



Valdez COVID-19 Unified Command

NEWS RELEASE # 057 Valdez Weekly Summary

For immediate release: 12/31/2020, 6:00 p.m.

Valdez, AK – Valdez COVID-19 Unified Command provides the following local weekly summary covering developments over the last thirteen days.

Valdez Case Count Updates & Trends

As of midnight on Dec. 30, Valdez has zero active resident cases and zero active non-resident cases. Since the time of our last weekly summary on Dec. 18, the community of Valdez received notification of zero new cases of COVID-19.

Please continue to work together to protect our community and our healthcare system. Please remain extra cautious and make thoughtful decisions as you go about your day. Please continue to wear a mask which covers your mouth and nose when you are around anyone outside of your household, even if you are outdoors or can maintain six feet of physical distance. Continue to keep your social circle small and consistent. Try to limit your time traveling outside Valdez to only that which is necessary.

COVID-19 Vaccine Update

COVID-19 vaccine is allocated in Valdez based upon state and federal guidelines. Local officials do not make allocation decisions. The Valdez Unified Command's Vaccine Task Force, comprised of members of the local medical community, public health, city staff, Valdez Native Tribe representatives, and others, work together to determine logistics for vaccine distribution based upon state/federal allocation guidelines.

Valdez received its first shipment of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine on Dec. 16. Regular shipments of Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccine are ordered as needed based upon state guidelines for distribution.

Vaccine distribution for Phase 1A - Tiers 1 & 2 in Valdez began Dec. 17 and will continue into Jan. 2021.

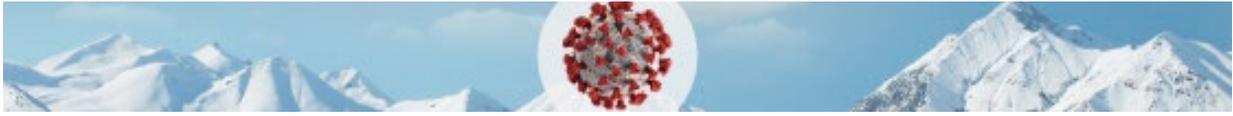
Vaccine distribution for Phase 1A - Tier 3 in Valdez begins Jan. 4 and will continue into Feb. 2021.

To view the full list of those persons currently eligible for vaccination in Phase 1A – Tiers 1, 2, and 3, visit <https://bit.ly/3n7OYHs>.

The local process used for the Phase 1A initial distribution groups consists of several closed point of dispensing (POD) clinics, similar to what is practiced for flu vaccine each fall in Valdez. A closed POD is a smaller, focused event just for a specific population. Closed PODs are scheduled in advance and not open to the general public. Appointments for closed PODs are required for COVID-19 vaccination to verify eligibility, ensure equity of distribution, and provide time for the standard 15 to 30 minute post vaccination observation period.

Those individuals in Valdez who qualify under Phase 1A - Tier 3 must sign-up for an appointment using the state's vaccine website (<http://covidvax.alaska.gov>) or by calling the DHSS Valdez Public Health Clinic at 907.835.4612 during regular business hours. Those in Phase 1A - Tier 3 will make an appointment for their second dose of vaccine during their first dose appointment. Both doses must be the same brand of vaccine. The state requests those receiving vaccination arrange their schedule to receive their first and second doses through the same provider/clinic location.

On Dec. 31, the State of Alaska published the complete list of those who will be eligible for vaccination in Phase 1B. However, no additional information is available at this time regarding the timeline for Phase 1B vaccine distribution. Visit <https://bit.ly/3n7OYHs> to view the full list for Phase 1B. No sign-up or future vaccine reservation option is available at this time for anyone except those eligible under Phase 1A. Once additional information becomes available, community members should anticipate public notification and vaccine distribution will mirror the processes used for flu vaccine point of dispensing practiced every fall in Valdez.



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Please note, Alaska's distribution process and specific phases/tiers do not include military service members or Valdez Native Tribe members. They will be vaccinated separately through a direct federal or Indian Health Service allocation. Timing of eligibility under the direct federal or Indian Health Service allocations may differ from timing of eligibility under the state's phases/tiers.

Valdez Testing Options

Please stay home and get tested if you have even one mild symptom of COVID-19. If you think you may have been exposed to the virus, please reach out to the Valdez Public Health Nurse (835-4612) or your medical provider for guidance on next steps. Multiple options exist for both symptomatic and asymptomatic testing in Valdez. All local testing options are by appointment only and at no out-of-pocket cost to the patient. Please visit the Valdez Unified Command website to learn more: <http://www.valdezak.gov/COVID-19>.

Valdez Economic Relief & Recovery

In addition to mitigating the health impacts of COVID-19 in Valdez, our community has been working diligently to address the economic impacts from the pandemic felt by residents, businesses, and non-profit organizations.

The City of Valdez split local economic relief and recovery efforts into three phases, consisting of immediate emergency assistance thru waivers of fees and penalties, direct assistance thru the May 2020 distribution of approximately \$3M in relief funds to Valdez businesses and residents, and the ongoing Economic Recovery Initiative.

The first Economic Recovery Initiative programs rolled out to the community in early December.

The *Considerations for Event Organizers and COVID-19 Mitigation Plans Guide* is now available. The guide provides detailed considerations to assist in planning safe, COVID conscious events in our community. Mitigation plan review and assistance is available at no cost to event organizers. Download the guide on the city website or request a paper copy from the city events coordinator by emailing events@valdezak.gov or calling (907) 834-3404.

The City also launched the Valdez Advertising & Marketing Matching Grant Program, which provides a matching grant up to \$5,000 to assist local tourism-related small businesses market their company and our community to visitors. A wide variety of advertising efforts are eligible under the program. If you are unsure if you qualify for the grant, please email mbarberio@valdezak.gov for guidance. Grant applications are available on the city website or at City Hall and due no later than 5:00 p.m. on Jan. 15.

To learn more about the City Economic Relief & Recovery Initiative and download applications for the current Valdez Economic Recovery Initiative programs, visit: <http://www.valdezak.gov/557/Valdez-COVID-19-Economic-Relief-Recovery>. Please check the website regularly for announcements on additional Economic Recovery Initiative programs in 2021.

For More Information

The Valdez Unified Command remains committed to providing information, support, and resources for our community. For the most up-to-date local information, please continue to monitor the Valdez Unified Command website (www.valdezak.gov/COVID-19) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ValdezUCRG).

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