



## KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH, CITY OF KETCHIKAN, AND CITY OF SAXMAN

### **JOINT MEDIA RELEASE: COVID-19**

Date: March 13, 2020  
From: Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center (EOC)  
Contact: Kacie Paxton, Public Information Officer, 228-6605

#### **For Immediate Release**

Out of an abundance of caution and in an effort to reduce the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus, the following decisions have been made by the Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and its member agencies:

#### **Facility Closures**

The Borough Recreation Center will be closed effective 9:00 p.m. today, March 13, for an anticipated duration of at least two-weeks. More information will be provided during the two-week period. Partial credits will be issued to customers enrolled in classes or activities affected by this closure, questions can be directed via email to [parksandrec@kgbak.us](mailto:parksandrec@kgbak.us) or by voicemail at 228-6650.

The Ted Ferry Civic Center will be closed effective March 14 through March 31, 2020.

The City Library and Museum will be open for regular business, but are canceling any scheduled groups and events held at their facilities effective March 14 through March 31, 2020.

The Saxman Community Center and Tribal House will be closed effective March 14 through March 31, 2020.

#### **School District Update**

The Ketchikan School District has announced that Spring Break will be extended by one week. The District will provide breakfast and lunch during the week of March 23-27 for all students. More information will be provided Monday, March 16, 2020. Watch for information on the District website at [www.kgbsd.org](http://www.kgbsd.org). All District international, out-of-state, and in-state travel has been canceled until the end of this month. Additional trips will be evaluated in upcoming weeks. All scheduled public events in school facilities will be canceled beginning Monday, March 16, 2020, through the end of March 2020.

#### **Public Gatherings**

We recommend that large public gatherings and events be canceled over the next two-week period. For events that cannot be canceled, we encourage online or telephonic participation. We will continue to monitor the situation and make adjustments as appropriate.

For Borough Assembly meetings we encourage the public to access the live feed via KPU, GCI, or online at [http://borough-ketchikan.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish\\_id=3](http://borough-ketchikan.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=3). Citizens may submit public comments be read into the record to [boroclerk@kgbak.us](mailto:boroclerk@kgbak.us).

For City Council meetings we encourage the public to access the live feed via KPU, GCI, or online at [www.ktn-ak.us/current-agendas-and-minutes](http://www.ktn-ak.us/current-agendas-and-minutes). During this time, Ketchikan citizens can submit questions or comments to be read aloud during the meeting to [clerks@city.ketchikan.ak.us](mailto:clerks@city.ketchikan.ak.us).

### **PeaceHealth Medical Center Update**

Due to limited availability of test kits and limited capacity of labs to analyze results, testing for COVID-19 is not currently available to the general public in our community. At this time, PeaceHealth hospitals and clinics are only testing people for COVID-19 who fall into several high-risk categories. This includes those needing to be admitted to our hospitals, and those who are at highest risk of spreading the virus to others, including healthcare and public safety workers. We hope to be able to provide more testing in the future and will continue to reevaluate as testing capabilities increase across the nation.

If you are experiencing fever or respiratory infection symptoms (e.g. cough), ***please call your healthcare provider's office before*** arriving or scheduling an appointment to determine the appropriate care setting and testing process.

The following restrictions are currently in place for visitors to PeaceHealth Ketchikan facilities:

- Hospital patients are currently limited to 1 or 2 essential support people.
- New Beginnings Birth Center patients are currently limited to 1 or 2 essential support people, who will receive arm bands for access.
- New Horizons Long-term Care unit is currently closed to all visitors.
- PHMG patients coming for scheduled appointments are asked to limit accompanying support persons to 1 or 2.

For general information, we encourage you to visit [peacehealth.org/coronavirus](http://peacehealth.org/coronavirus).

### **Borough Transportation Update**

The Ketchikan International Airport has implemented an up-scaled cleaning protocol for all airport equipment and terminal building areas. Alaska Airlines, as well as TSA and all other airport tenants have also increased their cleaning protocols. Due to the current inoperability of the TSA X-ray machine, TSA has been experiencing longer wait times. It is anticipated the machine will be operable by the end of the day. Alaska Airlines has made no changes to its flight schedules and does not expect schedule changes. Citizens are encouraged to call the airport staff for additional information at 225-6800.

The Borough Transit System will be adjusting its schedule to accommodate increased cleaning services. More information on the bus schedule changes will be shared through the Borough website and on social media at <https://www.facebook.com/KetchikanBus-179031686614/>. Borough bus riders are encouraged to seek alternative means of transportation if possible.

### **Continued Information**

There are currently no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Ketchikan. If that changes, the Ketchikan EOC will work diligently to ensure the public is notified and to take all actions necessary to respond to the situation in order to protect our community. The decisions that have been made are in an effort to be proactive and are out of an abundance of caution. We continue to work together to make sure that Ketchikan has the most up-to-date information available with access to key information. The health of our community is at the focus of our decisions.

#ketchikanstayhealthy #staystrongketchikan #stepsforahealthycommunity