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American Shipper Asia-Pacific Container International Maritime News

Low cargo volumes drive PortMiami terminals to suspend operations

Blanked sailings blamed for South Florida Container Terminal and Port of Miami Terminal Operating Co. temporarily closing gates

Kim Link-Wills · Thursday, March 19, 2020 0 🔥 439 📖 1 minute read



Two PortMiami terminals have scheduled temporary closures because of low import container volume.

The South Florida Container Terminal (SFCT) gate at PortMiami will be closed Friday.

"We have only had one blanked sailing and the closure is only due to low import volume in the terminal," Mark J. Baker, the terminal director, said in an email.

The Port of Miami Terminal Operating Co. (POMTOC) announced on its website that it will be closed Monday and Tuesday "due to extremely low import volumes caused by blanked vessel sailings."

Chief Operating Officer Carlos Arocha did not return a call requesting the number of canceled sailings POMTOC had experienced in recent weeks.

The coronavirus caused an extended manufacturing shutdown in China, which resulted in a dry-up of exports to the United States. Lars Jensen, CEO of Sealntelligence Consulting, said the impact on [container shipping lines from the pandemic could total about 17 million twenty-foot equivalent units \(TEUs\)](#).

PortMiami recorded a 3.4% gain in cargo volume for the 12-month period ending Sept. 30 with 1.12 million TEUs handled.

"For the fifth consecutive year, PortMiami has surpassed the 1 million TEU mark," the port said in January. "The port team attributes this growth to a diverse balance of global trade, supported by more than [\\$1 billion infrastructure improvements](#) offering shippers a strategic hub equipped to handle larger vessels."

Seaboard Marine Terminals said its cargo terminal at PortMiami and the Jacintoport Terminal in Houston remain open and are functioning normally.

"PortMiami has three cargo terminals with Seaboard Marine exclusively operating an 87-acre facility. Although neighboring cargo terminals have announced partial closures, the Seaboard facility at PortMiami is fully operational and open," [Seaboard Marine said in a coronavirus preparation update](#) on its website. "Likewise, the Port of Houston has several different cargo terminals. Although two of the major facilities in Houston are closed,

the 60-acre Jacintoport Terminal that is operated by Seaboard Marine is also fully operational and open. Both our Houston and Miami cargo terminals are open and staffed to handle all cargo needs.”

[Port Houston announced Thursday it was closing the Bayport and Barbours Cut terminals after an employee who works at both sites tested positive for the coronavirus.](#)

Tags

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