulletin expected?	
Operator route notice?	
Safe alternative?	

A gale warning is not a personalised go/no-go instruction. The master, operator, port and competent authorities decide whether a particular vessel sails. Recheck near departure.

STOP SIGN — Your only weather evidence is a generic phone icon for the destination city.

5 Confirm boarding conditions

Conditions differ by operator, route, vessel and fare. Do not transfer airline baggage assumptions to a ferry.

- Check-in opening, closing and requested arrival time
- Printed ticket, QR code and original-ID requirements
- Bag count, size, weight and excess charges
- Checked-bag handover and collection
- Restricted and prohibited items
- Vehicle check-in, if applicable
- Mobility and access assistance
- Medicines, medical equipment and temperature-sensitive items
- Child, infant and guardian rules
- Animal rules, if relevant

Bag-by-bag plan

Bag / item	Cabin or checked?	Limit confirmed?	Essential if delayed?
ID, ticket, phone	Keep with you	N/A	Yes
Medicines / aids			Yes
Main bag			
Special item			

Keep documents, essential medicine, communications and one safe payment method with you unless operator or security rules require otherwise.

STOP SIGN — An essential aid, medical item or large bag is left for staff to decide at the terminal because it was not confirmed earlier.

6 Protect the next commitment

Scheduled arrival is not the moment you will stand outside the destination port with all bags. Allow for docking, disembarkation, baggage collection, terminal exit and local transport.

Connection consequence card

Next commitment	Time	Latest useful arrival	Replacement?	Loss if missed	Buffer
			Yes / No	PHP	

Choose a larger buffer or an overnight when:

- The next commitment is expensive or non-refundable.
- This is the last useful sailing.
- Weather exposure is elevated.
- Replacement services are infrequent.
- Children, limited mobility or essential equipment add time.
- The ferry and onward service are separate purchases.

If failure would end the trip or create a major loss, do not make the planned arrival minute carry the whole risk.

STOP SIGN — The plan works only if the ferry is exactly on time and you are first off the vessel.

7 Write the disruption plan

MARINA Circular No. 2018-07 covers passenger rights and operator obligations for cancelled, delayed and uncompleted voyages on covered inter-island passenger liner services. MARINA's explanation says refund or ticket revalidation applies to cancelled and delayed voyages regardless of cause, except when the passenger is at fault; other amenities or compensation can depend on operator responsibility.

Do not treat that summary as a promise about an individual claim. Keep the ticket, notices, receipts and written response, and ask which rule applies to the event.

Disruption sequence

- 1 Confirm: delayed, cancelled, moved, or still under review?
- 2 Ask for the available choice: later travel, revalidation, refund or another stated remedy.
- 3 Protect people first: medicines, food, safe waiting, children and accessibility.
- 4 Notify the next provider before its deadline.
- 5 Price one legal, physically workable alternative.
- 6 Keep notices, chats, receipts and contact names/times.

Recovery card

Current status	
Confirmed by / time	
Ticket choice offered	
Earliest usable alternative	
Safe wait / stay	
Next booking notified	Yes / No
Evidence saved	Yes / No
STOP SIGN — You buy a costly replacement because of a rumour before the operator confirms the original service status.	

The seven-check boarding card

Complete this before leaving for the port. Tick a box only when the detail is specific and current.

☐ 1	SERVICE + PLACE Exact operator, sailing and departure point recorded
☐ 2	TICKET + ID Names, accepted ID and proof of payment ready
☐ 3	STATUS Operator plus relevant port or authority checked
☐ 4	ROUTE WEATHER Relevant coastal, gale and cyclone products checked
☐ 5	BOARDING Check-in, baggage and traveller needs confirmed
☐ 6	CONNECTION Onward buffer and separate-ticket risk addressed
☐ 7	RECOVERY Contact plan and first fallback written down

Final call

Result	Meaning	Action
7 complete	Operationally coherent	Recheck status before departure
5-6 complete	Gaps can still break the journey	Resolve before leaving
0-4 complete	A destination idea, not a boarding plan	Do not build a fragile connection

Operator: _____ **Sailing:** _____
Port + terminal: _____
Latest status source + time: _____
First fallback: _____

Official sources

Checked 26 October 2026. Reopen current pages close to travel.

1. MARINA — Passenger rights
Official explanation of Circular No. 2018-07.
<https://marina.gov.ph/2019/03/05/marina-to-shipping-operators-uphold-passengers-rights-at-all-times/>
2. MARINA Circular No. 2018-07
Source circular on covered inter-island services.
<https://marina.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/MC-2018-07.pdf>
3. MARINA — SEAS announcement
Ships E-ticketing Application System announcement, 11 April 2026.
<https://marina.gov.ph/2026/04/11/safer-travel-thru-seas-marina-mandates-online-ticketing-system-for-domestic-passenger-ships/>
4. MARINA Memorandum Circular No. 180
Passenger counting and manifest rules.
<https://marina.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/mc180.pdf>
5. PAGASA — Gale Warning
Current official gale-warning status.
<https://www.pagasa.dost.gov.ph/marine/gale-warning>
6. PAGASA — High Seas and Offshore Waters
Use only when the route and forecast area are relevant.
<https://www.pagasa.dost.gov.ph/marine/high-seas-forecast>
7. PAGASA — Weather
Gateway to current forecasts and tropical-cyclone products.
<https://www.pagasa.dost.gov.ph/weather>
8. Philippine Ports Authority
Official port information and port management offices.
<https://www.ppa.com.ph/ppafrontpage>

Reader note

This guide is practical editorial information, not legal advice, a safety certificate or an operating notice. Schedules, ports, vessel assignments, ticket channels, baggage rules, weather and passenger-remedy procedures can change. Follow the responsible operator, port and competent authorities for the actual journey.

PHILIPPINES KNOW-HOW

Practical decisions before they become travel problems.