



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

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE: COVID-19 | THREE NEW POSITIVE CASES IN KETCHIKAN

Date: March 21, 2020
From: Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
Contact: Kacie Paxton, Public Information Officer, 228-6605

For Immediate Release

We have received information from the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) that there have been three new positive test results for COVID-19 in Ketchikan. This brings the total of positive cases in Ketchikan to six (6).

These three individuals, upon experiencing symptoms of illness, self-isolated and sought testing by a local provider. Two of the individuals were close contacts to the first identified positive case in Ketchikan. One of the individuals was a close contact with the second identified positive case in Ketchikan.

Ketchikan Public Health officials have contacted these individuals and will continue to monitor their condition to ensure continued self-isolation. Public Health officials will initiate a contact investigation and reach out to any person who may have come into contact with these individuals. Public Health will notify and isolate additional persons as appropriate. Through the contact investigation, Public Health will direct testing of persons that meet criteria based on contact with any confirmed case of COVID-19. Individuals who meet the criteria are being tested in accordance with CDC and State of Alaska priorities.

Joint Mayoral Proclamation Under State of Emergency to Shelter in Place

Because the COVID-19 virus is so highly contagious, it has already spread rapidly in Ketchikan. In the last few days we have gone from one positive case to six positive cases. This rapid spread is known as exponential growth. If the growth continues at the current rate, by the end of the week Ketchikan could have over 20 positive cases of COVID-19 in the community. **We need to stop the spread now.**

Due to the exponential spread of the COVID-19 virus in Ketchikan, and in accordance with the recommendations of the Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the mayors of the City of Ketchikan, City of Saxman, and Ketchikan Gateway Borough have issued a joint proclamation strongly urging the citizens of Ketchikan to **hunker down, shelter in place, and stay home**, in order to contain the spread of COVID-19.

In keeping with the mandates issued by Governor Dunleavy on March 21, 2020, we remind our citizens to practice social distancing and that **no gatherings of more than 10 people may take place**, and if a gathering does take place people must be 6 feet apart from each other. Owners of businesses which are non-essential, to the extent possible, are urged to close for a period of at least 14 days.

We want to assure the public that vital services such as emergency, fire, police, and grocery stores will remain fully functioning and open and available. The flow of goods to Ketchikan is continuing and grocery store shelves will remain stocked.

Residents who are healthy and do not believe they have been exposed to COVID-19 may shop at grocery stores, but are asked to do without lingering. If you go out, practice health directives such as handwashing and social distancing by staying six feet away from others. Please help stop the spread of COVID-19 in Ketchikan.

We encourage citizens to follow these CDC recommendations:

- Wash your hands with soap and water often;
- Avoid touching your nose, face and mouth;
- Use sanitizer that is at least 60 percent alcohol;

- Avoid people who are sick to help protect yourself;
- To protect others, stay home if you are sick, cover coughs and sneezes, clean and disinfect surfaces, and remember that you could be asymptomatic but still carrying the virus.

If you are sick or suspect that you may be infected with the COVID-19 virus, you should take steps to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community. If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as cough or difficulty breathing, **call your healthcare provider for medical advice.**

Additional current information on COVID-19 is available through the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) at www.coronavirus.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
#