



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

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

Date: April 7, 2020; 5:30 p.m.  
 From: Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center (EOC)  
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**For Immediate Release**

This brief responds to questions received by the EOC, and provides an update on information from the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and its partner agencies.

**COVID-19 Case Count Update**

There were no new cases of COVID-19 today. The number of positive cases of COVID-19 in Ketchikan remains at fourteen (14). Of these cases, two (2) individuals had a recent history of travel, and eleven (11) individuals were identified as having been in close contact with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19.

Ketchikan COVID-19 Case Count by Category					
	Travel-Related	Non-Travel Related	Close Contact to Positive Case	Travel/Contact Under Investigation	Total Cases
Total by category	2	1	11	0	14

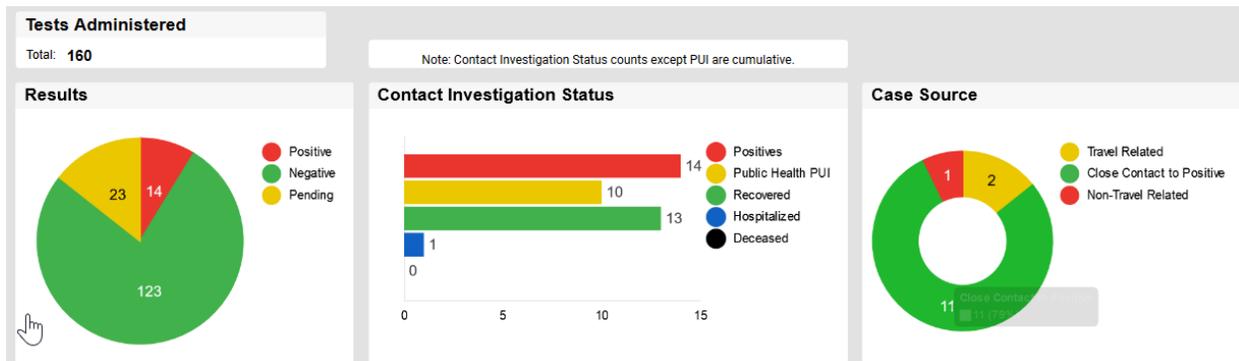
Ketchikan COVID-19 Case Count by Date	
Date	# Cases
3/17/2020	1
3/19/2020	1
3/20/2020	1
3/21/2020	3
3/24/2020	3
3/25/2020	2
3/26/2020	1
3/28/2020	1
4/1/2020	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>

Ketchikan COVID-19 Case Recovery Information
<p>13 out of 14 have recovered and are no longer being monitored by Public Health.</p> <p><b>Criteria for release from monitoring/quarantine:</b></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

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

Tests Conducted	Positive Results	Negative Results	Pending Results
160	14	123	23



### Ketchikan Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Inventory

The EOC is keeping an inventory of PPE available at the various health clinics, fire departments, and the EOC storage facility. Ketchikan currently has the following equipment available, with additional equipment on order:

Current Inventory	Quantity
N95 Masks (ea)	1528
Surgical Masks (ea)	16233
Masks with Face Shields	1378
Goggles (ea)	56
Exam Gloves (bx 100)	814
Gowns (ea)	1705
Gowns heavy duty (ea)	3
Gowns Kit, full isolation	4
Hoods	16
PAPR (ea)	33
PAPR Hoods (ea)	173
Hand Sanitizer (4oz bottle)	1874
Alcohol Prep Pads (ea)	15975
Sanitation Wipes (containers)	115

### Businesses Required to Submit a Travel Plan for Critical Infrastructure

We have received questions related to businesses that are required to submit a Critical Infrastructure Plan to the State of Alaska. If employees of your business engage in

interstate or intrastate travel, you must submit a travel plan or protocol for maintaining critical infrastructure to [akcovidplans@ak-prepared.com](mailto:akcovidplans@ak-prepared.com).

Only private businesses who have employees who either have traveled from out of state, or commute between communities within Alaska (e.g. from Anchorage to Ketchikan), are required to submit a plan. The Alaska Health Mandates, including the list of essential businesses and FAQs regarding the essential businesses, are available at: <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>

### **Wearing of Homemade Face Coverings**

Alaska's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Zink, and the country's top medical expert on the Coronavirus pandemic, Dr. Fauci, encourage people to wear tightly woven homemade masks when they go out in public, but they both emphasize that this will not necessarily protect the wearer from being infected. Masks can provide a false sense of security for the following reasons:

- They aren't foolproof; respiratory droplets are so small they can get through most fabric.
- Absolutely can't replace good hygiene. Always wash your hands, don't touch the face, and practice social distancing.
- They cannot provide a seal around the nose and mouth, and their effectiveness is unlikely to be improved by face shields.

Scientific evidence indicates that asymptomatic and presymptomatic shedding of the virus that causes COVID-19 is occurring. This means that people who have no symptoms whatsoever may be infected with the virus and capable of transmitting the virus to others when interacting in close proximity—for example, speaking, coughing, or sneezing. This heightens the need for community-wide implementation of control measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among people who are not experiencing symptoms of illness. The primary ways to do this are through social distancing, frequent hand-washing, and disinfecting high-touch surfaces. Another tool that may help to minimize transmission while people are around others outside of their household is the use of face coverings.

Because we are experiencing a nationwide shortage of medical supplies, including facemasks, we recommend that Alaskans make their own face coverings and wear them in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies) -- especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. This recommendation aligns with current national guidance:

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-facecover.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-facecover.html)

The following measures are highly recommended for all Alaskans:

- Wear a cloth face covering in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies).
- Make sure the face covering covers both the nose and mouth.
- Do not remove the face covering until you return home.
- When removing the face covering, avoid touching the front of the face covering (because it may be contaminated). Remove it by grasping the ear loops, ties, or bands and immediately discard or place in a designated container for laundering.
- Wash your hands immediately after removing the face covering and before touching anything else.
- Wash face coverings in hot, soapy water between uses.
- Do not wear N-95 or surgical masks; these are needed by health care workers and first responders.
- Do not rely on face coverings as the primary way to prevent COVID-19 transmission, and be careful to avoid developing a false sense of security through the use of face coverings.

### **Donations of Homemade Face Coverings**

We are aware that there are many quilters and crafters who have been making homemade masks. The EOC would welcome donations these homemade masks, as well as homemade hospital gowns. Donations can be dropped off at:

- Saxman Community Center at 2706 South Tongass Highway.

If you are in need of homemade face masks, please call 228-6605, and we can arrange for homemade cloth masks to be provided to you.

### **Can Social Distancing Be Relaxed?**

We have received many questions on whether our residents can relax some of the social distance rules, and when it would be safe for people to stop social distancing.

The short answer is that social distancing is working and we are seeing the results of it in Ketchikan. The longer answer is that this is not a short-term fix, but a long term process. We need to prepare for the long haul.

We are not yet looking at relaxing social distancing because we believe there may be people in the community who may have COVID-19 but are early on in the virus and are asymptomatic. It is important to maintain the separation from other people and limit movement as much as possible in order to stop the spread.

We will continue to share updates as we receive them from a national and state level. For now, we have to stick together as a community by staying strong and continuing to practice social distancing.

It is imperative that folks continue to #hunkerdown, shelter in place, and stay home, in order to contain the spread of COVID-19. Parents are urged to keep children home, not schedule play dates, and avoid group gatherings in public areas.

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 or use the Testing Hotline and call 247-TEST (8378).

### **EOC Information**

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

- Safeguard the health and safety of personnel and the public
- Slow/stop the spread of COVID-19
- Increase COVID-19 testing capacity
- Care for the sick
- Provide public information
- Mitigate community/economic impact

Additional current information, including a new interactive GIS map for the COVID-19 case count is available through the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) at <https://coronavirus-response-alaska-dhss.hub.arcgis.com/> 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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