



News

Forrest Booth Predicts New Admiralty Case Law Will Result from COVID-19 Suits Filed by People Infected by Cruise Ship Passengers

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In an article published in *The Daily Journal*, Hinshaw attorney Forrest Booth says that he expects new admiralty case law will result from cases filed by persons infected onshore with COVID-19 by cruise ship passengers who contracted the virus while at sea.

Booth explains that, "[h]istorically, admiralty dealt with ships and things that floated on the water." However, in a 1963 case, the U.S. Supreme Court held that a plaintiff injured as a result of an accident on land that was caused by a ship could recover under the Admiralty Extension Act, which extends general maritime law inland.

Booth believes that plaintiffs in this new crop of cases may rely on the Admiralty Extension Act, but "[t]he question is: [h]ow far inland does that extend?" He adds:

"With regard to class actions, a lot of lessons were learned from the tobacco and asbestos litigation because every individual was different. . . . These ships are enormous. People could be on any of 15 decks. Also, did they spend their days on the ship at the casino at a one-armed bandit two feet away from other people, or were they walking around on deck getting exercise or at the pool?"

Booth concludes that, "[t]hese are all novel legal issues and are cases of first impression to some extent. We're going to get some interesting law made in the next couple of years as the courts start dealing with these."

[Read the full article](#) (*subscription required*)

"Virus Spread on Cruises Could Create New Case Law" was published by *The Daily Journal*, April 29, 2020.