

Valdez COVID-19 Unified Command

NEWS RELEASE # 072 Valdez Weekly Summary

For immediate release: 04/16/2021, 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

Between Apr. 9 and Apr. 15, the community of Valdez received notification of five new resident cases and three new non-resident cases of COVID-19. One of the new resident cases was treated in the Providence Valdez Medical Center emergency room on Apr. 14 for worsening symptoms and transferred by medivac to an Anchorage hospital for further care.

As of midnight on Apr. 15, Valdez has 10 active resident cases and three active non-resident cases. With the exception of the patient hospitalized in Anchorage on Apr. 14, all of the currently active cases are isolating at home or in their place of lodging.

All five of the new resident cases are adults with symptoms. Three of the new resident cases are close contacts of other recent cases. Source for the fourth resident case remains under investigation. Source for the fifth case remains unknown, as the patient refused to cooperate during the DHSS contact tracing process.

All three of the new non-resident cases are adults with symptoms. All three are close contacts of other existing cases.

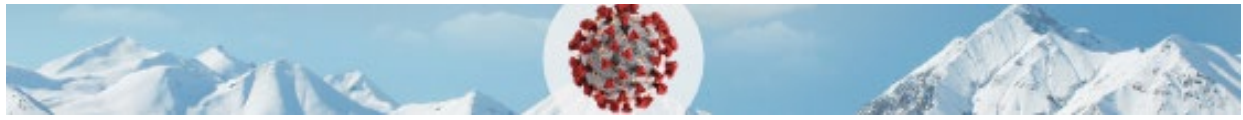
Two additional Alaskans tested positive this week while physically present in Valdez. However, they are counted in the case count of their home community within Alaska (not Valdez) based upon CDC guidelines. Both of these cases are asymptomatic adults. Both are close contacts of existing cases.

Please Protect Our Community & Healthcare System

COVID-19 remains present in our community. A continued focus on personal responsibility to prevent further spread is important.

- **Got Symptoms or Been Exposed? Get Tested.** Testing helps identify where the virus is located in our community, helps us notify those who might be at risk, and allows placement of roadblocks (isolation and quarantine) in the way of the virus to prevent further spread. Multiple options exist in Valdez for COVID-19 testing for both symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals. All testing options in Valdez are at no out-of-pocket cost to the patient. Testing promptly and working cooperatively with public health contact tracers helps ensure further spread.
- **Be Careful During Travel** – Many of our recent cases have been linked to having close contact with someone who recently traveled. If you must travel, please be extra cautious. **If you traveled recently, even within Alaska, please consider completing COVID-19 testing.**
- **Consider Vaccination.** Free COVID-19 vaccination is available in Valdez to anyone over age 16 who lives or works in Alaska. **Public health officials urge our community to consider getting vaccinated.** COVID-19 vaccines are almost 100% effective at preventing severe illness and hospitalization. To learn more about the different types of vaccines, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19>.
Once fully vaccinated, people outside of healthcare settings may refrain from quarantine or testing following a known exposure to COVID-19, as long as they remain asymptomatic. Additional CDC recommendations for fully vaccinated individuals can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3rL1G1o>.
- **Practice Personal Responsibility.** Remember to stay home if you are sick, even with the sniffles or other minor symptoms. If you test positive for COVID-19 or are identified as a close contact of a positive patient, closely follow instructions from public health, your local physician, and the Valdez City Schools nurse regarding isolation and quarantine requirements.

Continue to keep your social circle small and consistent. Avoid gatherings, especially gatherings with individuals outside your household who are not fully vaccinated. Continue to wear a mask which covers your mouth and nose when you are in public or communal spaces outside your residence. Maintain physical distancing. Practice good personal hygiene.



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Local COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Update

Valdez vaccine appointment availability:

- **Appointments remain available for the Valdez Moderna first dose vaccine POD clinic on Apr. 22.**
- Following FDA, CDC, and DHSS direction, distribution of the Johnson & Johnson Janssen vaccine in Valdez has been paused pending further review of the vaccine at the federal level. Visit <http://covidvax.alaska.gov> to learn more about this pause in distribution.
- Multiple second dose clinics are scheduled in Valdez throughout April.
- Valdez parents/guardians with children age 16 or 17 interested in receiving the Pfizer vaccine should call the Valdez Public Health Clinic to place their name on the waiting list.

Two Valdez options exist to make vaccine appointments:

- 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.

As of Apr. 16, 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. The numbers include those who have been vaccinated during a large Valdez POD clinic at the Civic Center, those who have been vaccinated during a Valdez employer private POD clinic, those who have been vaccinated at the Valdez Public Health Clinic or hospital, and those who have been vaccinated at home due to mobility challenges or other health concerns.)*

- **Pfizer-BioNTech:** 335 first doses and 293 second doses.
- **Moderna:** 1,318 first doses and 994 second doses.
- **Johnson & Johnson Janssen:** 90 single doses
- **Total Number of First Dose Vaccinations Administered:** 1,653
- **Total Number of Vaccination Series Completed (second dose or single dose series):** 1,377

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. **If you are a business or organization seeking testing for a group of five or more people, please contact a testing location at least 48 hours in advance of your desired appointment date.**

This helps ensure local testing locations have enough time to coordinate personnel and testing equipment to accommodate your request.

- **Providence Valdez Medical Center.** Offers both symptomatic and asymptomatic state lab testing. Call 907.255.6063 to schedule a testing appointment (not a rapid testing option). Those who need pre-procedure testing should call 907.835.2249 for testing appointment instructions.
- **The Alfa Doc.** Offers both symptomatic & asymptomatic rapid testing. Call 907.835.2532 to schedule a testing appointment.
- **Valdez City Schools.** Offers symptomatic rapid testing to **school district students and employees only**. Call 907.835.4728 to schedule an appointment.
- **Valdez Medical Clinic.** Offers symptomatic & asymptomatic rapid testing. Call 907.831.6441 or 907.835.4811 to schedule an appointment.

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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Contact: Allie Ferko, public information officer, Valdez Unified Command, PIO@valdezak.gov, (907) 202-0711.