

Valdez COVID-19 Unified Command

NEWS RELEASE # 069 Valdez Weekly Summary

For immediate release: 03/26/2021, 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 Mar. 19, the community of Valdez received notification of 14 new resident cases and two new non-resident cases of COVID-19. As of midnight on Mar. 25, Valdez has 21 active resident cases and three active non-resident cases. While this reflects the largest active resident case count in Valdez since the pandemic began, none of our recent local cases have required hospitalization.

Four of the new resident cases are adults with symptoms, five are minors with symptoms, two are asymptomatic adults, and three are asymptomatic minors. (Adults are those 18 years and older. Minors are those 17 years and younger.)

Of the 14 new resident cases, preliminary source investigation indicates:

- Ten are close contacts of other recent resident cases and linked to the recent cluster of cases in Valdez.
- Two are linked to recent travel outside Valdez.
- Two have sources still under investigation.

Both of the two new non-resident cases are adult visitors with symptoms. One of the non-resident cases is linked to recent travel outside Valdez. The other is a close contact of another recent non-resident case.

Please Continue to Protect Our Community & Healthcare System

The majority of our recent local cases have been linked to travel outside Valdez, either directly or due to close contact with someone who recently traveled. If you must travel, please be extra cautious, wear a mask around others, maintain physical distance, and practice good hygiene. **If you traveled recently, even within Alaska, please consider completing free COVID-19 testing.**

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.

Local COVID-19 Vaccine Update

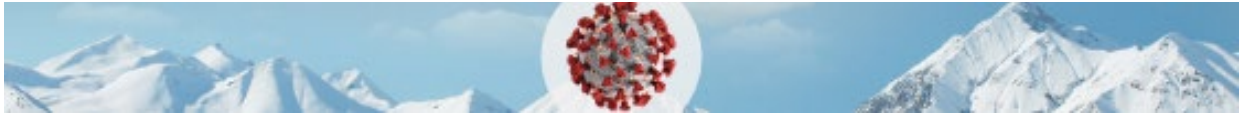
Public health officials urge our community to consider getting vaccinated. COVID-19 vaccines are safe and highly effective at preventing severe illness and hospitalization due to COVID-19. To learn more about the different types of vaccines, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19>,

All those over age 16 who live and/or work in Alaska are now eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccine. The Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are both FDA authorized for individuals over age 18. The Pfizer vaccine is FDA authorized for individuals over age 16.

Appointments are now available for the next Valdez vaccine POD clinic on Apr. 15th (single dose, Johnson & Johnson Janssen vaccine). Appointments will be added in April as Valdez receives additional vaccine allocation from the state.

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

- Preferred Appointment Option: Make a vaccination appointment online: <http://covidvax.alaska.gov>.
- Alternate Appointment Option: If you do not have internet access or need help, you can also make a vaccination appointment by calling the DHSS Valdez Public Health Center at 907.835.4612.



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Valdez parents/guardians with children age 16 or 17 or others interested in receiving the Pfizer vaccine should call the Valdez Public Health Clinic to express interest. This will help determine the need to specifically request Pfizer vaccine from the state moving forward.

As of Mar. 26, the following cumulative number of COVID-19 vaccinations have been administered in Valdez: *(These numbers include state and IHS allocations. The numbers include both Valdez residents and those who live/work in Alaska who received vaccination in Valdez.)*

- **Pfizer-BioNTech:** 294 first doses and 287 second doses.
- **Moderna:** 1,157 first doses and 566 second doses.
- **Johnson & Johnson Janssen:** 60 single doses
- **Total Number of First Dose Vaccinations Administered:** 1,451
- **Total Number of Vaccination Series Completed (second dose or single dose series):** 913

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.

CDC Guidance for Fully Vaccinated Individuals

On Mar. 8, CDC released the first set of public health recommendations for fully vaccinated individuals in non-healthcare settings. People are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 two weeks after receiving their second dose in a two-dose series (Pfizer or Moderna) or two weeks after receiving a single-dose vaccine (Johnson & Johnson Janssen).

According to the CDC, fully vaccinated individuals may now:

- Visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors (in private settings such as a home) without wearing a mask or physical distancing.
- Visit with unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19 disease indoors (in private settings such as a home) without wearing a mask or physical distancing.
- **Refrain from quarantine and testing following a known exposure, as long as they remain asymptomatic.**

According to the CDC, fully vaccinated individuals should continue to:

- Wear a mask, physical distance, and practice other precautions while in public.
- Wear a mask, physical distance and practice other precautions when around high risk unvaccinated people, when around those with high risk unvaccinated people in their household, and when visiting with unvaccinated people from multiple households.
- Avoid medium and large sized in-person gatherings.
- Get tested if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Follow guidance issued by individual employers.
- Follow CDC and health department travel requirements and recommendations.

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 free 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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