

# Navy upholds firing of carrier captain who warned of coronavirus

The decision to make Crozier's firing permanent is a reversal from an initial inquiry completed in April, when the leaders recommended reinstating the captain.



The USS Theodore Roosevelt in January. | U.S. Navy via Getty Images

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The Navy has decided to uphold the firing of Capt. Brett Crozier, the former commanding officer of the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt who was relieved of duty after raising the alarm about a Covid-19 outbreak on his ship in March, according to two people familiar with the investigation.

"The results of the investigation justified the relief," said one person who has seen the investigation. "He failed to take appropriate action, to do the things that the commanding officer of a ship is supposed to do, so he stays relieved."

No other punitive action will be taken against the captain, said a congressional aide.

In a new twist, the Navy is also expected to hold up the promotion of the senior officer onboard the Roosevelt, Rear Adm. Stuart Baker, the commander of Carrier Strike Group 9, said the two people.

"Strike Group Command will also be held accountable for poor decision-making and his second star is being put on hold," said the aide.

After learning of the outbreak on the ship, Crozier argued for evacuating the entire crew as soon as possible. But Baker, Crozier's superior on the ship, [reportedly countered that less drastic measures should be taken.](#)

The news brings to a close a highly publicized chain of events that started with an outbreak of the coronavirus onboard the Roosevelt in late March, which forced the ship to stop in Guam and offload its 5,000 sailors. Crozier caused an uproar when he wrote a letter pleading for help from Navy leadership as the coronavirus spread throughout his ship, which was later leaked to the media. Crozier was fired by then-acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly, who later stepped down over remarks he made to the ship's crew criticizing the captain's actions.

The news that Crozier will remain relieved is a shift from the Navy's recommendation in April. After a preliminary inquiry, the chief of naval operations recommended that Crozier be reinstated.

But Gen. Mark Milley, the chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was not satisfied and pushed for a broader investigation, a move that delayed a decision on reinstating Crozier, POLITICO first reported.

After recovering from Covid-19 on Guam, Crozier was moved to an administrative job in San Diego while the Navy wrapped up the broader investigation. The [Roosevelt finally got underway in late May](#) after nearly two months sidelined in Guam while its sailors fought the virus.