



Dear Community Members,

We welcome 2021 with the arrival of vaccines in the fight to defeat COVID-19. Just as we have been pushing for adoption of the precautions we all know work to include masking, hand hygiene and physical distancing, we must also push for high rates of vaccination within our communities if we hope to overcome this virus. This will require trust in the COVID vaccination process, from the development, distribution and administration of a safe and effective vaccine as well as willingness to get vaccinated. Our hope is simple, we urge you to get the COVID-19 vaccine and share your experience with others.

Several new variants of the virus causing COVID-19 have been reported, including one in the United Kingdom (UK), one in South Africa and one from Brazil. As of 1/10/2021, cases of the UK variant have been confirmed in multiple regions of the United States and Canada. None have yet been found in Alaska. CDC is monitoring the new variants and encouraging states to do more sequencing (sampling positive specimens to identify variant). The Alaska State Public Health Laboratories routinely sequence a subset of positive tests including all that contain the pattern associated with the UK strain.

These variants seem to spread more easily and quickly than other variants, which may lead to more cases of COVID-19. Currently, there is no evidence that these variants cause more severe illness or increased risk of death. However, an increase in the number of cases will put more strain on health care resources, lead to more hospitalizations, and potentially more deaths.

Your best protection from COVID-19 will be a combination of getting a COVID-19 vaccine, wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet away from others, avoiding crowds, and washing your hands often. No one tool alone is going to stop this pandemic.

Current Case Counts in Alaska

New Resident Cases Yesterday 296 Updated Daily by Noon	Total Resident Cases 49,835 <small>Cumulative (includes recovered cases)</small>	Currently Hospitalized 66 <small>Confirmed COVID Positive</small>	Total Resident 228 <small>Deaths Statewide</small>
New Nonresident Cases Yesterday 9 Updated Daily by Noon	Total Nonresident Cases 1,631 <small>Cumulative (includes recovered cases)</small>	Total Hospitalizations 1,152 <small>Cumulative (does not reflect current stays)</small>	Total Nonresident 1 <small>Deaths Statewide</small>



Chugachmiut COVID-19 Testing:

	Testing Past Two Weeks	Testing YTD	Negative Results	Positive Results	Pending Results	ANMC Test Collection Kits	ID Now Rapid Testing Kits	Binax Now Rapid Testing Kits
Chenege	6	120	120	0	0	223	72	31
Nanwalek	13	432	432	0	0	139	140	39
Port Graham	9	367	367	0	0	169	123	40
Seward	35	562	562	31	0	322	69	151
Tatitlek	1	110	110	0	0	211	94	37
Total	64	1591	1591	31	0	1064	498	298

CDC guidelines recommend regular testing for critical infrastructure workers and other groups at higher risk for COVID-19, even if asymptomatic (not experiencing symptoms). Test prioritization will continue to be prioritized for people with symptoms and those with known exposures to COVID-19, expanding screening testing too many groups, including restaurant and grocery store workers, school staff, people who recently attended large gatherings, first responders, and healthcare workers is recommended.

What's New?

COVID-19 Disaster Declaration Extended: On January 12th, Governor Dunleavy extended Alaska's COVID-19 public health disaster emergency until mid-February. The new declaration renews the state's COVID-19 Outbreak Health Orders.

CDC Spread of COVID-19: New research shows that more than half of all COVID-19 cases are spread by infected people without any symptoms. Wear a mask, wash your hands, and stay 6 feet from others—even if you're feeling well. The Alaska Department of Health & Social Service positive case findings confirm that many Alaskans who are diagnosed with COVID-19 report that they went to social gatherings, community events, church services, and other social venues while they were contagious but before they knew they had the virus. Alaskans should avoid indoor gatherings with non-household members, avoid crowds, wear masks when around non-household members, and stay 6 feet from anyone not in their household.

50% of COVID-19 infections are spread by people without symptoms.



Wear a cloth mask



Wash hands often



Practice social distancing



cdc.gov/coronavirus



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COVID-19 Testing at ANMC Update: The COVID-19 walk-up testing site has moved to the Patient Housing parking garage at 4043 Tudor Centre Drive and is accessible via an entrance on Tudor Centre Drive, the parking garage elevator or the first floor of the parking garage. The site was relocated for the convenience of patient housing guests and for people without vehicles and/or those who need assistance with their swabbing. Online registration is still requested in advance for the walk-up location (required for the drive-thru). Register online: <https://covid19test.anmc.org>
Both walk-up and drive-thru testing sites will be open 9:00am to 7:00pm Monday-Saturday & 10:00am to 6:00pm Sundays.

Alaska COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard Summary as of 1/15/2021:



Vaccine Dashboard Summary

Total Allocated Vaccines 114,800	Dose #1 Vaccinations 43,992	Vaccination Series Complete 10,954
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Local Clinic Service Updates:

- **Clinic Services:** Please **DO NOT** delay necessary medical care. Call the clinic to schedule an appointment (currently not accepting walk-ins). Upcoming holiday hours for clinics & pharmacy:
Martin Luther King Jr Day Early Closure 1/15- Close at 3:30pm
Martin Luther King Jr Day 1/18- Closed for holiday
Clinic Staff will be on-call for emergencies during early closures & holidays.
- **Dental Services:** Dr. Murphy remains on-call for any dental emergencies. Angela McKinney, Dental Hygienist is scheduled to provide hygiene services the following dates:
Port Graham- 01/26/21 to 01/31/21
Nanwalek- 02/01/21 to 02/10/21
Tatitlek- 02/12/21 to 02/18/21
- **COVID-19 Testing:** Get tested at the first sign of any symptoms and after traveling. Testing works best when obtained as soon as symptoms start and is our best tool to identify if you have COVID-19 so immediate precautions can be taken to minimize the risk of spreading the virus to others.



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- Flu Vaccine: It's not too late to get a flu shot!** The higher percentage of those who receive a flu shot will provide better protection and help to prevent hospitalizations. Chugachmiut & Chugach Alaska Corporation teamed up to offer weekly and monthly prizes to encourage YOU to get your flu shot. Check out Facebook! **Goal is to reach at least 60%!**

The table below shows community progress towards protection against flu:

Flu Vaccine Coverage Rates by Community	2020 Active Users	2020 Active Users Received Flu Vaccine	2020 Flu Vaccine % Active Users
Chenege	48	26	54%
Nanwalek	282	135	48%
Port Graham	167	51	31%
Seward	690	201	29%
Tatitlek	88	51	58%
TOTAL FLU VACCINE	1275	464	36%

- COVID-19 Vaccine:** We have hosted vaccine clinics throughout the Region with the exception of Chenege (due to weather delays in getting the vaccine there). Vaccines just arrived in Chenege today and first vaccine clinic will begin tomorrow 1/16 at 9:00am. **Encouraging ALL to call your local clinic to schedule an appointment to get your COVID-19 vaccine.**

Chugachmiut COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard

	Total Allocated	Dose #1 Vaccinations	Vaccination Series Complete
CHENEGA	20	0	0
NANWALEK	40	41	0
PORT GRAHAM	40	40	0
SEWARD	135	54	6
TATITLEK	25	25	0
TOTAL ALLOCATED/VACCINATED	260	160	6

COVID-19 Vaccine Frequent Asked Questions

Can I get COVID-19 from a vaccine?

No. None of the authorized vaccines in the U.S. contain live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19. The goal of the vaccine is to provide your body with the tools it needs to fight the COVID-19 virus if you were to get infected.



Will a COVID-19 vaccination protect me from getting sick with COVID-19?

Yes. Vaccination works by teaching your immune system how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19, and this protects you from getting sick with COVID-19. Being protected from getting sick is important because even though many people with COVID-19 have only a mild illness, others may get a severe illness, have long-term health effects, or even die. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you, even if you don't have an increased risk of developing severe complications.

Does the vaccine protect against all new COVID-19 variants?

Not sure. Information about the characteristics of these new variants is rapidly emerging. Scientists are working to learn more about how easily they might spread, whether they could cause more severe illness, and whether currently authorized vaccines will protect people against them. At this time, there is no evidence that these variants cause more severe illness or increased risk of death.

If I get vaccinated, is it possible for me to still get a milder form of COVID-19 than if I hadn't been vaccinated?

Yes. The COVID-19 vaccines have gone through large clinical trials and have shown to be very effective in preventing symptoms of the disease. However, current information suggests it is possible that someone who has been vaccinated against COVID-19 may still have a mild or asymptomatic infection or spread the virus to others. Until we know more, it is important to continue taking precautions, like wearing masks and practicing physical distancing, even after you have been vaccinated.

Do I still need to wear a mask and physical distance after receiving the vaccine?

Yes. It will take time after the vaccination for your body to respond and make enough antibodies to protect you. This could take up to two weeks after your last dose.

Current info suggests that it is possible that someone who has been vaccinated against COVID-19 may still have a mild or asymptomatic infection or spread the virus to others. So it is important to continue taking precautions. Continue wearing masks and practicing physical distancing until it is clear that it is safe to stop.

If I get vaccinated do I have to comply with health orders for travel?

Yes. You need to still comply with the requirements of Health Order 8, Intrastate Travel or Health Order 6, International and Interstate Travel. It is unknown whether vaccinated individuals might still be able to pass the virus on to others.

While the vaccines authorized by the FDA for COVID-19 are safe and highly effective, they have been tested only to find out whether they protect the person getting the vaccine from getting sick with COVID-19. We do not know yet how well they prevent the person from getting infected with the virus and passing it on, only how well they prevent the person from getting sick. We know that getting vaccine helps to protect you, but we do not know yet how much it helps to protect other people.



So, if you are traveling and you have gotten the vaccine, you are much less likely to get very sick with COVID-19. However, because you may still be able to catch the virus and give it to others, the requirements for quarantine and testing do not change. The vaccines do not affect your test results.

Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I have recently received the flu vaccine, or any other vaccine?

No. The CDC does not recommend getting the COVID-19 vaccine within 2 weeks of any other vaccine.

After getting a COVID-19 vaccine, will I test positive for COVID-19 on a viral test?

No. The current vaccines authorized for use cannot cause you to test positive on viral tests, which are used to see if you have a current infection.

How long will vaccine immunity last?

Not sure. Researchers do not yet know how long immunity lasts after vaccination. That's why continuing prevention practices like wearing a mask, washing your hands regularly and social distancing will still be important.

I've seen a lot of rumors on social media about vaccines. How can I tell what is true?

The internet can have a lot of dangerous misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines, and it can be difficult to know what to trust. The best thing you can do is educate yourself about the vaccines with information from trustworthy sources. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) vaccines and immunization web content is researched, written and approved by subject matter experts, including physicians, researchers, epidemiologists, and analysts. Content is based on peer-reviewed science.

Will the COVID-19 vaccine alter my DNA?

No. The vaccines contain messenger RNA (mRNA), which instructs cells to make the "spike protein" found on the new coronavirus. When the immune system recognizes the protein, it builds an immune response by creating antibodies- teaching the body how to protect against future infection. The mRNA never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA (genetic material) is kept. The body gets rid of the mRNA soon after it's finished using the instructions.

Does the COVID-19 vaccine include a tracking device?

No. A video has been shared thousands of times on Facebook makes false claims about the products of syringe maker Apiject Systems of America, which has a contract with the government to provide medical-grade injection devices for vaccines. The company has an optional version of its product that contains a microchip within the syringe label that helps providers confirm a vaccine dose's origin. The chip itself is not injected into the person getting the vaccine.



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- **Universal Masking:** It is our collective responsibility to exemplify and uphold a culture of health and safety. Chugachmiut has a universal masking requirement for all staff, contractors, patients and visitors in all Chugachmiut operated medical and dental clinics and pharmacy to best protect our staff, patients and communities amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **MyHealth Enrollment:** Do you want immediate access to your medical record 24/7 to get test results, clinical documents, medication list, and the ability to connect with your provider and care team, or view and request appointments? Contact clinic to enroll and gain access to YOUR MyHealth account.

Community & Family Services Division Updates:

- **Winter “Laugh and Learn” Series:** Everyone is invited and welcome to attend! Offered virtually via Zoom link! Text 907-764-1945 for link invite!

January 20, 2021, 2:00pm “A Window Between Worlds”

Hosted by: Sharon Whytal & Danielle Larsgaard

- **Llangarwik Recovery Camp:** Our mission is to empower individuals and families to live sober healthy lives, prepare them to be powerful, influential teachers and healers within their own communities. Llangarlik is a unique alternative to residential alcohol/drug treatment for Alaska Natives and our approach is holistic, natural and traditional.

Dates: January 25th to February 7th, 2021 (offered virtually through Zoom)

Monday-Friday 1:00pm to 5:00pm & Saturday-Sunday 2:00pm to 6:00pm

For more information call 334-4155 or email eydief@chugachmiut.org



Please note, instead of providing this situation report every two weeks, we will begin providing report one time per month (first Friday of every month). Next report will be provided on Friday, February 5, 2021.

Thank you for your continued support. It means so much to all of us in health care. Together, we will get through this. Please stay safe and take care of yourselves and one another.

Sincerely,

K. Baker

Kelley Baker, Health Services Division Director