



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

EOC COVID-19 UPDATE: Increase to Risk Level 4 – Very High | Facilities Update | Vaccination Clinic for Ages 12 and Older

Date: May 11, 2021
From: Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
Contact: Kacie Paxton, Public Information Officer, 228-2464

For Immediate Release

Over the past week Ketchikan has seen an alarming increase in COVID-19 cases, in all settings and age groups. Because of the widespread nature of the outbreak, the Unified Command has decided to increase Ketchikan’s Community Risk Level to 4 – Very High.

Level 4 - Very High	Extreme: Stop non-essential travel outside home (unless vaccinated) Schools: Reference KGBSD Plans/Policies*** No gatherings >20 people Essential services only Modified healthcare services No non-essential visits to congregate facilities (e.g. nursing homes) Recreation locally with safety measures** (e.g. walking)
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Many members of our community have been vaccinated and may continue following recommendations for vaccinated individuals.

For unvaccinated individuals and those at highest risk of negative outcomes the EOC recommends the following mitigation measures. Please consider doing the following to help curb the spread of COVID-19 and to keep your neighbors, friends, and family members safe:

- If you have even minor symptoms, stay home!
- Travel outside the home only for essential purposes.
- Refrain from gathering in large groups, especially with multiple households.
- Avoid in-person visits with people in congregate settings; instead, keep in touch by phone or video chat.
- When you do go out, wear a mask over your nose and mouth, keep a 6-foot distance from others, and wash or sanitize your hands frequently.

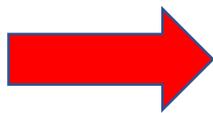
We need everyone’s help to flatten the curve of COVID-19 transmission in Ketchikan, and stop the spread of this dangerous virus in our community.

Today’s case update: There are 15 new cases of COVID-19 in Ketchikan since yesterday’s report. Two of the cases were determined to be close contacts to a known positive, three of the cases were determined to be community spread, and 10 are under investigation.

Public Health and School District Nursing Staff will work with the positive cases to identify close contacts, and will reach out to anyone identified as a close contact and instruct them to quarantine and seek testing as appropriate.

Hospitalization Update: There is currently one person admitted in the COVID-19 unit at PeaceHealth Ketchikan Medical Center.

The total cumulative case count, including travelers, is 539. The number of positive cases of individuals residing or staying in Ketchikan is 518. Of the 518 cases, there are **77** active, **2** deceased, and **439** recovered.



Each business, government entity, and organization must evaluate these recommendations against the anticipated impacts on operations and decide on appropriate actions to take. Vaccination rates of employees, staff, and customers may provide a significant mitigating factor that results in lesser mitigation efforts required on a case by case basis.

It is important to note that the EOC's recommendations for Fully Vaccinated Individuals do not change based on the risk level.

The following mitigation measures are strongly recommended during Risk Level 4 – Very High*:

- **Public:** Wear masks and practice strict social distancing outside of private residence.
- **Schools:** Reference KGBSD plans and policies at www.kgbbsd.org
- **Travel:** Follow Alaska Health Advisories 2 and 3. Recommend travel only for critical infrastructure and critical personal needs.
- **Business and Government:** Recommend closed except critical infrastructure or designated essential positions and telework.
- **Bars, Restaurants, Personal Services, Gyms:** Recommend all closed.
- **Gatherings:** No gatherings of greater than 20 people.
- **Congregate facilities:** No non-essential visits.

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



Updates for School District Facilities at Risk Level 4:

The District will move to Medium Risk level effective immediately for all schools unless otherwise noted below. Students and staff with even mild symptoms will be required to stay home.

- All extracurricular, outside user group, or out-of-school-facility sports or activities (i.e. field trips, beach days, etc.) will be postponed until further notice.
- All secondary schools will have an asynchronous learning day on Friday, May 14th.

- Schoenbar Middle School will be closed for 24-hours tomorrow Wednesday, May 12th to assist with contact tracing of newly identified positive cases, and will have asynchronous/remote learning days for the rest of the week. SMS will make a full transition to a 50% on-site model by Monday, May 17th.
- Revilla Jr./Sr. High School will transition to a 50% model on Wednesday, May 12th.
- Ketchikan High School will remain in 50% capacity model.
- Houghtaling Elementary school will be changed to High Risk level effective immediately and closed for the rest of the week due to the number of positive cases, the need to quarantine staff, and to provide time for additional contact tracing. (Risk level to be reassessed later in the week.) The school is currently preparing a plan for some level of remote learning.
- Point Higgins Elementary school, Fawn Mountain Elementary school, Ketchikan Charter School, and Tongass School of Arts & Sciences will remain open with strict cohorting, health screenings, hand washing, social distancing, and continuous masking.
- Additional cases impacting any school may cause a change in school risk level and/or operations. This will be evaluated on a daily basis.



Updates for Borough Facilities at Risk Level 4:

- Gateway Recreation Center and Gateway Aquatic Center are closing as of 5 p.m. tonight. Staff will conduct a thorough cleaning of the facilities.
- Bus capacity will be reduced to 8-12 passengers. Essential rides only. Fares will be waived during this time.
- White Cliff will be closed to the public. Services can be provided over the phone or through the Borough website at www.kgbak.us
- The Pat Wise Animal Shelter will be closed to the public.
- Fields will be closed to organized sports team activities including practices.



Updates for City of Ketchikan Facilities at Risk Level 4 effective the start of business tomorrow, May 12:

- City Hall, Ketchikan Public Library, Tongass Historical Museum, and Totem Heritage Center will be closed to the public. The public can receive services via phone and email from these facilities and departments.
- KPU Customer Service in the Plaza will remain open to the public with extremely limited public entrance. The public will be encouraged to seek services by phone/email and staff will be available to assist a limited number of public visitors in the store.
- All other City/KPU facilities will remain open with 50% or less public occupancy.



Updates for City of Saxman Facilities at Risk Level 4:

- City Hall is closed to the public. Services available
- Citizens are encouraged to conduct business over the phone by calling 225-4166 or online at www.cityofsaxman.com.

Kayhi Vaccination Clinic for ages 12 and Up

With the FDA's authorization of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 12-15, there will be a free Pfizer clinic for anyone ages 12 and older.



Saturday, May 15th and Sunday, May 16th at Kayhi from 10am-2pm.

Beginning May 12th, you can make an appointment at <http://covidvax.alaska.gov/> Walk-in's are welcome. Ages 12-17 must have a parent or guardian present.

For vaccine information or to see a list of local providers go to: www.kgbak.us/covidvax

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.

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.

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