USS Milwaukee Returns to Sea After COVID Confinement



The Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Milwaukee (LCS 5) steams through the ocean, Dec 16, 2021. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Aaron Lau*

NAVAL STATION GUANTANAMO BAY – USS Milwaukee (LCS 5) a Freedom variant littoral combat ship, returned to sea Jan. 3 after being in port as a result of a portion of the crew testing positive for COVID-19, Cmdr. Katherine L Meadows, U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command and U.S. 4th Fleet Public Affairs, said in a statement.

The ship departed with all crew members, which includes the "Sea Knights" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 22 Detachment 5 and embarked U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment.

"It is great to be heading back out to sea." said Cmdr. Brian

Forster, USS Milwaukee commanding officer. “The crew worked together as a team to ensure we are ready to conduct the mission. My entire crew is feeling great, healthy and excited for the next portion of our deployment.”

Milwaukee has been in port since Dec. 20, when it arrived for a regularly scheduled port visit.

While all Sailors onboard were 100% immunized, a portion of the crew tested positive for COVID-19. All affected Sailors exhibited mild or no symptoms.

Since being in port, Sailors were also afforded the opportunity to receive the COVID-19 booster shot. While not mandatory, the booster is recommended for Sailors.

The ship’s crew will continue to follow aggressive cleaning protocols, wear masks and social distance while at sea to ensure they remain mission ready.

Milwaukee departed its homeport of Naval Station Mayport, Florida, Dec. 14 for its regularly scheduled deployment to the U.S. 4th Fleet area of operations. Milwaukee will support the Joint Interagency Task Force South’s mission, which includes counter-illicit drug trafficking missions in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific.