



Health Services COVID-19 Situation Report

5/22/2020

Dear Community Members,

Sharing Alaska Health and Social Services message as we head into Memorial Day:

Memorial Day weekend kicks off summer for Alaska. Whether you choose to go camping, travel to your cabin, go fishing, hiking or biking, or just get outside and BBQ in your own backyard, please stay safe this weekend. Alaskans know the best way to stay safe while having fun is to be prepared. This year that means in addition to the normal safety measures – such as planning ahead, carrying extra supplies, being fire wise and not driving distracted – follow these COVID-19 precautions to keep yourself and family safe:

WASH YOUR HANDS: If you don't have access to soap and water, make sure you bring and use hand sanitizer.

MAINTAIN YOUR DISTANCE: Stay at least 6' feet away from others not in your household WEAR A FACE COVERING: Carry one with you and use it when you're around others and can't maintain 6' of distance.

STAY HOME IF YOU'RE SICK: It may alter your plans, but please don't go out if you feel sick, even with mild symptoms. Call your health care provider to talk about testing options.

If you're traveling to or through another community, check to see if they have stricter travel restrictions in their area. Be respectful of others who may be more at risk from the virus.

When we all take responsibility for our actions, we're all safer and healthier and can enjoy this great state we live in. And don't forget the reason we celebrate the Memorial Day holiday is to remember and honor the men and women who have died while serving in military.

Thank you, Alaskans!

As of today, Alaska has 404 confirmed cases, 356 recovered cases, 44 hospitalizations, and 10 deaths. ANMC's currently COVID-19 inpatient status update- 1 positive inpatient and 2 suspected inpatient.

Chugachmiut COVID-19 Testing:

(Weekly Testing #s reported from 12:00pm Wednesday to 12:00pm following Wednesday)

	Testing This Week	Testing YTD	Results Negative	Pending Results	Results Positive	Testing Collection Kits to ANMC	Rapid Testing Kits
Chenege	0	0	0	0	0	100	71
Nanwalek	6	21	21	0	0	150	100
Port Graham	7	20	17	3		144	153
Seward	8	23	19	4		139	48
Tatitlek	2	6	6	0	0	100	115
Total	23	70	63	7	0	633	487





What's New?

Contact Tracing Workforce Development Opportunity: The UAA College of Health's Alaska Center for Rural Health & Health Workforce and Division of Population Health Sciences (DPHS) are working with the State of Alaska DHSS to increase the contact tracing workforce. Sign up by Friday June 5th! Per Dr. Wahl *"It would be incredible if we could recruit half a dozen people from each village to get this training, and they would even get paid for doing the training! This is powerful preparation for our villages, powerful."*

What is contact tracing? Contact tracing aims to identify and alert people who have come into contact with a person infected with coronavirus.

Stipends will be awarded for completion of training regardless of whether or not contact tracers are deployed and active. If deployed, they will work with candidates individually to determine availability and compensation.

Link for details: <https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/departments/ACRHHW/>

If interested, sign up here by Friday June 5: http://bit.ly/AK_COVID_Tracing

Please notify your tribal council if you have signed up to become a contract tracer so we can get a good idea how many local contact tracers we have to support communities within the Chugach Region.

Critical Infrastructure Worker Testing: COVID-19 testing began this week at the Anchorage and Fairbanks airports for workers who fly into Anchorage or Fairbanks before traveling to remote locations. Workers will remain in quarantine in either Anchorage or Fairbanks until test results are returned. After that they will continue to their worksite and where they will finish their 14-day quarantine.

Local Clinic Service Updates:

- **COVID-19 Rapid Testing:** All clinics currently have rapid testing capabilities!!!
- **COVID-19 Serology Testing Now Available:** It is a COVID-19 antibody test. This test is a venipuncture blood draw and is sent to ANMC for testing. The COVID-19 antibody test is intended to provide information on previous COVID-19 infection and results are reported to Alaska Public Health. Contact clinic if you are interest.

What is an antibody test?

An antibody is a screening for things called antibodies in your blood. Your body makes these when it fights infection, like COVID-19. The same thing happens when you get a flu shot. That's how you build immunity to a virus.

The antibody test isn't checking for the virus itself. Instead, it looks to see whether your immune system (your body's defense against illness) has responded to the infection. Keep in mind that current antibody tests can't tell you if you're immune to COVID-19. That's because we don't know how long these antibodies might protect you against the coronavirus. So regardless of the result of the test, precautions such as social distancing, hand hygiene and masking are still important.



Who do we recommend getting a serology test?

- Healthcare workers who may have been exposed without knowing at work.
 - Families of healthcare workers who may have been exposed to the healthcare worker.
 - Individuals who had COVID-19 like illness at least 4 to 6 weeks ago but not before January 15, 2020 (1st US Case) unless International Travel since December 1, 2019.
 - Individuals who traveled in areas of known COVID-19 infection since January 15, 2020 but at least 4-6 weeks ago.
 - Other individuals may be tested at the discretions of their provider.
- **Medical Travel Information Packets:** Nanwalek staff created travel packets for Region wide distribution to help educate travelers about quarantine requirements, 14 day health monitoring logs and COVID-19 testing available upon return.
 - **Dental Services:** The dental team will be in Seward providing limited services June 1-5 and June 8-12. Patient and staff safety will be the highest priority, the clinic will be closed to visitors and walk-ins, patients will be required to call for an appointment. All patients will be screened prior to their appointment, and staff is following internal protocols, along with state mandates, and recommendations. Services will include emergencies, and non-aerosol procedures and preventative care. These may include, exams, x-rays, sealants, cleanings, silver diamine fluoride (SDF). The clinic will be reaching out to patients next week to schedule appointments.
 - **Healthcare Worker (critical workforce) Village Travel:** We are taking extra precautions to assure healthcare staff is well and not putting others at risk. Staff continues to maintain daily health monitoring logs and screening prior to coming to work along with implementation of a universal masking procedure. Recently, we have implemented COVID-19 testing for staff prior to traveling to a village for work assignment.
 - **COVID-19 Pandemic Preparations for Prevention & Mitigation, Testing, & Response:** Meetings occurred this week with Nanwalek, Port Graham and Tatitlek. Discussion highlights included Alternative Home Isolation Site Needs, Contact Tracing Workforce Opportunity, Critical Workforce Testing Capabilities prior to village entry, Alaska Health Mandates, Enforcement & Fines, Travel & Tribal Travel Restrictions.
 - Nanwalek's follow-up meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 1, 2020 at 11:30am.
 - Tatitlek's follow-up meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 27, 2020 at 1:00pm.
 - Port Graham's follow-up meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 27, 2020 at 3:00pm.
 - Chenega's follow-up meeting will be scheduled upon request of Tribal Council.

Did you know individuals who recklessly violate the mandates risk civil fines and criminal prosecution for violating an Alaska Health Mandate?

Community & Family Services Division Updates:

- **Counseling Services:** The clinical staff is meeting with people throughout the region while following the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in order to maintain "social distancing" while working from home. Staff members are calling, Skyping, using Facetime, and even texting- and receiving the same- to ensure that no one feels alone through these times of international pandemic.



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- **Crisis Line:** For the duration of the COVID-19 emergency response, our Crisis Line is also working as a point of contact to link people up with their preferred counselors. Please feel free to call our Crisis Line number: 1-844-891-0444.
- **Group Support:** The behavioral health team continues to offer virtual/online groups to address mental health issues and to ensure that our partners in sobriety can maintain their resolve to stay clean and sober. We are holding regular AA meetings with an attendance of as many as 8. We are also hosting Zoom group meetings on a variety of topics. If interested in joining one of these groups, please feel free to call our Crisis Line number: 1-844-891-0444.

What are the most reliable resources to get updates?

Alaska DHSS COVID-19 website: <http://www.dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/COVID-19/default.aspx>

CDC COVID-19 website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

Sincerely,

Kelley Baker, Health Services Division Director