



# KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH

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**Office of the Borough Mayor**

March 18, 2020

Fellow Borough Citizens,

As many of you know, yesterday a confirmed COVID-19 case was discovered in Ketchikan. As a result, several individuals who had contact with this individual, including myself, are now in a 14-day quarantine. Many more are choosing to self-isolate at home out of an abundance of caution.

As such, many people in our community will be in quarantine until early April. Based upon available information regarding this virus, it is very possible that others in our community had/have the virus before the confirmed case was known. We knew this was coming and there will be few, if any, locations in the world that will not be impacted before this is over. We are also likely to see additional cases in Ketchikan in the future.

Ketchikan citizens should take comfort in the following:

- We are prepared and have been proactive. Emergency Operations have been up and running for several days now. The Ketchikan EOC started meeting on this on February 19<sup>th</sup>, officially activated at Level 1 on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, and moved up to Level 2 on March 16<sup>th</sup>.
- A City/Borough Emergency declaration was accomplished before our first confirmed case and we modified Borough Code to maintain the functions of Government. The Assembly can meet electronically and critical staff members can work remotely.
- Our hospital and EMS workers are some of the best and are prepared.
- Continuity of Government, critical infrastructure and essential services will be maintained.

Now is the time for us to come together as a community and address this crisis. I participated in a Teleconference with the Whitehouse today in which Vice President Pence encouraged all Americans to work together to limit the scope of this event. The Vice President specifically asked that we communicate the following to the community:

The risk of serious illness to the average American remains low, but the risk to seniors or those with compromised immune systems is high. The COVID-19 virus is 3 times more infectious than the flu. The Federal Government is encouraging the following: Every American who feels sick should stay home (contact your provider if you need medical care) older Americans should stay home, avoid groups of 10 or more, use drive through and pick up if available for necessary supplies. Per the Vice President, we need to focus on preventing exposure so that vulnerable citizens who are at high risk do not contract it.

Everyone in Ketchikan needs to realize you have a part to play in this event and a duty to follow recommendations and guidelines. For most of us this would be little more than a bad "cold", but for others it could be life threatening. Consider that you are protecting someone's grandmother or an immune compromised citizen when you stay at home, limit outings and follow recommendations.

Ketchikan made it through the Spanish Flu and will get through this as well. Stay Strong Ketchikan and do your part! A great article on what our community forefathers went through can be read here:

[http://www.sitnews.us/Kiffer/Influenza/112608\\_1918.html](http://www.sitnews.us/Kiffer/Influenza/112608_1918.html).

Hoping and praying for the best along with you,

Rodney Dial  
Ketchikan Gateway Borough Mayor