



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

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE: COVID-19 | POSITIVE CASE IN KETCHIKAN

Date: March 17, 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 has been a positive test result for COVID-19 in Ketchikan. The individual has a history of travel to the lower 48. Upon experiencing symptoms of illness, the individual self-isolated and sought testing through a Ketchikan clinic. The individual is an employee of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough.

The White Cliff Building has been closed until further notice. The Borough has contracted out for a thorough commercial disinfectant service for the entirety of the White Cliff Building and outside areas of the building. Borough employees in direct contact with the individual will be self-isolating for a period of no less than 14 days. Employees who were not in contact with the individual may return to work sooner.

Ketchikan Public Health officials have made contact with this individual and will continue to monitor his 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 this individual. Public Health will notify and isolate additional persons as appropriate.

We want to reassure the public that we are working closely with Ketchikan Public Health to identify anyone who may be at risk for having contact with this individual. We will keep the public informed of any information that is needed for community health and safety.

We also want to encourage our citizens to continue to follow the Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations for precautionary measures such as handwashing and social distancing. In following the CDC guidelines, we recommend that public gatherings and events be canceled. Please refer to the CDC webpage for information on precautionary measures at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>.

If you are sick or suspect that you may be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, 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.

If you are not sick, please continue to take precautionary measures to stay healthy:

- Get your flu shot! The flu shot will not prevent COVID-19 but will help prevent you from getting sick and reduce the workload on the healthcare system.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, or cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily (e.g., tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles) using a regular household detergent and water.

#ketchikanstayhealthy #staystrongketchikan #stepsforahealthycommunity

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