

Valdez COVID-19 Unified Command

NEWS RELEASE # 073 Valdez Weekly Summary

For immediate release: 04/23/2021, 3:30 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. 16 and Apr. 22, the community of Valdez received notification of ten new resident cases and one new non-resident case of COVID-19. One of the new resident cases was treated in the Providence Valdez Medical Center emergency room on Apr. 21 for worsening symptoms and transferred by medivac to an Anchorage hospital for further care.

Four of the new resident cases are adults with symptoms. Six of the new resident cases are asymptomatic adults. Nine of the new resident cases are close contacts of other recent cases. Source for the tenth resident case remains under investigation.

The new non-resident case is an asymptomatic adult. They are a close contact of another recent case.

One additional Alaskan 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. This case is an asymptomatic adult who is a close contact of another recent case.

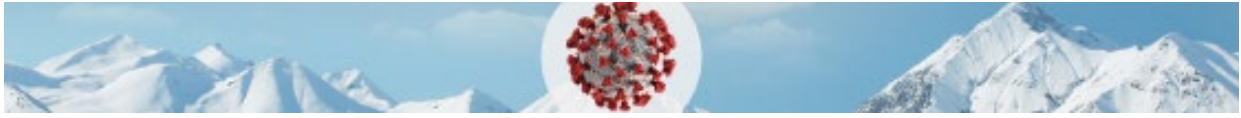
As of midnight on Apr. 22, Valdez has nine active resident cases and one active non-resident case. With the exception of the two patients hospitalized in Anchorage - one hospitalized on Apr. 14 (previously reported in news release 072) and the other hospitalized on Apr. 21, all of the currently active cases are isolating at home or in their place of lodging.

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 prevent 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, contact tracers, your local physician, and the Valdez City Schools nurse regarding isolation and quarantine requirements. **If you have any questions or concerns about what to do following a positive test, what to do if you are considered a close contact, or isolation/quarantine requirements, please contact the Valdez Public Health Clinic (907.835.4612) or your medical provider for assistance.**

Continue to keep your social circle small and consistent. Avoid large 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

- Starting in May, vaccine distribution in Valdez will start looking a little different based on current community needs. Large first dose vaccination POD clinics at the Civic Center will conclude and transition instead to smaller vaccine distribution events coordinated thru the Valdez Public Health Clinic. **If you still need your first dose of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, please call the Valdez Public Health Clinic (907.835.4612) to discuss your situation and arrange your appointment.**
- Other local medical providers are also exploring the process to order and administer vaccine in small numbers at their facilities. This option is not yet available, but please stay tuned for more information coming soon!
- Multiple second dose vaccination POD clinics are scheduled at the Valdez Civic Center throughout late April and May.
- **If you are a business or organization looking to schedule vaccination for your employees or clients/customers, please contact the Valdez Public Health Clinic (907.835.4612) to discuss your situation.**
- 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. If and when the pause is lifted, Valdez will offer a large Johnson & Johnson vaccination POD clinic at the Civic Center for those waiting for a single dose vaccine option.

As of Apr. 23, the following cumulative number of COVID-19 vaccinations have been administered in Valdez:

- **Pfizer-BioNTech:** 337 first doses and 321 second doses.
- **Moderna:** 1,377 first doses and 1,136 second doses.
- **Johnson & Johnson Janssen:** 90 single doses
- **Total Number of First Dose Vaccinations Administered:** 1,714
- **Total Number of Vaccination Series Completed (second dose or single dose series):** 1,547

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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