CDC and City of San Antonio Metropolitan Health District confirm two COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) cases within quarantined Diamond Princess cruise federal evacuees at Lackland Air Force Base

Quarantine continues to function as planned; patients continue to be kept in isolation from general public and other evacuees

INFO CURRENT AS OF 12:30 P.M.

SAN ANTONIO (FEBRUARY 21, 2020) — The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (Metro Health) today confirmed two cases of COVID-19 infections (2019-nCoV, previously known as novel coronavirus) among the Diamond Princess Cruise Ship Federal evacuees that are currently under federal quarantine order at Lackland Air Force Base. This brings the total number of confirmed cases in Bexar County to three.

The CDC expects additional confirmed cases of COVID-19 from within the quarantined Diamond Princess cruise ship cohort and will share information with the public as appropriate. Additional information about the number of U.S. cases is available at this website:

The patients have continued to be kept in maximum level isolation from the general public and the rest of the evacuees. At this time, the risk to the public remains low. Although few cases have been confirmed amongst these quarantined evacuees, the City of San Antonio continues to implement its existing plans with its federal, state and regional partners.

“Our residents should know that the federally ordered quarantine is functioning as it should. Those evacuees, who are in quarantine on Lackland Air Force Base, who test positive for COVID-19 remain in isolation from the general public and other evacuees,” said Metro Health Director Dr. Dawn Emerick.
The Texas Department of State Health Services has supported the effort with use of their state-owned Texas Center for Infectious Disease (TCID) hospital to treat patients with symptoms of COVID-19. This facility specializes in infectious disease control and treatment.

**About the Federal Evacuees & Repatriation Effort from the Diamond Princess cruise ship:**

An estimated 400 United States citizens onboard the Diamond Princess cruise ship were evacuated and flown back to the United States on two separate planes chartered by the State Department—one plane landed at Travis AFB in California and the other carrying 151 passengers landed at Lackland AFB just before 4:00 a.m. on February 17, 2019.

Of those passengers, 144 asymptomatic citizens disembarked from the aircraft, were assessed and transported to Lackland Air Force Base, in a separate housing area from the previous cohort of travelers who arrived on February 7.


**Information for the Public:**
Metro Health continues to maintain an up-to-date website which will provide current updates to anyone seeking information on the situation: www.sanantonio.gov/health/2019ncoronavirus.

Information regarding the Novel Coronavirus is also available in American Sign Language at this link: http://sat.ahasalerts.com/ActiveAlerts.aspx?id=1334

**How do people become infected with Coronavirus?**

Human coronaviruses most commonly spread from an infected person to others through:

- Respiratory droplets released into the air by coughing and sneezing;
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands;
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands; and

**What are the symptoms?**

Patients with confirmed 2019-nCoV infection have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

**How can I avoid infection with Novel Coronavirus?**

The best way to prevent infection is to take precautions similar to the precautions you take to avoid the flu. CDC always recommends these everyday actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

San Antonio: America’s 21st Century City

San Antonio is a global city with a dynamic economy and workforce, a deep cultural heritage and diverse communities that are resilient and welcoming. It is one of the strongest fiscally managed cities in the country, nurturing entrepreneurship, encouraging investment and funding infrastructure. America’s seventh-largest city offers a vibrant business climate and growth opportunities in bioscience, financial services, aerospace, cybersecurity, energy, transportation, manufacturing and healthcare. In 2015, UNESCO designated San Antonio’s 18th century Spanish colonial missions as a World Heritage Site – the first in Texas. Proudly called Military City, USA®, San Antonio is home to one of the largest populations of active duty military, veterans and crucial military commands. For more information, visit www.sanantonio.gov

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

CDC works 24/7 protecting America’s health, safety and security. Whether diseases start at home or abroad, are curable or preventable, chronic or acute, or from human activity or deliberate attack, CDC responds to America’s most pressing health threats. CDC is headquartered in Atlanta and has experts located throughout the United States and the world.