



# Valdez COVID-19 Unified Command

## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release: 05/22/2020 10:00 p.m.

**Valdez, AK** – The community of Valdez received confirmation of its first case of COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) late Friday evening. The patient is an asymptomatic male between the ages of 20 and 29. They are in isolation and following the guidance of their medical provider and public health officials. The patient, an employee of Peter Pan Seafoods, Inc., will be listed separately from the total state case count, as they are not a resident of Alaska.

“While the first case in our community is concerning, the parties involved did everything right. The patient was identified as part of a routine employer screening put in place specifically to protect their workforce and our community,” said Dr. Angela Alfaro, physician consultant to the Valdez Unified Command. “To the person who was recently diagnosed, we send our thoughts as he and his family deal with this difficult situation. To our community, keep following those good public health practices which have kept Valdez safe and healthy so far. Please continue to show compassion and kindness to others. We are all in this together.”

Upon receipt of confirmed positive results, public health officials conduct something called a contact investigation to determine where the patient has been and who they may have come into contact with over the course of the last several weeks. Following a preliminary investigation, it appears the patient has remained restricted to the Peter Pan Seafoods campus for the entire duration of their stay in Valdez. Several individuals identified as close contacts of the patient have been moved into quarantine. Representatives from Peter Pan Seafoods report thorough disinfection of the patient’s living and work spaces

Valdez medical providers, local leaders, residents and industry partners have been preparing together over the past three months for the potential arrival of the virus. The community has done an exceptional job flattening the curve. Public health officials believe the current risk to Valdez is low due to screening and containment of this asymptomatic patient. However, based upon other communities’ experiences, additional cases may surface in Valdez in the future. Residents and visitors must continue making thoughtful and careful decisions as long as COVID-19 remains present in Alaska and beyond.

“Now is a good time to redouble our efforts around simple precautions and individual responsibility,” said Mayor Jeremy O’Neil. “Hand hygiene, physical distancing, wearing a cloth face covering, and staying home when sick go a long way. Valdez has always been an exceptional community. Our response during this time is no different. Leaning on each other is our hallmark way for getting through tough times.”

Residents and visitors are encouraged to monitor themselves for COVID-19 symptoms which include a fever, cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell, and any new onset of illness. If you believe you have even mild symptoms, contact your healthcare provider for screening and closely follow their instructions. Remember to call ahead before you go to the doctor’s office, public health clinic, or hospital. The local medical team will continue to provide the best possible care for you and our community.

We recognize this latest development may create additional stress and uncertainty among local residents. The Unified Command and public health officials continue to closely monitor the rapidly changing course of COVID-19. We remain committed to providing information, support and resources to protect the health, safety and well-being of Valdez during this extraordinary and unprecedented time.

For additional details on this case, please view the full video announcement here: [https://youtu.be/\\_amOhSgyTM](https://youtu.be/_amOhSgyTM)

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Media video download of first Valdez case announcement: [First Confirmed COVID-19 Patient in Valdez Video](#)

Media audio download of first Valdez case announcement: [First Confirmed COVID-19 Patient in Valdez Audio](#)