



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

EOC COVID-19 UPDATE: Strongly Urging Ketchikan to Follow Mitigation Measures for the Health and Safety of Community

Date: May 7, 2021
From: Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
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For Immediate Release

The EOC Unified Command and Policy Group members are extremely concerned about the number of recent positive cases of COVID-19 and the impacts to Ketchikan. The EOC is specifically concerned about the increase in community spread cases.

There have been ten (10) community spread cases in the past seven days. This means that there is no identified source of the virus for these cases and that it was obtained from an unknown source. For each community spread case, there are additional unknown cases in the community.

Ketchikan is currently experiencing its largest outbreak of COVID-19 since the pandemic began. We have multiple clusters of positive cases that are spanning a variety of sectors of our population. COVID-19 has impacted our schools, daycares, businesses, hospitality industry, and every person in our community in one way or another. There have been **61** positive cases in the past seven days.

The Unified Command met with Public Health officials and the EOC Policy Group to determine whether to increase the risk level. The EOC reviews all of the risk indicators, which include positivity rate, travel cases, and other factors, including the mitigation measures, for a community-wide look. The risk indicators showed that there was one indicator in Level 2, one indicator in Level 3, and one indicator (community spread cases) in Level 4. The team determined that since the Community Risk Level has just been increased to Risk Level 3 on May 4, there has not yet been enough time to realize an impact on those mitigation measures. The EOC has decided to keep the community in Risk Level Three until May 11, and to reevaluate at that time in order to give the community mitigation efforts an opportunity to be effective.

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The EOC will reevaluate the risk indicators and mitigation measures on Tuesday, May 11th and determine whether to increase the risk level.

Our community is in a very scary position. Our students deserve a healthy end of the school year, our children deserve to have activities, our businesses deserve to be able to be open and we all deserve to live in a healthy community.

Please do your part to follow the mitigation measures now:

- Stay home if you are sick (even slightly) or have been identified as a close contact.
- Avoid large gatherings, especially indoors.
- Wear a mask when you have to go out in public.
- Follow safe social distancing, and wash your hands often.
- Get vaccinated if you are able.



Thank You to Community Members Who Have Stepped up and Responded. Many community groups, businesses, and individuals have already stepped up in response to the increased safety recommendations. Several organizations have canceled or postponed in-person events, at a sacrifice to your members, for the greater good of the health of the community. Thank you for your commitment to Ketchikan and for taking

these actions.

Update on positive cases: There were twelve (12) cases of COVID-19 reported in Ketchikan today. Seven cases were close contacts to known positive cases; one case was related to recent travel, and four remain under investigation.

There were 12 positive cases in Ketchikan today.

Of the pending cases from May 4-6, two were identified as close contacts to known positive cases, and one was related to recent travel. Two of the individuals were "lost to contact", which means that Public Health was not able to contact the positive individuals after multiple attempts.

During the contact investigations, Public Health will coordinate with the positive person to reach out to anyone who may be a close contact and instruct them to quarantine. In the event of a positive case associated with the School District, Public Health will coordinate with School District staff to reach out to anyone who may be identified as a potential close contact.

Hospitalization Update: There are no patients currently admitted in the COVID-19 unit at PeaceHealth Ketchikan Medical Center.

The total cumulative case count, including travelers, is 513. The number of positive cases of individuals residing or staying in Ketchikan is 492. Of the 492 cases, there are **67** active, **2** deceased, and **423** recovered.

Current information on the response to COVID-19 in Ketchikan, including additional case data, local vaccination data, Ketchikan's community risk, Berth 3 drive-up testing, and airport traveler testing, is provided at www.kgbak.us/covid19.

The Community Risk Level is at Level 3 – High

Community Risk	Recommended General Mitigation Measures*
Level 3 - High	<p>Significant: Limit non-essential travel outside home (unless vaccinated) Schools: Reference KGBSD Plans/Policies*** Indoor: Limited small <20 mass gatherings with safety precautions (funeral, wedding, etc.) Outdoor: Limited small <30 gatherings with safety precautions Businesses limited openings with safety measures** Modified healthcare services (e.g. telemedicine, essential care, chronic care) No non-essential visits to congregate facilities (e.g. nursing homes) Recreation with expanded safety measures (e.g. low risk) **</p>

The following mitigation measures are strongly recommended during Risk Level 3 – High*:

- Strongly recommend masks and social distancing be practiced in communal settings and public locations with 5 or more people. If six-foot distancing is not possible, then masks should be worn.
- Strongly recommend businesses encourage telework to the maximum extent possible.
- For employees who cannot telework, we strongly recommend that the business reduce capacity to ensure physical distancing can be maintained not to exceed 50% capacity; close shared spaces such as break rooms, kitchens, etc.
- Strongly recommend bars closed, restaurants reduce capacity to 50% and ensure physical distancing with reservations required. Delivery or curbside pick-up encouraged.
- Personal services (nail and hair salons, massages, etc.) appointments only with one customer per each service provider. No waiting areas.
- Gyms-no group activities and limit capacity to 25%.
- Indoor gatherings limited to fewer than 20 individuals.
- Outdoor gatherings limited to fewer than 30 individuals.
- Modified Healthcare services (telemedicine, essential care, chronic care)
- Stop non-essential visits to Pioneer Home, Jail, Youth Center, WISH.

*Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated Individuals are available at: www.kgbak.us/covidvax



The Berth 3 Drive-Up Testing Clinic is available every day this week, including Sunday and Monday, for free testing for anyone who is symptomatic, believes they may be a close contact to a known positive, or may have recently been exposed to COVID-19.

The hours of the Berth 3 Drive-Up Clinic are 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. AND 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

General Information on the COVID-19 vaccine in Alaska is provided at <http://covidvax.alaska.gov>. The Alaska Health Advisories are available at www.covid19.alaska.gov.