



PETERSBURG BOROUGH, PETERSBURG MEDICAL CENTER

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE: COVID-19 | POSITIVE CASE FROM OUT OF STATE

Date: July 12, 2020
From: Petersburg Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
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For Immediate Release

A new positive test result for COVID-19 has been identified through the Traveler testing site at the James A. Johnson Airport in Petersburg. The positive case is a visitor from the lower 48 who was tested upon his arrival to Petersburg on June 30th. Overloaded laboratories in Washington State caused the delay in reporting the result. The Alaska Department of Epidemiology has been notified and has begun a contact investigation. The visitor did not have symptoms of COVID-19 upon his arrival to Alaska.

Initial information is that the visitor spent a few days with friends (also from out of state) at USFS cabins in Beecher's Pass and/or Duncan Canal before leaving Petersburg and returning to his home in the lower 48. The party did not stay at a local lodge and were not guided during their stay. Reports are that the positive case did not circulate within the community during his trip. The risk of the person having spread the virus in Petersburg appears to be low.

We want to reassure the public that we are working closely with the Alaska Division of Public Health to identify anyone who may be at risk for having contact with this individual. We will keep the public informed of any information that is needed for community health and safety.

Due to the large increases in positive cases across the nation, and the resulting emphasis on increased testing, testing labs utilized by the PMC are overwhelmed. The PMC is doing all it can to procure test results in an effective amount of time. This situation underscores the fact that all residents and visitors need to be mindful of our actions and take all necessary precautions that will mitigate the spread of the virus to our population. The greater the

number of people who contract the virus, the greater the potential is to spread to a vulnerable member of our community, with potentially grave consequences.

Please refer to the CDC webpage for information on symptoms and precautionary measures at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/.

Additional current information on COVID-19 is available through the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) at coronavirus.alaska.gov.

We must assume that COVID-19 is being spread in the community and all residents must act accordingly to prevent the further spread of this virus. If you are sick or suspect that you may be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, you should take steps to prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community. If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing, call the Petersburg Medical Center COVID Hotline at 907-772-5788 for medical advice. Do not go to the hospital or clinic before calling the hotline.

If you are not sick, please continue to take precautionary measures to stay healthy:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, or cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Clean frequently-touched surfaces and objects daily (e.g., tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles) using a regular household detergent and water.
- Wear a mask when out in public when you cannot ensure six feet of social distancing as this could minimize the spread of COVID-19.
- Continue to socially distance. This means protecting you and your household members from getting sick. Avoid breaking your home bubble of protection.
- Monitor your health and that of your household members and call the COVID hotline with any questions.

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