



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

**JOINT MEDIA RELEASE: COVID-19 | EOC UPDATES**

Date: May 15, 2020  
 From: Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center (EOC)  
 Contact: Kacie Paxton, Public Information Officer, 228-6605

**For Immediate Release**

This brief provides an update on information from the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and its partner agencies.

**COVID-19 Case Count Update**

The total number of positive cases of COVID-19 in Ketchikan remains at sixteen (16).

Upon further investigation and a follow up with a previously reported positive case of COVID-19, it has been determined that the individual has not recovered from COVID-19. This individual has been self-isolating and will continue to be monitored by health professionals. 15 of the 16 cases have recovered.

<b>Ketchikan COVID-19 Case Count by Category</b>					
	Travel-Related	Non-Travel Related	Close Contact to Positive Case	Travel/Contact Under Investigation	Total Cases
Total by category	2	1	13	0	16

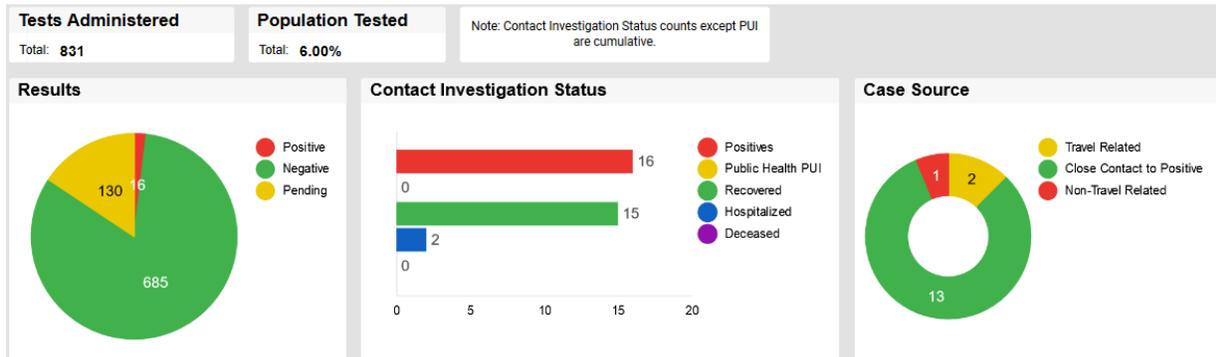
<b>Ketchikan COVID-19 Case Count by Date</b>	
Date	# Cases
3/17/2020	1
3/19/2020	1
3/20/2020	1
3/21/2020	3
3/24/2020	3
3/25/2020	2
3/26/2020	1
3/28/2020	1
4/1/2020	1
4/11/2020	1
4/20/2020	1
Total	16

<b>Ketchikan COVID-19 Case Recovery Information</b>
<p>15 of the 16 cases have recovered and are no longer being monitored by Public Health.</p> <p>Criteria for release from monitoring/isolation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and,</li> <li>• At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.</li> </ul>

### COVID-19 Testing Update

831 tests have been conducted for COVID-19 in Ketchikan, with the following results:

Tests Conducted	Positive Results	Negative Results	Pending Results
831	16	685	130



<p><b>If you experience <u>any</u> symptoms of COVID-19, contact your regular provider or our testing hotline at 247-TEST (8378)</b></p>	<b>Testing capacity:</b>	
	Current Test kits:	1,479
	Test kits on order:	10,000

### Ketchikan Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Inventory

Ketchikan currently has the following PPE equipment available, with additional equipment on order:

Current Inventory	Quantity
N95 Masks (ea)	5929
Surgical Masks (ea)	23932
Masks with Face Shields	2227
Goggles (ea)	145
Exam Gloves (bx 100)	958
Gowns (ea)	1316
Gowns heavy duty (ea)	3
Gowns Kit, full isolation	4
Hoods	16
PAPR (ea)	33
PAPR Hoods (ea)	115
Hand Sanitizer (4oz bottle)	1775
Hand Sanitizer (8oz bottle)	80
Hand Sanitizer (16oz pump)	0
Hand Sanitizer pump bottle	28
Alcohol Prep Pads (ea)	32415
Sanitation Wipes (containers)	418
Cloth face masks	20

### **Wastewater Testing Underway to Determine COVID-19 Presence**

Covid-19 can be detected in wastewater before someone becomes symptomatic, if they become symptomatic at all. This is effectively a test on the presence of the virus throughout a large percentage of the community, rather than on a person-by-person basis. The testing provides a forward-looking glimpse of what the curve is going to be, and, if performed regularly, may enable the community to anticipate and address an outbreak at an earlier stage.

The wastewater testing is done through the City of Ketchikan Wastewater Treatment Facility. With the central location of the testing site, the EOC believes that it is capturing a substantial cross-section of the community that covers not only City residents, but the fish processing facilities, and the majority of the businesses and workplaces. The testing is conducted each week by collecting a 24-hour composite sample. It is anticipated that this weekly testing will continue for at least 4 weeks. The samples are sent to a commercial laboratory which conducts a comprehensive analysis. Test results are expected to be returned in about seven days.

The test results can help the EOC's policy group make more informed decisions relative to when or when not to lift restrictions. It can also help the policy group determine if we want to pursue antibody testing, and if so, the timing of such an endeavor. Finally, it can act as a baseline to track general infection rates.

The data will also be shared with the State Department of Conservation (DEC) for statewide consideration. We are hopeful that we also will receive data from other Alaska communities. Again, having the information will help to provide a picture of the presence of the virus which will assist our leaders in making decisions affecting Ketchikan's—and Alaska's—next steps.

### **Successful Drive-Up Testing Clinic Held May 12, 13, 14**

The Ketchikan EOC, along with Creekside Family Health and Public Health, hosted a free drive-up COVID-19 testing clinic on May 12, 13, and 14. The clinic was held from 10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Berth 3. Over the three-day event, our health officials conducted 116 tests for anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Each person tested will receive notification from a health care provider with the test results—either positive or negative—as soon as the results are received.

The EOC extends a **big thank-you** to all who worked so hard for the testing clinic. Ketchikan Public Health and Creekside Family Healthy Clinic providers administered the tests. City of Ketchikan's Public Works Streets Division staged and set up the testing site, and the City Ports and Harbors Division donated the space. We are so thankful for all of their hard work during this time (and that the weather cooperated as well).

We also want to **thank our local media for partnering with us** to share the word about the testing clinic. Our media representatives, including our radio personalities at KRBD, KFMJ, KTKN, KGTW, and our newspaper representatives at Ketchikan Daily News, were instrumental in providing excellent coverage before and during the event to encourage citizens to take part in the event.

We continue to encourage anyone experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, no matter how mild, to contact your health care provider or call our testing hotline at **247-TEST (8378)**.

### **Hand Sanitizer Refill Station Update**

Many citizens are taking advantage of the hand sanitizer refill stations that have been placed throughout the community by the EOC. With assistance from the City of Ketchikan Public Works Department, the EOC has procured and developed a quantity of hand sanitizer that is available for the public. The hand sanitizer solution is a “no-frills” formula. It is not a thick gel, and it is not fragranced, but it is highly effective for killing germs. Gallon-sized refill containers have been set up at the following locations:

- Ketchikan Police Department
- KPU Customer Service in the Plaza
- Gateway Recreation Center
- Saxman IRA Building; 2706 South Tongass Hwy
- North Tongass Fire Department Station 8 (Mile 13 North Tongass Hwy)

Beginning Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, the following facilities will also have refill stations available:

- Ketchikan City Hall
- Ketchikan Ports and Harbors building

As additional facilities become open to the public, additional refill stations will be established.

### **Borough and City Facility Updates**

City and Borough staff are closely following the Governor’s mandates and applying protocol for social distancing and safety precautions prior to opening facilities. Staff is working on obtaining necessary supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) in order to be able to open to the public. Many services continue to be offered via telephone, internet, and mail. Plans are being implemented for opening the facilities through a phased-in approach following the current safety guidelines.

#### **City of Ketchikan Facilities:**

City Hall: Front Street entrance use only. Customer service on the first floor is limited to 2 people in the lobby area at a time with waiting outside and 1 visitor/common household group able to visit each City Hall department at a time. All building access will be monitored and escorted. A drop box is located at the back alley entrance behind the Police Station for City and KPU payments.

Ports & Harbors: Main entrance use only. Customer service is limited to 3 people at a time in the lobby area with waiting outside.

Public Works Administration Building: Main entrance use only. Building to remain locked; the public is encouraged to schedule an appointment or call the phone numbers posted on the door upon approaching the building. A drop box is located at the main entrance for documents.

KPU Customer Service in the Plaza: Main entrance use only. Customer service is limited to 2 people at a time at the front counters with 2 waiting inside and 4 receiving service at customer service desk stations. Operating hours will be Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 4:30 pm with in-store visiting hours 9:30 am to 4:00 pm; closed Saturday and Sunday. The courtesy phone outside the store will remain in place for public use as will the drop boxes for payments near the Wells Fargo Plaza ATM and at A&P Grocery.

Ketchikan Fire Stations No. 1 and No. 2: Main entrances only. Buildings to remain locked; access by appointment and staff escort only.

Ketchikan Police Station: Main entrance only. No public entry beyond main lobby and dispatch.

Ted Ferry Civic Center: Building to remain closed to the public; open only for pre-arranged events that conform to state mandated guidelines for operations.

Ketchikan Public Library: Delayed public reopening to occur May 26. Curbside and grab bag service resumed May 11. Upon reopening to the public, access will be limited to 20-25 individuals. Public visitation will be Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 10:00 am to 6:00 pm; and Tuesday and Thursday, closed 9:00 am to 10:30 am with curbside service for high-risk individuals; open 11:00 am to 6:00 pm. Closed Sunday. No in-person programs, the Children's Library will remain closed, public computer seating only, and reduced in-house materials access.

Tongass Historical Museum and Totem Heritage Center: Delayed public reopening to occur June 2. Upon reopening, public access in exhibits and archives will be limited (TBD) with public visitation hours Tuesday through Saturday, 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm; closed Sunday and Monday. Visitation appointments for high-risk individuals outside public hours will be offered Tuesday through Friday, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Donations and collections visits by appointment only. No in-person programs.

All other City and KPU Offices, Facilities and Warehouses: closed to the public.

### **Borough Facilities:**

White Cliff Building is currently physically closed to the public with services being provided via phone, internet, and mail. Once PPEs have been obtained and social distancing protocols established, the building will be opened to the public. The target date for opening is Monday, June 1.

The Borough Transit Program is working on revising protocols in response to the Phase 2 guidelines. Once the revisions have been established, the bus ridership capacity may be able to be increased.

The Gateway Recreation Center and Gateway Aquatic Center opened on May 13<sup>th</sup> as planned with limited services. The track, cardio room, and weight rooms were opened

with strict adherence to social distancing and personal hygiene guidelines. The pools are open for lap swims and fitness swims only. More information will be announced through the Recreation Department.

Ketchikan International Airport: Incoming passenger counts have begun to increase. Alaska Airlines has announced the addition of another morning flight on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Delta Airlines plans to begin flights to Ketchikan beginning June 8<sup>th</sup>. The airport staff continue to provide the daily cleaning and disinfecting protocol. Signage is posted throughout the airport with the current Alaska Health Travel Mandate information. Traveler Declaration Forms are provided at a table at the exit leaving the security area. Audio messaging on the travel mandates is broadcast over the PA system. Video messaging is shared on the KVB screen in the baggage claim area.

Playgrounds within the Borough were opened on May 8, including:

- All school playgrounds including Houghtaling Elementary, Valley Park, Point Higgins Elementary, and Fawn Mountain Elementary.
- Public playgrounds including Grant Street Park, Monroe Street Tot Lot, Triangle Park, Raven Street Park, and the Rotary Beach playground.
- Skate Park located on Schoenbar Avenue.

Borough fields are open to use with strict adherence to current social distancing guidelines. Sports Organizations must follow the Borough's field mitigation plan which will be posted at the fields and on the Borough website once finalized.

### **Business and Economic Recovery Update**

Through the Emergency Operations Center, the Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce, Ketchikan Visitors Bureau, and Borough Planning Department established the Business Economy Recovery Group (BERG).

The primary focus of the BERG has been to connect individuals and businesses with the available resources during the state of the COVID-19 emergency. During the response phase of the EOC, the BERG has been instrumental in the following:

- The BERG developed a local webpage on the Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce website, accessible through the Ketchikan Visitor's Bureau and Ketchikan Gateway Borough websites.
- The BERG developed an online Business Directory which is accessible on the Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce website with the intent of assisting Ketchikan residents with shopping locally and supporting community businesses.
- The Ketchikan Chamber website has helpful information for local businesses such as 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.

As local functions are restored and local businesses are able to resume operation, the BERG will be able to turn over the community recovery operations to the local municipal bodies.

Regarding the CARES Act funding, it has not yet been made available to local municipalities. When it does become available, the appropriation of the funding will be processed through the local elected leadership: the City of Ketchikan Council, City of Saxman Council, and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly.

The long-term economic recovery of the community will be addressed by the local governing authorities, and we expect that discussions will soon occur through the elected bodies of the Community of Ketchikan.

### **Take it Slow and Practice Social Distancing**

As businesses and service providers start to open up, remember to take things slow. In order to continue to flatten the curve and slow the spread of COVID-19, it is important that we all take measured steps in changing our routines. We urge the community to take it slow and continue to practice safe social distancing. Please remember to:

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Wear cloth masks in public.
- Stay at least six feet away from others in public settings.
- Wash your hands.
- Don't touch your face.

### **EOC Information**

The Ketchikan EOC Unified Command Objectives for response to the COVID-19 Emergency are:

1. Safeguard the health and safety of personnel and the public
2. Slow/stop the spread of COVID-19
3. Increase COVID-19 testing capacity
4. Care for the sick
5. Provide public information
6. Mitigate community/economic impact

Additional current information is available on the State of Alaska's website at [www.covid19.alaska.gov](http://www.covid19.alaska.gov).

EOC information and the response to the COVID-19 outbreak in Ketchikan is updated daily on the COVID-19 Response page at <https://www.kgbak.us/913/COVID-19-Response>.

#ketchikanstayhealthy #staystrongketchikan #stepsforahealthycommunity  
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