

Valdez COVID-19 Unified Command

NEWS RELEASE # 066 Valdez Weekly Summary

For immediate release: 03/05/2021, 6:00 p.m.

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

Valdez Case Count Updates & Trends

Since the time of our last weekly summary on Feb. 26, the community of Valdez received notification of four new resident cases and zero new non-resident cases of COVID-19. As of midnight on Mar. 4, Valdez has five active resident cases and zero active non-resident cases.

Three of the new resident cases are minors. Two have symptoms. One is asymptomatic. All three are linked to each other and recent travel outside Valdez.

The fourth new resident case is an adult with symptoms. This case is a close contact of the resident case announced on Feb. 25. They are not linked to the other three new cases this week.

Please Continue to Protect Our Community & Healthcare System

Most of our recent local cases have been linked to travel outside Valdez. **If you plan to travel for spring break, please be extra cautious. Public health officials also highly recommend you complete free COVID-19 testing either at the Anchorage or Fairbanks airports or at one of the Valdez testing locations upon return from travel.**

Continue to keep your social circle small and consistent. Continue to wear a mask which covers your mouth and nose when you are around anyone outside of your household.

Remember to stay home if you are sick. If you have even one mild symptom or think you've been exposed to the virus which causes COVID-19, arrange to be tested at one of the multiple testing locations in Valdez. Testing promptly and working cooperatively with public health contact tracers helps ensure others at risk are quickly identified to prevent further spread.

Public health officials urge our community to consider getting vaccinated once it is your turn. COVID-19 vaccines are safe and highly effective at preventing severe illness and hospitalization due to COVID-19. To learn more about the different types of vaccines, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19>.

It remains unknown whether vaccinated individuals can carry the SARS-CoV-2 virus and transmit it to others. Those vaccinated must continue to take precautions to protect those around them, including physical distancing, wearing a mask, and practicing good hygiene.

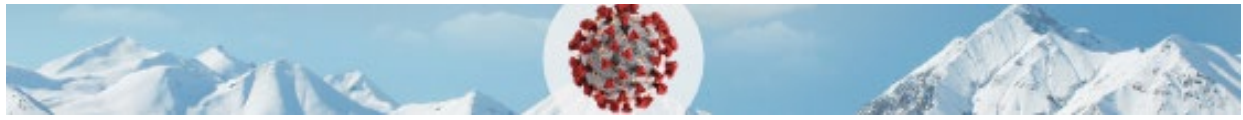
COVID-19 Vaccine Update

Two Valdez options exist to make vaccine appointments for those currently eligible:

- **Preferred Appointment Option:** Make a vaccination appointment online: <http://covidvax.alaska.gov>. Please note, the Valdez online scheduling button will only be shown when appointment slots are available. Those eligible should check back often if you are not able to make an appointment right away. Additional appointments will be added as Valdez is allocated more vaccine supply from the state.
- **Alternate Appointment Option:** If you do not have internet access or need help with scheduling online, you can also make a vaccination appointment by calling the DHSS Valdez Public Health Center at 907.835.4612.

As of 5:00 p.m. today, 181 appointments remain available for the next Valdez vaccine POD clinic on Mar. 11. This clinic is for first dose Moderna vaccine for individuals age 18 or older eligible under state guidelines. Additional local March POD clinics will be added as Valdez receives more vaccine allocation from the state. Please check back regularly for new appointment options.

An IHS allocation POD clinic will also occur in Valdez on Mar. 11. This clinic is for first dose Moderna vaccine for Valdez Native Tribe members and members of their households age 18 or older. If this applies to you or your household, please call the VNT at 907.835.4951 for assistance making an appointment.



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The following people are currently eligible for vaccine under state guidelines:

- **OPEN: Phase 1A:** Healthcare/medical workers and long term care residents. Includes people who stay home to provide care and daily support - such as assistance with bathing, dressing, eating, shopping, and housework - for medically fragile individuals or seniors.
- **OPEN: Phase 1B:**
 - Individuals age 65 and older.
 - People who assist seniors in getting a vaccine.
 - People age 50 years & older who have a high risk medical condition.
 - People age 50 years & older who are frontline essential workers and required to work within six feet of others.
 - People living or working in congregate settings not covered in Phase 1A.
 - Education staff, limited to PreK-12 educators & support staff, childcare workers & support staff, and indigenous language & cultural bearers.
 - Limited pandemic response staff who may come into contact with the SARS-CoV-2 virus during outbreak response activities.
- **NEW! OPEN: Phase 1C:**
 - Individuals age 55-64.
 - Individuals age 16 and older who:
 - Are essential workers* not included in previous phases –OR-
 - Are considered “high risk” or “might be high risk” for severe COVID-19 illness according to the CDC or their medical provider –OR-
 - Live in a multigenerational household, which includes more than three or more generations or “skipped” generations (e.g. a grandchild living with a grandparent) –OR-
 - Live in an “unserved community” where less than 45% of homes are served by pipe, septic tank and well, or covered haul systems.

*(*Essential workers, as defined by the State of Alaska and CISA, include but are not limited to those who work in the following industries: Chemical; commercial facilities; communications and information technology; critical manufacturing; defense industrial base; education (including higher education, career and technical education, and support staff); energy (petroleum, electricity, natural gas, utility and power workers); financial services; food and agriculture (manufacturers, distributors, restaurant workers, seafood workers, grocery store workers); hazardous materials; healthcare/public health; hygiene products and services; law enforcement, public safety, and other first responders; other community or government based operations and essential functions; public works and infrastructure support service; residential/shelter facilities, housing, real estate, and related services, transportation and logistics (transit workers, aviation workers, taxi drivers, port workers, bus drivers, USPS workers); and water and wastewater workers. For the complete list and to check your eligibility, visit <http://covidvax.alaska.gov>)*

As of Mar. 5, the following cumulative number of COVID-19 vaccinations have been administered in Valdez:
(These numbers include state and IHS allocations, as well as federal allocations administered thru the Valdez public health.)

- **Pfizer-BioNTech:** 294 first doses and 182 second doses.
- **Moderna:** 570 first doses and 515 second doses.
- **Total Administered:** 864 first doses and 697 second doses.

Those interested in volunteering for upcoming vaccine distribution POD clinics should contact the Valdez Unified Command volunteer coordinator, Rhea Cragun, at 907.843.3416 or rcragun@valdezak.gov. All skill levels are welcome.

Valdez Testing Options

If you think you may have been exposed to the virus which causes COVID-19 or have even one mild symptom, please reach out to the Valdez Public Health Clinic 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>.

More Information

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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