



**Yukon-Kuskokwim
HEALTH CORPORATION**

Working Together to Achieve Excellent Health

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Additional COVID-19 Case in Bethel

On Thursday, June 11, YKHC confirmed an additional COVID-19 case in Bethel. The positive case was identified through screening and testing of inbound passengers at the Bethel airport.

The individual is currently self-isolating and YKHC is working with the State of Alaska Section of Epidemiology to conduct contact tracing, follow-up testing, and ensure precautions are taken to protect people the individual may have been in close contact with. Bethel residents who are considered close contacts will receive a call from YKHC, providing instructions for follow-up testing and precautions to take.

While YKHC is highly confident this is a travel-related case, we will offer public testing to Bethel residents who are concerned about potential exposure. COVID-19 testing will be offered, without an appointment, at the YKHC drive-through testing site on Friday, June 12, from noon-4 p.m. and again on Monday, June 15, from noon-4 p.m. YKHC recommends Bethel residents, concerned about potential exposure from this case, opt for testing on Monday, June 15.

Bethel residents who opt to participate in this public testing are required to self-isolate at home until results return, which could take 5-7 days. A reminder that Alaska Health Mandate 10.1, effective June 6, requires all residents or visitors upon arrival to Alaska from out-of-state travel to self-quarantine for 14 days, unless the traveler has met testing requirements. If tested upon arrival from out-of-state, the traveler must self-quarantine while waiting for initial test results and get tested a second time within 7-14 days of arrival. This means individuals should shelter in place and remain physically distant from anyone who is not a member of their immediate household until their initial test result is received, and minimize interactions until the second result shows the traveler is negative for COVID-19.

While this is the fifth known case of COVID-19 in the YK Delta region, the individual who tested positive is not a resident of Bethel. Therefore, per State reporting protocols, this case will not be counted in the YK Delta positive case count.

While testing is a core public health strategy to detect, isolate and trace new cases, current airport testing in Bethel remains at 25-60% of arriving passengers who opt for free, voluntary testing. "We continue to encourage all passengers, whether local residents or visitors, to agree to free COVID-19 testing at the Bethel airport," said YKHC President & CEO Dan Winkelman. "I look forward to the day that 100% of Alaska Airlines' passengers are tested when arriving to Bethel."

YKHC encourages the public to practice these known protective measures, which helps to prevent spread of the novel coronavirus. Additional protective measures include regular handwashing, physical distancing from anyone not in your same household, and disinfecting high-touch surfaces in your home.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include a fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea, and diminished sense of taste or smell. If you have these symptoms, do not go to your village clinic or to the emergency room in Bethel. Instead, call your village clinic or in Bethel call 543-6949 so a health care provider can assist you.

Get the latest information on COVID-19 from YKHC at www.ykhc.org/covid-19.

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