



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

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE: COVID-19 UPDATE

Date: March 20, 2020
From: Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
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For Immediate Release

Public Health Contact Investigation and Assigned Risk Levels

Upon confirmation of a patient who has tested positive with the COVID-19 virus, nurses from the Ketchikan Public Health Center, the local office of the State Division of Public Health, will conduct a contact investigation with the individual to learn the people that the individual has been in close contact with, regardless of where they were encountered.

Close contact is defined as: a) Being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time; close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a health care waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case – Or – b) Having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on).

Public Health then contacts the people identified by the individual but ONLY if they are considered to be a medium or high risk contact based on the information provided. Please see the attached table defining the criteria for the various risk levels (low, medium, high).

Public Health Nursing and the Section of Epidemiology are working together to contact individuals with High/Medium risk during the positive case infectious periods. After people in the medium and high risk categories are identified, Ketchikan Public Health are also conducting the daily monitoring of those people to ensure that self-isolation is being followed and that testing occurs if symptoms develop. Ketchikan Public Health is working closely with the Ketchikan EOC as part of our local incident management team.

COVID-19 Testing and Testing Criteria

If you are sick and think that you have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus, please call your health care provider. A test for COVID-19 will be scheduled by your provider if you meet the following criteria:

- Symptomatic (Fever, Cough, etc)

AND

- Travel Out of State within 14 days
- Contact with a confirmed case
- High Risk Pt (elderly, underlying medical conditions)

OR

- Medical or EMS Provider

PeaceHealth Medical Center Update

PeaceHealth Ketchikan continue to tighten screening for all who are entering the hospital. Temperatures are being taken for all who enter, including caregivers. Approved visitors must receive a wrist band from security to enter the building and remain in the hospital room with the patient they are visiting.

KMC Incident Command has also establishing a separate negative-pressure COVID-19 Isolation Unit in our PACU/Surgical Recovery area. This allows potential COVID-19 exposed patients to be treated in isolation from all other patients in our facility with the ability to expand the beds available in the space as necessary. Emergency surgeries can continue to occur as necessary as well as these two spaces are separated and our extra surgical rooms can be used as recovery spaces for any surgical space.

The instructions for seeking medical care at PeaceHealth remain the same. If you are ill with respiratory symptoms, call your primary care provider or the Emergency Department who will instruct you the best way to receive care. Those seeking emergency care for non life-threatening concerns, should come through the Tongass Avenue circle drive doors to the main admitting desk to check in, 7 days a week, 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. or to the ED doors after 7 p.m. If the patient's symptoms are life-threatening (can't breath, has chest pains, etc.), they should call an ambulance or make their way directly to the Ambulance entrance on Carlanna Lake for immediate admission to the Emergency Department.

Creekside Family Health Clinic Update

Creekside Family Health Clinic is still offering same day care for individuals in the community. While our community manages the spread of COVID-19, we are taking all necessary precautions to ensure the health and wellbeing of our patients, as well as our employees. As such, we would ask all individuals in need of care to contact the clinic at 907-220-9982 prior to coming into the office. The premises of Creekside Clinic receive a thorough cleaning each evening after closing from a contracted commercial disinfectant service. Creekside joins the local, state and federal authorities in encouraging you to contact your medical provider if you have any questions or concerns regarding any potential exposure or symptoms.

Ketchikan International Airport Information

This afternoon, Borough Mayor Rodney Dial, in conjunction with the Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center (EOC), submitted a letter to Governor Dunleavy requesting intervention for Alaska's airports in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Specifically, the Borough and Ketchikan EOC requested the Governor to restrict non-essential air travel into isolated communities such as Ketchikan, and to provide guidance on the screening to address COVID-19 concerns of air travelers enplaning and deplaning passengers throughout Alaska airports.

Later this afternoon, Dr. Anne Zink, Chief Medical Official, and DHSS Commissioner Alan Crum issued a health advisory to Alaskans urging suspension of non-essential travel and issuing 14-day quarantine mandates. The health advisory can be found at the following link:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/AKDHSS/bulletins/28262e8>.

Borough Transit Update

We encourage all our riders and employees to do what they need to keep themselves and their families safe, and follow the recommendations of health experts. We will continue to provide transit service to help move health care workers, social service workers, our own transit staff, first responders and others who must travel during this time so they can help keep people safe and keep our community going. If you do not have an essential place to travel to (work, medical, pharmacy, store) please stay home.

By their own choice, drivers may be wearing a mask, face-shield, gloves and/or safety glasses for their own protection. The seats immediately behind the driver will be blocked off in the spirit of social distancing. Please spread out when seated on the bus and wash your hands upon exiting.

2-1-1 Updates

For suggestions on how to be prepared for COVID-19 or questions concerning resources to help you with emergency food, shelter, or senior services dial 2-1-1 or 1-800-478-2221. Regardless of your location in Alaska, 2-1-1 can help connect you with up-to-date information about COVID-19. Questions can also be emailed to Alaska211@ak.org. Ketchikan is currently providing information to Alaska 2-1-1, which will be circulated to callers. Hours of operations are currently from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Activity Update

This information will be updated and available on the Borough's COVID-19 Response page at <https://www.kgbak.us/913/COVID-19-Response>.

#ketchikanstayhealthy #staystrongketchikan #stepsforahealthycommunity

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Risk Level	Geographic (Travel-associated) Exposures*	Exposures Identified through Contact Investigation
High	Travel from Hubei Province, China	Living in the same household as, being an intimate partner of, or providing care in a nonhealthcare setting (such as a home) for a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection <i>without using recommended precautions</i> for home care and home isolation
Medium (assumes no exposures in the high-risk category)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel from mainland China outside Hubei Province or Iran • Travel from a country with widespread sustained transmission, other than China or Iran • Travel from a country with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close contact with a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 • On an aircraft, being seated within 6 feet (two meters) of a traveler with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection; this distance correlates approximately with 2 seats in each direction • Living in the same household as, an intimate partner of, or caring for a person in a nonhealthcare setting (such as a home) to a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection <i>while consistently using recommended precautions</i> for home care and home isolation
Low (assumes no exposures in the high-risk category)	Travel from any other country	Being in the same indoor environment (e.g., a classroom, a hospital waiting room) as a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time but not meeting the definition of close contact
No identifiable risk	Not applicable	Interactions with a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection that do not meet any of the high-, medium- or low-risk conditions above, such as walking by the person or being briefly in the same room.

*In general, geographic exposure categories do not apply to travelers who only transit through an airport.

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– Or –

b) Having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on).