

Two deaths tied to California cruise ship, with few tested

March 26 2020, by Olga R. Rodriguez



In this March 14, 2020, file photo, the Grand Princess cruise ship is docked at the Port of Oakland in Oakland, Calif. Two men who were on the coronavirus-stricken cruise ship died from the virus after being returned to California. Federal officials confirmed Thursday, March 26, 2020 that fewer than half the ship's passengers were tested for the virus, despite assurances from Vice President Mike Pence and California's governor that everyone aboard the ship would be tested. (AP Photo/Ben Margot, File)

Two men who traveled on a coronavirus-stricken cruise ship stalled for days off the California coast have died, federal officials said Thursday, and they confirmed that fewer than half the ship's passengers were tested for the virus despite assurances that everyone would be tested.

The men, both in their early 60s, were on the Grand Princess sailing from San Francisco to Hawaii on Feb. 21 and died from the coronavirus, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services said in a statement.

One of the men was transported directly from the ship to a hospital when it docked March 9 in Oakland in the east San Francisco Bay. It had idled for several days off the California coast. The other man was among hundreds taken to Travis Air Force Base in Northern California for a 14-day isolation. He was immediately taken to a hospital after developing symptoms, said Bert Kelly, a spokesman for the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

One man died Saturday and the other Monday, Kelly said.

There is still no accurate accounting of how many of the 3,500 passengers and crew from 54 countries were infected with COVID-19 after a Northern California man on a previous sailing returned home and died of the virus, sparking the investigation.

Despite assurances from Vice President Mike Pence and California Gov. Gavin Newsom that everyone aboard the ship would be tested after the ship docked, only 1,100 passengers of about 2,400 have been tested, Kelly said. Many of the others declined testing after waiting numerous days in isolation. Kelly said of those tested, 103 have tested positive and 699 were negative. More results are pending.



This March 10, 2020, file selfie photo provided by Laurie Miller shows Laurie and her husband John Miller in a tent after they disembark from the Grand Princess cruise ship in Oakland, Calif. Federal officials confirmed Thursday, March 26, that fewer than half the ship's passengers were tested for the coronavirus, despite assurances from Vice President Mike Pence and California's governor that everyone aboard the ship would be tested. Taking a test "was actually discouraged, if you were not showing any signs of illness," said Miller, of San Jose, Calif., who spent 14 days at Travis Air Force Base before returning home Tuesday. (Laurie Miller via AP, File)

After Newsom promised on March 12 that "all of these individuals will be tested," his administration has not responded to numerous inquiries

over more than a week about who was being tested, when or why.

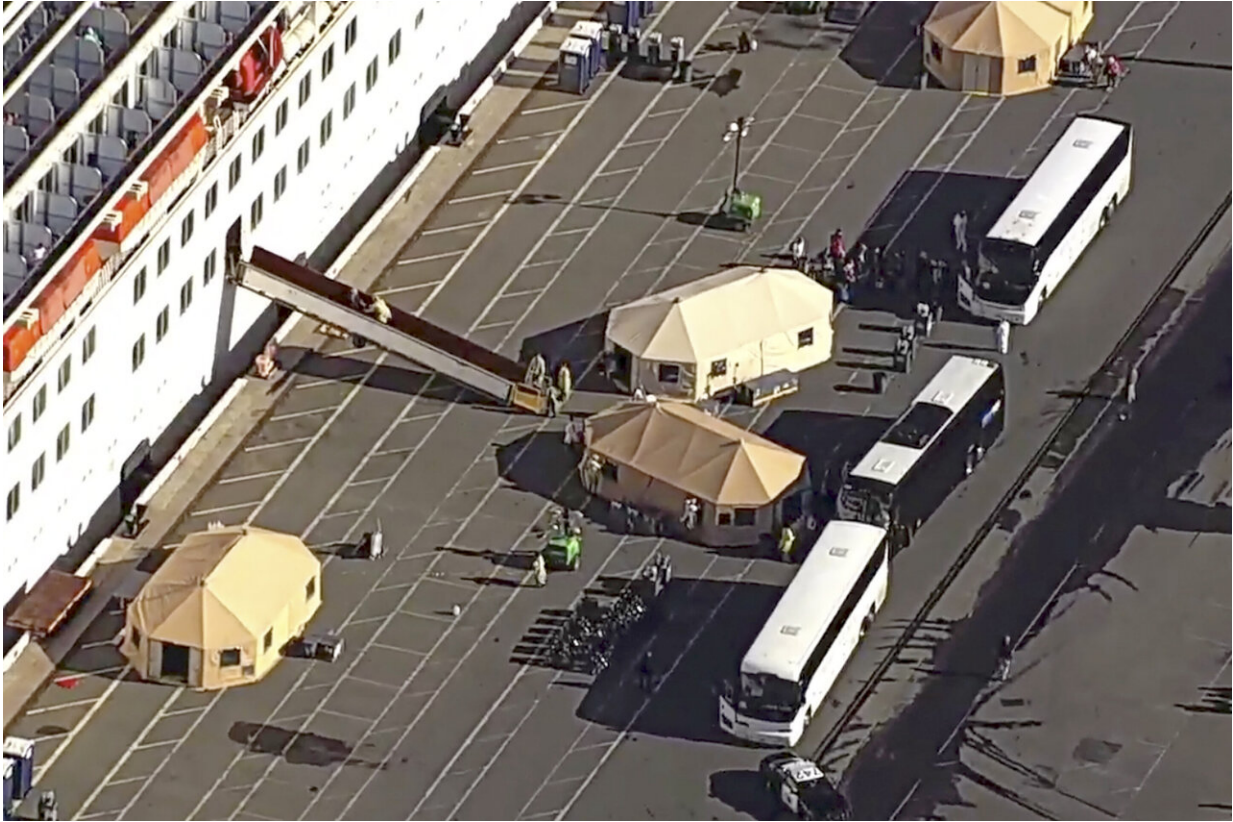
Taking a [test](#) "was actually discouraged, if you were not showing any signs of illness," said Grand Princess [passenger](#) Laurie Miller of San Jose, who spent 14 days at Travis Air Force Base before returning home Tuesday.

Miller and her husband chose not be tested because they hadn't shown symptoms and were told if they tested negative it wouldn't shorten their quarantine. If the test was inconclusive or results were delayed, they would have had to stay at the base longer, she said.

The ship's passengers were flown or bused to military bases in the U.S. or their home countries for a 14-day isolation while 1,100 crew members scattered to their home countries, including about 500 to the Philippines. The rest of the crew members and six passengers remained on the ship in isolation there. It's unclear how many [crew members](#) have been tested.



This March 10, 2020, file photo taken from pool video provided by KGO-TV shows passengers waiting to board buses after leaving the Grand Princess cruise ship at the Port of Oakland in Oakland, Calif. Two men who were on the coronavirus-stricken cruise ship died from the virus after being returned to California. Federal officials confirmed Thursday, March 26, 2020, that fewer than half the ship's passengers were tested for the virus, despite assurances from Vice President Mike Pence and California's governor that everyone aboard the ship would be tested. (KGO-TV via AP, Pool, File)



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This March 10, 2020, file photo provided by Laurie Miller shows Grand Princess cruise ship passengers being screened inside a tent as they disembark in Oakland, Calif. Two men who were on the coronavirus-stricken cruise ship died from the virus after being returned to California. Taking a test "was actually discouraged, if you were not showing any signs of illness," said Miller, of San Jose, Calif., who spent 14 days at Travis Air Force Base before returning home Tuesday. (Laurie Miller via AP, File)

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially [older adults](#) and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death.

All passengers will have completed their 14-day quarantine by Friday, Kelly said.

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