



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

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE: COVID-19 UPDATE | SECOND POSITIVE CASE

Date: March 19, 2020
From: Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
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For Immediate Release

Second Positive COVID-19 Case in Ketchikan

We were notified concurrently with the Governor's press conference this afternoon that there has been a second positive test result for COVID-19 in Ketchikan. We will provide a subsequent media release this evening once information has been confirmed for the case.

Alaska 2-1-1

For questions about what you need to do to be prepared for COVID-19 or questions about resources to help you with emergency food, shelter, senior services during this time:

Dial 2-1-1.

No matter where you live in Alaska, 2-1-1 can help connect you with answers about COVID-19. 2-1-1 operating hours are from 7am to 8pm, or you can also email them at Alaska211@ak.org

COVID-19 Testing Updates

Following the announcement of a positive COVID-19 case in Ketchikan, Public Health has conducted a contact investigation and has directed testing of individuals that meet criteria based on contact with any confirmed case of COVID-19. Individuals are being tested in accordance with CDC and State of Alaska priorities.

We are working on several different options to increase local testing capability. Ketchikan medical providers are discussing the possibility of drive-through screening or testing. Please see the March 18 Media Release for information regarding local testing, specimen collection, and lab processing.

The number of tests administered is tracked and provided on a statewide basis, updated daily on the Alaska Department of Health and Services (DHSS) website at <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/COVID-19/monitoring.aspx>.

If you are experiencing a fever and symptoms, such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider for medical advice. It is important to call your primary care provider prior to going in to evaluate if you need to be tested and or self-isolate. The only reason to go to the Emergency Room is if you are experiencing symptoms that need immediate emergency medical care, such as severe respiratory distress.

Ketchikan International Airport Information

Posters regarding the State of Alaska travel guidance have been placed throughout the airport. At this time neither the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) nor the CDC has offered any guidance on monitoring passengers on domestic flights. We recommend people follow the health alert guidance for the traveling public available on the webpage at:

<https://gov.alaska.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/03172020-SOA-COVID-19-Health-Mandate-004.pdf>.

Specifically, if you have traveled outside of Ketchikan, we recommend that you self-isolate in your home for at least 14 days after your return.

The airport terminal building and ferry have been thoroughly disinfected and daily cleaning continues to be a high priority. The airport gift shop, the snack bar, and the bar are closed until further notice. Alaska Airlines scheduled flights are still coming into Ketchikan as normal.

Emergency Supplies

PeaceHealth is following CDC guidance regarding PPE usage which does include recommended procedures for conserving PPE so as not to create a shortage. In addition our EOC has ordered additional PPE through regular channels, we have more PPE in reserve with our Medical Reserve Corp supplies, and the State Emergency Operations Center is shipping us an order of supplies from the Strategic National Stockpile.

Services for Vulnerable Population

To protect the health and safety of Alaska Pioneer Home elders, additional precautions are being put in place. Effective Tuesday, March 17, at 6 p.m., all Pioneer Homes were closed to visitors, including family. The PeaceHealth New Horizons Long-term Care unit is currently closed to all visitors.

The community of people who are homeless, and the service providers they depend on, face unique challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic will have a potentially disproportionate impact on people experiencing homelessness in Ketchikan. The EOC concerned with these challenges to our homeless population and the organizations that provide services to them are working in concert to address the Before, During, and After of the COVID-19 pandemic. The EOC objective is to provide for the health and well-being of our homeless population during this crisis, enable social distancing within the homeless population while allowing organizations to provide ongoing services, and to provide the capacity to isolate / quarantine an individual(s) should they become symptomatic.

The EOC has been in contact with FCHS, WISH, PATH and the Salvation Army to provide 24-hour services. Additionally, greater social distancing for the homeless community can be facilitated through the use of a larger facilities to include tents and the temporary use of the unrenovated KRYF building for isolation of a limited number of individuals. Two local hotels (The Landing and Salmon Falls) have offered temporary space to house PATH residents in the event isolation / quarantine of individuals is required.

With businesses being closed or operating under reduced hours in response to the Governors Health Mandate portable toilets with hand washing stations are being contracted to provide hygienic restrooms for homeless individuals. Areas identified for placement of the portable toilets are Thomas Basin (next to the Salvation Army), Creek Street Bridge, Berth-3, Parking lot next to the Police Station, and the Plaza Bus stop. The stations will be serviced daily to allow for replenishment of supplies and cleaning. Should the need arise additional stations are available to be placed in identified areas.

Continuity of operations for FCHS, WISH, PATH and the Salvation Army is underway with EOC personnel meeting with various staff from the aforementioned organizations to provide a continuity of operations plan that will address staff shortages due to COVID-19.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues the EOC is working with City and Borough leaders to ensure people experiencing homelessness are included in response plans to the crisis.

Updated Borough Facility Information

The White Cliff Building has been closed until April 1, 2020. Staff members are practicing social distancing and are working from home. Though the building is closed, business can be conducted over the phone, via email, and through the Borough website. Visit the Borough website at www.kgbak.us for facility closure, departmental forms and contact information.

Parks and Recreation Update

The popular online yoga session will continue to be offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. Amanda Davidshofer will be providing the class via Facebook Live on the Parks and Recreation Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ketchikanparksandrec/> and KPU will be recording for Live In Ketchikan.

Update from the Organized Village of Saxman

On March 19, 2020, in a preventive and precautionary measure for the general public and tribal employees, the Saxman Tribal Office will be closed to the general public until further notice. The Tribe will continue to provide client services. Tribal citizens seeking assistance will now be aided over the telephone. Tribal citizens may call the offices at 247-2502 to request assistance and may call the Saxman Family Caseworker at 228-6984 or 254-1182. The Organized Village of Saxman appreciates the sacrifice and understanding tribal citizens make to flatten the curve of the coronavirus outbreak. Your attention to social-distancing is deeply appreciated.

Financial Impacts to Local Government

The City has yet to fully assess the impact of lost revenue due to the anticipated downturn in the tourism industry this summer. The primary reason is that the situation is still very fluid. We don't know for sure what kind of tourism season we will have this summer. A lot depends on how the PVSA issue will be resolved by the US Congress or the Canadian government. We also don't know if and how much federal disaster relief money will be made available to the local community. Tourism is a major industry in Ketchikan and directly and indirectly accounts for about 35% of the City's sales tax revenue. A strong economy generally results in stable or rising property values and property tax revenues. A weak economy has the opposite effect. The City expects that if action is required, a concerted effort will be made to reduce capital expenditures and explore opportunities to reduce operating expenditures. As a matter of practice, the City has always monitored its reserves to ensure that they will be sufficient to address contingencies and economic downturns. The City's reserves are at sufficient levels so that they can be used as part of a plan to mitigate the impacts that COVID-19 may have on our community.

The Borough has also not yet assessed the full impact or scope of lost revenue, for the same reasons. The Borough is in the process of developing its FY 2021 budget and in light of the current fiscal uncertainty, has directed staff to eliminate all non-essential travel; cut all non-essential spending; and defer implementation of any new programs or services until further notice. We have also placed a hiring freeze for non-essential positions. The Borough has sufficient reserves to respond to the immediate financial needs caused by COVID-19, and can respond in a measured and planned fashion as the long-term impact becomes more clear.

Community Information

The Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has compiled the following information related to our community's response to the COVID-19 virus and efforts to help our citizens through this time.

Community Services:

- Love in Action: Delivery of groceries for families/Individuals who qualify as low income; 907.247.5462
- Salvation Army: To-Go Lunch: Monday-Friday: 12:30PM-1PM; Food Boxes: Monday & Friday: 10AM-12PM; 907.225.5277

Grocery Stores services:

- Alaskan & Proud
 - Monday & Thursday 7-9AM Seniors/Compromised Immunize Systems Only
 - 5% Discount for Seniors during these times
 - Delivery available: orders@akproudteam.com; 907.228.7019
 - Shipping resources limited.
- Safeway
 - Tuesday & Thursday 7-9AM are for Seniors/compromised immune systems only.
 - Call for email to order and pickup; 907.228.1900

Restaurant services:

- Bar Harbor: Curbside Pickup & Delivery. No Delivery Charges; 907.225.7566
- Cape Fox: Curbside Pickup & Delivery. No Delivery Charges; 907.228.2813
- Gold Pan Pizza: Open for Pickup Only; 907.220.9380
- The Landing Restaurant: Curbside Pickup & Delivery; 907.225.5166
- New York Café: Open for Pickup Only; 907.247.2326
- Oceanview: Takeout & Delivery; 907.225.7566
- Polar Treats: Curbside Pickup & Delivery; 907.225.6527

Borough Transit:

- Punch passes are discontinued until further notice. Monthly Unlimited passes will be sold at the same prices as punch passes until further notice, credit cards may be used over the phone;
- Paratransit and senior van customers that are calling to receive transportation to a medical provider for a respiratory illness, must call ahead to let their provider know they are coming. If the provider instructs the client to use paratransit for transport, the client will be required to wear a mask (supplied by Paratransit services).
- We are asking customers to refrain from riding The Bus, **if you or your family members are sick, please stay home.** Remember to take everyday preventive actions to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses.

Borough Finance: To assist our elderly patrons, the Borough has announced that the yellow tax exempt senior cards do not expire until further notice, and seniors may give their card to any person to assist them with shopping so that elders may more effectively self-quarantine. 907-228-6620

City of Ketchikan: To assist with work from home, KPU is providing a faster internet speed for its customers, and has announced that it will charge NO overages on any internet plan for residential or businesses.

This information will be updated and available on the Borough's COVID-19 Response page at <https://www.kgbak.us/913/COVID-19-Response>. Please email us with other services to be added to the list at boroclerk@kgbak.us.

#ketchikanstayhealthy #staystrongketchikan #stepsforahealthycommunity

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