



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

**Questions and Answers - Facebook Live Session  
Friday, April 24, 2020 6:00 p.m.**

The following are questions submitted prior to the Facebook Live session, and the responses from the Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center and its Incident Commander Abner Hoage, Borough Planning Director Harney, and Ports and Harbors Director Corporon.

**Introduction**

**Ketchikan's response to COVID-19 and successful social distancing**

Phase One to Reopen Alaska is being done because of the positive results of social distancing and flattening the curve. Because Ketchikan has been diligent to follow the mandates so far, we are able to begin to slowly open the economy.

We do expect to see a small increase in cases of COVID-19 with the opening of the economy. With the phased approach, and with the increase in testing capacity and careful monitoring of healthcare resources, we expect the small increase in case count to be manageable. The Public Health providers will monitor the case count. We do not want to open too quickly and see an exponential growth in the number of cases.

We are in close coordination with the Governor's Office, State DHSS, SIOC, and local health providers. If there is a spike in COVID-19 cases, there will be action taken to address it.

**Mandate Update and efforts to open economy**

Governor Dunleavy, with Dr. Anne Zink, and DHSS Commissioner Crum, announced the Reopen Alaska Responsibly Plan effective April 24th as Health Mandate 16. This mandate is the first of a series that are intended to reopen Alaska responsibly. The mandate as well as the attachments and guidance documents for restaurants, retail, personal services, non-public facing businesses, public-facing businesses, fishing charters, churches, gyms, lodges and camping, childcare, intrastate travel and activities, and graduation ceremonies, are available at:

<https://covid19.alaska.gov/reopen/>

All health mandates are available at <https://covid19.alaska.gov/health-mandates/> .

**Ketchikan Support Network:**

The Ketchikan Wellness Coalition and SAIL have partnered to coordinate a Ketchikan Support Network . This program is designed to be a registry of volunteers who are willing to assist others in our community. Additionally, individuals can request help for their needs (food, delivery, dog walking etc) and receive help from those registered and/or local non-profits. The program is hosted on the Ketchikan Wellness Coalition website at [ktnwc.org](http://ktnwc.org).

**COVID-19 Testing Questions:**

- 1. *What is Ketchikan's plan to increase testing capacity? Do we have sufficient testing supplies available to ramp up our testing? Can we expect to see easy access testing sites in KTN – such as drive thru?***

The Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center has worked with local medical providers to significantly increase the number of COVID-19 testing supplies in Ketchikan. The combined test capacity in Ketchikan as of April 23rd is around 880 with around 15,000 test kits on order. In a few weeks it is our goal to have the ability to offer drive through testing.

Despite increases in testing supplies and broadening test criteria we have only been testing around 10 to 15 people per day across all of the providers in Ketchikan; this is well within the capacity of our current clinics.

- 2. *What percent of the total population has been tested?***

2.06% of population tested.

- 3. *Of those tested what percentage tested positive?***

5.6% of tested were positive.

- 4. *What percent of the total population tested negative?***

1.8% of the population tested negative.

- 5. *What percent of the total population tested positive?***

0.1% of the population tested positive.

- 6. *Have our elders and those with special needs, medically fragile been tested to see if they have the COVID19. Have all of our medical providers in our community been tested? What about the frontline workers in the grocery stores?***

Only if they are symptomatic based on current guidelines. Again only those who have been symptomatic have been eligible

We want to encourage anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 to get tested. Common symptoms include: fever, cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing. Additional symptoms include: chills, diminished sense of taste or smell, diarrhea, fatigue, headache, muscle/joint aches, nausea, rash, rigors, runny nose, sore throat, or sputum production.

- 7. *Will Ketchikan be conducting antibody tests? Why/Why not?***

Ketchikan does not have a supply of antibody tests. In Alaska in general, it is only being used in limited circumstances such as contact tracing or in congregate living situations. We are looking into options for antibody tests.

**8. *With changes requiring asymptomatic people to be tested before certain medical procedures happening, is there any way these numbers could be included separately instead of as part of the main numbers? Can testing of asymptomatic patients under health mandate 15 be included separately?***

We have asked the providers to report this information separately and will report it to the community separately based on information we receive.

**9. *Will testing inform us if we're immune?***

No. Current available testing will not inform you if you are immune.

**10. *What is the difference between the types of tests available for COVID-19?***

There are currently two types of tests available. Molecular tests detect the virus and can be used to directly diagnose COVID-19 and antibody tests detect the body's immune response to the infection caused by the virus but cannot be used to definitively diagnose or exclude COVID-19. Currently, molecular tests are the only type of tests that can be used alone to diagnose COVID-19. Antibody tests cannot be used alone to rule out COVID-19.

Molecular Tests: "Nucleic acid amplification tests," or "NAAT" tests are molecular tests that detect the virus's genetic material. FDA has issued Emergency Use Authorizations (EUA) for dozens of molecular tests. Based on current data, we believe these EUA (Emergency Use Authorizations) authorized tests are highly accurate tests.

Antibody Tests: Antibody (or serology) tests detect antibodies in the blood when the body is fighting an infection. The test does not detect the actual virus; rather, it detects the body's immune response to the virus. In the early days of an infection, antibodies may not be detected, limiting the effectiveness of an antibody test. This type of test may also be falsely positive if antibodies to a coronavirus other than the pandemic novel strain are present. Because of this potential for false negative and false positive results, an antibody test should not be used alone to diagnose COVID-19.

**11. *If antibody tests are not used for diagnosis or exclusion of COVID-19 infection, what is their purpose?***

Can be used to help identify those who have been exposed and may be able to identify who might be immune in the future. Only a few of these types of tests approved and not widely available.

**12. *Are at-home tests available?***

According to the FDA, there are not currently any approved.

**13. Does Ketchikan have an adequate amount of PPE? With the current rate of COVID-19 cases, will these numbers be satisfactory, or are we still "behind" in this regard?**

The numbers we are tracking include PPE with the providers and in the EOC Logistics Warehouse and comes from normal provider supply chains and through procurement by the EOC either direct purchase or resource requests routed to the State EOC (SEOC) or Tribal EOC (TEOC). Our PPE supplies are adequate to continue operating currently and we have pending orders from multiple suppliers, including private vendors, the SEOC, and the TEOC. The EOC warehouse is awaiting shipments of N95 masks, gowns, surgical masks, ventilators, PAPRS, testing supplies, gloves, hoods, sanitizer and other supplies requested in March. We are currently in good shape but we do have additional supplies on order.

**Reopening the Economy / Economic Recovery Questions**

**1. With businesses reopening, what is the plan if we see a regression and find more cases of COVID-19 start to appear?**

We do expect to a small increase in cases of COVID-19 with the opening of the economy. This is why it is recommended that our at-risk members of the community continue to stay home. With the phased approach, and with the increase in testing capacity and careful monitoring of healthcare resources, we expect the small increase in case count to be manageable. The Public Health providers will monitor the case count. We do not want to open to quickly and see an exponential growth in the number of cases.

We are in close coordination with the Governor's Office, State DHSS, SEOC, and local health providers. If there is a spike in COVID-19 cases, there will be action taken to address it.

**2. Is there a checklist, or criteria, where we then say "shut it all down again."? Is there a plan for regression or future "waves" of the virus.**

It is difficult to determine a point where we would have to shut businesses down. If we continue to take small steps as we see the success of social distancing and applying the current mandate, we should be able to take next steps. With close monitoring of the circumstances and any new cases that arise, we will continue to evaluate each step. We will not move on to a next phase until we have seen flattening of the curve at the current phase.

**3. For a personal care service business with a single employee, how many clients can be on premises at a time?**

The ratio of employee to client under Mandate 16, Attachment G is one-to-one.

**4. Will churches be able to reopen?**

Governor Dunleavy, at a press conference earlier this week, announced that under Mandate 16, religious organizations would be able to hold gatherings of less than 20 while following social distancing rules. Those new guidelines are expected to be posted on the State [covid19.alaska.gov/reopen](https://covid19.alaska.gov/reopen) site today.

**5. *Does this also apply to the DMV opening with limited hours??***

The DMV is a governmental agency and considered an essential service. The division can establish its policy for operating under social distancing rules. Currently, the local DMV is open for appointment only. If your license expires during this incident, you may use the online portal to renew it or apply for a 6-month license extension. All road tests have been canceled. Until May 11,

- Vehicle and boat registration enforcement is suspended
- The requirement of out of state drivers to obtain an Alaska driver's license within 90 days of entering Alaska is suspended
- The requirement to obtain an Alaska title and registration within 30 days of purchase is suspended
- The prohibition of driving with studded tires from May 1st to through September 15th is suspended
- Non-commercial and commercial driver's licenses that expire during the pandemic period may be extended for six months using the online portal

The REAL ID deadline has been extended until October 1, 2021.

**6. *Opening at 25% capacity is difficult to make it financially feasible.***

Phase One of the Governor's Reopen Alaska Responsibly Plan is designed to be the first of a series that are intended to reopen Alaska responsibly. After a proven and effective Phase One, a next level Phase Two will be opened. Each step contains a balance of the testing and health capacity of the community and the economic needs of the community.

Resources are available on the Chamber of Commerce's webpage, this includes the SBA programs, loans, and other such resources. If you have questions please email [businessrecovery@kgbak.us](mailto:businessrecovery@kgbak.us) or call your lending institution.

**7. *PPE Supplies for businesses: hand sanitizer, masks, recommended patterns for making cloth masks.***

The EOC is looking to do everything we can to assist the community. We are exploring options to be able to obtain supplies if members of the public cannot get them through their own channels, but we currently do not have extra for public use. Donations of PPEs are being accepted at the Saxman Community Center at 2841 South Tongass Highway.

The EOC is preparing a recovery plan as we begin to transition into a recovery phase from the initial response phase. The plan will include elements that include different sector working groups, public input and guidance, how and what support may be available for

opening the economy, and direction from the elected bodies. Part of the plan will be how and what support the EOC may be able to provide to open the economy in a safe and manageable manner. The EOC is researching the needs of businesses and if PPE's can be obtained locally. We will know more by the end of next week. For now please refer to the CDC website on how to make cloth masks.

### **8. *What services are available for individuals and businesses?***

The Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce, Ketchikan Visitors Bureau, Borough Planning Department and the local EOC have created the Business Economy Recovery Group, or, BERG. Its primary focus is to provide economic support and resources to local businesses and households.

The BERG is reaching out to local businesses to determine their needs and keep them connected with their customers. With this information, the BERG will develop an online Business Directory on the Chamber site, so Ketchikan residents can shop locally and support community businesses.

For local businesses, there are links to state and local mandates, information on tax credits for small businesses, provisions within the CARES Act, and programs administered by the Small Business Administration.

Although currently the CARES Act Paycheck Protection Program and SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program have exhausted their allocations, it is anticipated that additional funds will soon be allocated to these programs and applications will be accepted beginning April 27th. The BERG will keep apprised of developments and update the Chamber COVID-19 page accordingly.

SBA Bridge Loans are available for small businesses that currently have a business relationship with an SBA Express Lender to access up to \$25,000 quickly. Talk to your lender for more specifics on this loan.

If you are interested in submitting comments, questions, and/or suggestions related to the effect of Covid-19 on Ketchikan's economy, the BERG can be reached at [businessrecovery@kgbak.us](mailto:businessrecovery@kgbak.us).

## **Seasonal Businesses and Fishing Industry | Mandate 17**

### **Health Mandate 17 – Protective Measures for Independent Commercial Fishing Vessels**

The purpose of this Mandate is to enact protective measures for independent commercial fishing vessels operating within Alaskan waters and ports in order to prevent, slow, and otherwise disrupt the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. The mandate requires protective measures and plans, and includes two appendices:

1. The Alaska Protective Plan for Commercial Fishing Vessels
2. Mandate 17 Acknowledgement Form

We encourage business owners to read the full texts of the revised mandates and ensure that your business can fully comply with the mandates prior to opening.

1. ***Charters are mostly 6 pack licenses which means only 6 passengers nonfamily. At the 25% capacity that is 1.5 people on board, not financially feasible.***

The daily press briefing by the governor, commissioner, and Dr. Zink explained the real intent of this initial phase is mostly to allow charters for a single family unit. Each business will have to decide if the limitations imposed or financially feasible or not. I believe the Governor said you can round 1.5 up to 2. You can still take 6 as long as they are members of the same household.

2. ***I hear the fish processing plants will have their seasonal workers quarantined at local hotels until they are clear. They have worked with local authorities and the state and have a plan. Is this true? And if so, can the community have more information? How are the housekeeping and cleaning staffs going to interact with them. What about kitchens and all the staff. And then...what about the locals going home to their families. Thankyou.***

The processors are indeed required to have plans in place approved by the State. All three of the local processors have been good community partners and are working closely and collaborating with the EOC on the development of their plans. All three have recently had their plans reviewed by the State of Alaska and been informed that they have met the minimum requirements as outlined by the State. These plans are really working documents that will need to be modified as the COVID-19 situation changes.

Workers arriving from out of state still have to quarantine for 14-days but they are allowed to work during their quarantine provided they can do so in accordance with the plan. If they are quarantining at a location outside the plant (residence or hotel, etc.) they can travel only between the quarantine location and the plant. No other stops are allowed. Processors are free to coordinate with local hotels to quarantine employees and some have chosen to do so. Local hotels are responsible for their procedures and compliance as outlined in mandate 16 attachment L.

3. ***I was wondering if there is any guidance provided for small business lodging facilities? I know if I had essential travel needs, I would prefer to stay in a small lodging facility like a bed and breakfast where the total number of guests is small vs a hotel with larger staff and guest numbers. A smaller facility is also potentially better able to maintain sanitization protocols between guests so I'd feel safer in that situation. How does the Governor's latest "re-opening" efforts affect these small businesses?***

Required social distancing plans and requirements for bed and breakfasts, and hotels, are included in the Alaska Health Mandate 16, specifically Attachment L "Lodging and Overnight Camping." The mandate includes protocols for social distancing, staffing, cleaning, and dining.

We know that many hotels stayed open prior to the release of Mandate 16, and it is our understanding that all must comply with Mandate 16.

4. ***We have a yacht rental business. We have guests who fly in and take a overnight boat our for 5-7 days. I am wondering if we can fullfill the quarantine if we have the vessel fully provisioned and pick up our renters at the airport and proceed to the boat without ever have them come to ketchikan proper? They then would take the boat out for their trip and return to the airport via boat? I did email the state department of health and never heard back.***

This is a tough one because it touches on several different areas. If the guests are flying in from out of state there is a mandatory 14-day quarantine which could be served on the vessel; however, they would have to be from the same household due to the lodging policies in mandate 16. They would not be allowed to depart the vessel once they boarded if that is their quarantine location. They would have to travel directly from the airport to the vessel and if their quarantine was still in effect when the charter was over they would have to travel directly back to the airport.

5. ***When does the quarantine period start for a vessel arriving from out of state?***

The quarantine period starts from the departure from the last out of state port of call provided there are no stops in between or the addition of crew members en route. Upon arrival in Ketchikan the remaining quarantine can be served on the vessel or at an address declared ashore. Persons would have to travel directly from the vessel to the quarantine address.

6. ***What if we add a crew member from out of state after the vessel has arrived?***

If a vessel adds a crew member from out of state, they will be required to quarantine for 14 days. The quarantine can be served on the vessel. If they can't be isolated from the rest of the crew during their quarantine then the 14 day quarantine starts over for the vessel and the rest of the crew.

### **Closing Summary:**

Phase One to Reopen Alaska is being done because of the positive results of social distancing. We encourage everyone to continue to practice safe social distancing, wearing of cloth face coverings while in public, and close adherence to the new mandates.

The EOC will continue to work closely with the SEOC, local health care providers, and local government officials to monitor our community's health and safety. We assure you that if a spike in COVID-19 cases occurs, we will take action to address it.

We urge anyone with any COVID-19 symptoms to seek testing. If you experience symptoms, contact your regular provider or our testing hotline at 247-TEST (8378).

Individuals and business owners should carefully read the new mandates and related guidelines available at <https://covid19.alaska.gov/reopen/>

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