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**Department of Health
and Social Services**

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Seventeen new cases of COVID-19 detected; first case in a long-term care facility

March 28, 2020 ANCHORAGE — The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) today announced 17 new positive cases of COVID-19 in six Alaska communities – Anchorage (10), Eagle River (1), Fairbanks (3), North Pole (1), Homer (1) and Soldotna (1).

Ten of the cases are still under investigation. Two cases are known to be travel-related and five are close contacts of previously diagnosed individuals. Five patients are older adults (aged 60+), nine are adults aged 30-59, two are young adults aged 19-29 and one is a child. Seven are male and 10 are female.

This brings Alaska's total case count to 102. Of these total cases, six have been hospitalized; one new hospitalization was added in this most recent 24-hour period.

In Fairbanks, one of the new positive cases is a resident of a long-term care facility. Foundation Health Partners issued a press release today describing the steps the facility is taking in accordance with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the State of Alaska Section of Epidemiology.

"The facility is doing an excellent job of responding swiftly to mitigate the spread of COVID-19," said Dr. Joe McLaughlin, Alaska's State Epidemiologist. "They are working closely with our epidemiologists to determine which residents and staff are at highest risk for exposure and implementing control measures that are consistent with national guidelines."

"Together with experts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the state has developed and published guidelines for long term care providers for this this type of situation," said John Lee, Director of the DHSS Division of Senior and Disabilities Services. "We know how serious COVID-19 infections can be, particularly among older adults. We continue to work with this facility and all providers across the state in mitigating the spread of COVID-19."

Lee is leading a tactical group within the Medical Branch of the Unified Command focused on protecting Alaska's long term care centers, as well as older adults and those with underlying health conditions who are at risk for severe illness from COVID-19. State health officials are also being guided in their response by [a CDC report](#) issued yesterday that analyzes a COVID-19 outbreak in a long-term care skilled nursing facility in King County, Washington.

So far the communities in Alaska that have had laboratory-confirmed cases include Anchorage (including JBER), Eagle River/Chugiak, Girdwood, Homer, Seward, Soldotna, Sterling, Fairbanks, North Pole, Palmer, Ketchikan and Juneau.

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 27 at 3 p.m. and March 28 at 3 p.m. when daily case counts are updated at coronavirus.alaska.gov.

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