

Adam Crum
Commissioner

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**Department of Health
and Social Services**

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First in-state Alaskan death from COVID-19

March 27, 2020, ANCHORAGE — The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) reported the state's first in-state death today related to COVID-19.

This is the second Alaska death. The first Alaska resident to have died from COVID-19 was a resident of Southeast Alaska who died on March 16 at a health care facility in King County, Washington, after a prolonged stay there.

"Our hearts go out to the deceased's friends and family members," said DHSS Commissioner Adam Crum. "We are also thinking of the health care providers who cared for this patient. We will continue to work tirelessly with our federal, state, local and Tribal partners to effectively respond to this crisis."

The individual who died today was a 63-year-old person with underlying health conditions. The deceased was receiving treatment at an Anchorage hospital and had tested positive for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on March 25.

"As we grieve this loss, we need to collectively resolve to do our part to prevent the spread of this virus," said Alaska's Chief Medical Officer Dr. Anne Zink. "This is an unfortunate reminder that COVID-19 is a life-threatening illness."

In addition to the announcement of the second Alaska death, DHSS announced 16 new positive cases in six Alaska communities – Anchorage (9), Girdwood (1), Fairbanks (3), North Pole (1), Juneau (1), and Ketchikan (1). This brings Alaska's total case count to 85.

Nine of today's new cases are male; seven are female. Eight of the new cases are adults, seven are aged 19-29 and one is a child. Nine of the cases are close contacts of previously diagnosed cases, one is travel-related and six are still under investigation.

Alaska public health officials urge anyone with any respiratory illness, regardless of how mild, to stay home for a period of at least 14 days. Travelers arriving from anywhere in the U.S. or elsewhere are now required to self-quarantine at home for the same period of time.

All Alaskans are urged to practice social distancing, stay home as much as possible, avoid crowds, wash hands frequently, and maintain a six foot distance from others. Alaska is continuing to release guidance to keep Alaskans and their families healthy. Find more information at www.coronavirus.alaska.gov.

Stay informed:

- Alaska's Response
 - Find more information about how to keep yourself and your family healthy at the DHSS webpage, coronavirus.alaska.gov
 - Visit the governor's webpage on COVID-19 at gov.alaska.gov/covid19news
 - Visit ready.alaska.gov/covid19 on the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management webpage for Unified Command information, community press releases and other documents.
- [United States response](#): The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention leads the U.S. response.
- [Global response](#): The World Health Organization guides the global response.

This press release covers new cases between March 26 at 3 p.m. and March 27 at 3 p.m. when daily case counts are updated at coronavirus.alaska.gov.

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