



Date: January 22, 2021

To: Acting Mayor Austin Quinn-Davidson

Thru: Heather Harris, Anchorage Health Department Director *HH*

From: Janet Johnston, Anchorage Health Department Epidemiologist *JMJ*

Subject: January 22, 2021, COVID-19 Risk Assessment Update for the Municipality of Anchorage

This weekly report shares data available on the State of Alaska and Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) websites for the period of January 14, 2020 – January 20, 2021, with some more recent data. Unless otherwise indicated, this data is for cases reported in the MOA.

Key Findings

Municipality of Anchorage COVID-19 metric status for the past week:

- **RED LIGHT** for epidemiology
- **YELLOW LIGHT** for health care capacity
- **YELLOW LIGHT** for public health capacity

The average number of new cases has remained relatively stable this week. The current 14-day rolling daily average of 26.02 cases per 100,000 population has dropped again from one week ago (35.9). However, this is still more than 2.5 times the rate of the State of Alaska's level for high alert. There were 41% fewer new cases this week than last week. The effective transmission rate (R_t) in Anchorage has dropped again to approximately 0.85.

Test positivity remains below 5% at 4.2% and looks to be trending downward. Available ICU beds have increased to 12 beds from 9 last week.

Assuming all vaccines administered in Anchorage have been administered to Anchorage residents, then approximately nine percent of the Anchorage population has received one dose of the vaccine, and two percent have received the full series.

Epidemiology

These metrics consider case counts and COVID-19-related hospitalizations and deaths.

Case Count Trends and Deaths

Key Findings: This measure remains **RED** due to the high level of cases at two and a half times the State's high alert level. New cases in Anchorage decreased by 41% over last week for 282 fewer new cases.

- **Cumulative cases.** As of January 20, there are 24,854 confirmed cases in the MOA. This includes 24,424 Anchorage residents in- and out-of-state and 430 nonresidents testing positive in Anchorage.

- Deaths.** There have been 140 Anchorage deaths, 139 among Anchorage residents, and one non-resident. This is 11 more than were reported in the Mayor’s Report last week. Many of these deaths occurred earlier but could not be reported until the death certificate review was complete.

Table 1: Case Count Measures

Cases by Date Reported	January 7 - January 13	January 14 - January 20	Change	Notes
New cases in the last week	694	412	-282	-41%
New non-resident cases	14	11	-3	Three seafood industry, one mining, rest unknown
Average new cases per day, last 7 days	99	59	-40	-41%
Average new cases per day per 100,000, last 14 days	35.9	26.02	-10	SOA high alert level is 10+

COVID/PUI Hospitalization Trends

Key Findings: This measure is **YELLOW**. Hospitalizations are similar to levels seen in August and October. The risk for hospitalization increases significantly with age. Black, Indigenous, and people of color continue to be disproportionately affected by COVID-19. We are watching to see how vaccine distribution affects hospitalizations by age and race.

- Current hospitalizations.** As of January 20, there were 32 hospitalized COVID-19 cases. The number of hospitalized cases ranged from 24 to 43 this week, similar to August and October. As of January 20, there was one hospitalized Persons Under Investigation (PUI). The number of hospitalized PUIs ranged from one to five.
- Age risk.** The age distribution of cases over the past three weeks is similar to the age distribution seen previously. Forty-five percent of cases are between the ages of 20 and 39, while that age group comprises just 32% of the Anchorage population. Table 2 shows the age distribution for new cases reported in the previous three weeks as well as for cumulative cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. Older age groups are overrepresented in hospitalizations and deaths since the start of the pandemic.
- Risk by racial category.** Table 3 shows the prevalence of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths by race. People of color, particularly Alaska Native (AN) and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Island people continue to be overrepresented in cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. Alaska Native people comprised 19% of cases in the last three weeks, while Alaska Native and American Indian people comprise just 8% of the total Anchorage population. White people

comprised 33% of the cases in the last three weeks, which is well below their proportion of the population (62%).

- **Risk by ethnicity.** Table 4 shows the prevalence of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths by ethnicity. Ethnicity data is missing for a majority of the cases (59%). Where ethnicity is known, people who identify as Hispanic make up 13% of cases, compared to 9% of the Anchorage population. There does not appear to be disparities in hospitalizations and deaths based on Hispanic ethnicity at this time.

Data Note: From the beginning of the pandemic, through September 21, 2020, hospitals reported their data through the Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association (ASHNHA) to the CDC. As of September 22, 2020, hospitals report directly to the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) TeleTracking System using a template provided by HHS. With this change, ASHNA no longer provides hospital data; therefore, some of the current data may not be directly comparable to previously reported data.



Table 2: COVID-19 Cases by Age

Age	December 31 - January 6			January 14 - January 20			January 7 - January 13			All Cases Last Three Weeks		
	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*
0 to 9	64	8%	158	28	7%	69	53	8%	130	145	8%	357
10 to 19	69	9%	188	49	12%	133	71	10%	193	189	10%	514
20 to 29	193	24%	430	107	27%	238	154	23%	343	454	24%	1,011
30 to 39	177	22%	390	74	18%	163	138	20%	304	389	21%	858
40 to 49	101	13%	305	51	13%	154	80	12%	241	232	12%	700
50 to 59	107	13%	292	44	11%	120	92	14%	251	243	13%	663
60 to 69	57	7%	199	34	8%	118	63	9%	220	154	8%	537
70 to 79	27	3%	166	8	2%	49	22	3%	136	57	3%	351
80+	6	1%	107	6	1%	107	7	1%	125	19	1%	340
All Cases	801	100%	278	401	100%	139	680	100%	236	1,882	100%	653
* Per 100,000												
Age	All Cases, All Time			Hospitalizations			Deaths			Anchorage Population		
	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Population	Percent	Rate*
0 to 9	1,480	6%	3,643	5	1%	12	-	0%	-	40,630	14%	
10 to 19	2,725	11%	7,405	6	1%	16	-	0%	-	36,798	13%	
20 to 29	5,314	22%	11,839	33	5%	74	2	1%	4	44,884	16%	
30 to 39	4,816	20%	10,617	59	9%	130	1	1%	2	45,361	16%	
40 to 49	3,390	14%	10,224	65	10%	196	6	4%	18	33,156	12%	
50 to 59	3,104	13%	8,467	112	17%	305	12	9%	33	36,662	13%	
60 to 69	2,262	9%	7,881	143	21%	498	27	19%	94	28,701	10%	
70 to 79	932	4%	5,744	156	23%	961	51	37%	314	16,226	6%	
80+	431	2%	7,721	95	14%	1,702	40	29%	717	5,582	2%	
All Cases	24,454	100%	8,491	674	100%	234	139	100%	48	288,000	100%	
* Per 100,000												
Anchorage population source: 2019 1-Year American Community Survey Estimates												

Table 3: COVID-19 Cases by Race

Race	December 31 - January 6			January 7 - January 13			January 14 - January 20			All Cases Last Three Weeks		
	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*
American Indian or Alaska Native	91	18%	356	102	22%	399	49	18%	192	242	19%	947
Asian	23	4%	89	25	5%	96	27	10%	104	75	6%	289
Black or African American	25	5%	164	13	3%	85	13	5%	85	51	4%	335
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	22	4%	274	16	3%	199	12	4%	149	50	4%	622
White	154	30%	85	163	35%	90	93	33%	52	410	33%	227
Other Race	114	22%	1,757	77	17%	1,186	52	19%	801	243	19%	3,744
Two or More Races	87	17%	330	67	14%	254	33	12%	125	187	15%	710
All Cases	516	100%	179	463	100%	161	279	100%	97	1,258	100%	437
* Per 100,000												
Race	All Cases, All Time			Hospitalizations			Deaths			Anchorage Population		
	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Population	Percent	Rate*
American Indian or Alaska Native	3,421	20%	13,386	133	22%	520	41	29%	160	25,556	9%	
Asian	1,165	7%	4,485	1	0%	4	21	15%	81	25,976	9%	
Black or African American	821	5%	5,399	1	0%	7	9	6%	59	15,207	5%	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	942	5%	11,715	105	17%	1,306	16	12%	199	8,041	3%	
White	6,255	36%	3,468	188	31%	104	50	36%	28	180,389	63%	
Other Race	2,825	16%	43,529	33	5%	508	-	0%	-	6,490	2%	
Two or More Races	1,840	11%	6,985	149	24%	566	2	1%	8	26,341	9%	
All Cases	17,269	100%	5,996	610	1	212	139	100%	48	288,000	0%	
* Per 100,000												
Anchorage population source: 2019 1-Year American Community Survey Estimates												

Table 4: COVID-19 Cases by Ethnicity

	December 31 - January 6			January 7 - January 13			January 14 - January 20			All Cases Last Three Weeks		
Ethnicity	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*
Hispanic	24	12%	89	24	11%	89	12	9%	44	60	11%	222
Non-hispanic	181	88%	69	185	89%	71	119	91%	46	485	89%	186
All Cases	205	100%	71	209	100%	73	131	100%	45	545	100%	189
* Per 100,000												
	All Cases, All Time			Hospitalizations			Deaths			Anchorage Population		
Ethnicity	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Cases	Percent	Rate*	Population	Percent	Rate*
Hispanic	1,304	13%	4,831	33	7%	122	9	7%	33	26,992	9%	
Non-hispanic	8,772	87%	3,361	445	93%	170	127	93%	49	261,008	91%	
All Cases	10,076	100%	3,499	478	100%	166	136	100%	47	288,000		
* Per 100,000												
Anchorage population source: 2019 1-Year American Community Survey Estimates												

Health Care Capacity

These metrics measure our ability to provide hospital care in the case of a surge in people sick with COVID-19.

Ability and Capacity to Meet Anticipated Case Surge

Key Findings: This measure is **YELLOW**. The number of available adult ICU beds increased to 12 on January 20. The percent of total hospitalizations due to COVID-19 patients still in their infectious period out of total hospitalizations decreased again to 6.3%. The effective transmission rate (R_t) for Anchorage decreased again to 0.85. Overall, the health care system's capacity is sufficient to meet the current demand in hospitalizations; however, the number of hospitalized patients with COVID-19 keeps us in a cautious position.

- **ICU beds.** As of January 20, there were 12 available adult ICU beds out of 66 total staffed adult ICU beds. The number of available adult ICU beds ranged from a low of 11 to a high of 19 during the past week.
- **Non-ICU beds.** As of January 20, there were 121 available adult non-ICU beds out of 485 total staffed adult non-ICU beds.
- **Ventilators.** As of January 20, there were 7 COVID-19 patients on ventilators in Anchorage.
- **Hospital Impact:** As of January 20, 6.3% of all hospitalizations and 5.4% of Emergency Department (ED) visits at the three acute care hospitals in Anchorage were related to COVID-19. This represents a 30% decrease in the percent of hospitalizations and a 38% decrease in ED visits.
- **Reproductive number estimates.** See Table 4 below. These data were pulled on January 21, 2020. These numbers are reported using a seven-day lag to be consistent with COVID ActNow's policy of reporting the most recent seven days as preliminary due to fluctuations in data for several days after reporting from states.
- **Projected cases.** Projected daily new cases with no mitigation measures in one week is 49 by January 28, 2021. The estimated halving time for new daily COVID-19 cases per day in Anchorage with no mitigation measures is 29.06 days. The daily growth rate has increased slightly to -2.38%.
- **CDC COVID-19 Surge model:** The CDC COVID-19 Surge model has been updated with data through January 20, 2021. Similar to last week, the updated model shows that demand for ICU beds due to COVID-19 will only exceed capacity if the effective reproductive number (R_t) increases from the current value to 1.3, the level seen in July. In that case, demand could exceed supply in approximately ten weeks. If R_t remains below that level, as it has in recent months, demand will not exceed supply.

Table 5: Reproductive Number Estimates

Geography, Source	January 3	January 3 (updated)	January 13
Anchorage, COVID ActNow	0.92	0.91	0.81
Anchorage, SOA model (in-state residents only)	0.94	0.93	0.86
Alaska, COVID ActNow	0.96	0.97	0.86
Alaska, SOA model (in-state residents only)	1	1.02	0.94

Testing Activity

Key Findings: This measure is **GREEN**. The seven-day average for test positivity decreased to 3.68%. Test positivity has been below 5% since January 3 and has been trending downward since then.

This measure reports a seven-day average of tests through January 4, 2021. The State reports test results according to the date when the sample was collected. Therefore, testing numbers for the more recent days are low and increase over time until all test results have been reported. We are changing the time lag for reporting test positivity from four days to seven days to allow for more test results, which will provide a more stable estimate.

Table 6: Percent Positive Measure

Indicator	January 4 (last week)	January 4 (updated)	January 14	Benchmark
Percent positive	4.6%	4.53%	3.68%	<5%: GREEN 5%-10%: YELLOW >10%: RED

Ability and Capacity to Test Widely

Key Findings: This measure is **GREEN**. Testing volume decreased slightly this week but remains well above the White House task force's target level. Average test turnaround times are similar to or faster than last week.

Each week's average daily counts are calculated using a five-day lag to allow for sample processing time. Because some tests take more than five days to process, the average daily counts for more recent weeks will increase as more test results are received.

Table 7: Weekly Test Count Measures

Metric	December 27 - January 2	January 3 - January 9	January 10 - January 16	White House Target (>2,000 per 100,000 population per week)
Total tests in the week	24,378	27,934	22,647	>5,713
Average daily tests Per 100,000	1,219	1,397	1,133	>285

Table 8: Average Turnaround Time Measures

Lab	January 14	January 21	Change
Commercial	1.7	1.6	Decrease
Alaska State Public Health Lab	1.3	1.0	Decrease
Facility	1.0	1.0	Same

Personal Protective Equipment Availability

Key Findings: This measure remains **YELLOW**. The supply chain remains disrupted, with a small number of providers requiring PPE from the EOC. The EOC encourages providers to stay in contact with their normal PPE suppliers as more items become available through the normal supply chain. This light will turn green when supply chain access to PPE returns to normal.

- **Access to PPE.** Most health care and first responders can achieve sufficient PPE, with a limited number requiring support from the EOC this week.
- **Requests.** The EOC continues to receive and fill requests from health care providers within the Municipality. The EOC issued 2,311 items, primarily masks, during the week ending January 15, 2021. These items were provided to four different organizations. This is a decrease in activity from the previous week.

Public Health Capacity

These metrics measure AHD's capacity to track and follow the positive cases and their contacts, ensuring as many people as possible self-isolate or quarantine depending on the situation, and testing symptomatic contacts. AHD is fully transitioned to using the CommCare system for case interviews and contact tracing.

Track and Follow New Cases and Contacts

Key Findings: This measure is **YELLOW**. With decreasing case counts and increased case interview and contact tracing capacity, there has been an improvement in case interview timeliness and outreach to contacts.

- **Positive case outreach.**
 - MOA and State of Alaska (SOA) case interviewers aim to interview or leave a message for each new case within 24 hours of receiving the case assignment; To maximize the effectiveness of case investigations and contact tracing, cases closest to the date of specimen collection are prioritized for interviews, including source investigation for the 5 days prior to specimen collection. Cases are closed if after two unsuccessful outreach attempts.
 - Of the 281 Anchorage cases entered into CommCare with specimen collection dates between January 10, 2021, and January 16, 2021, 267 (92%) completed interviews. Of those cases with a completed interview, 260 (97%) were completed within 5 days of specimen collection.
- **New contacts.** There were 70 contacts newly registered into CommCare between January 13, 2021, and January 19, 2021, who were still awaiting investigation as of the close of business on January 21, 2021. This is a decrease of 40 outstanding contacts from the week before.

Transmission Trends

This section summarizes trends in infection and transmission found in CommCare or through feedback from the AHD COVID-19 response team.

- **Exposure source.** Of the 281 Anchorage cases entered into CommCare with specimen collection dates between January 10, 2021 and January 16, 2020, 131 (47%) specified an exposure type. The most commonly reported exposure types were household (67%), employment (10%), and social events (5%). Of these 281 cases, 241 (86%) provided information about occupation. Occupation was categorized into the pre-specified list, with the largest group falling into the Other category, followed by Unemployed, Student, Retired, and Health Care Worker.
- **At-risk populations.** As of January 20, 2021, 464 cases have been identified within homeless shelters, supportive housing locations, and unsheltered homeless individuals, which is the same as last week's report. The number of hospitalizations remains at 25, while the number of COVID-19 deaths has dropped from six to five due to one death being reclassified as non-COVID after review of the death certificate. Regular screening continues on an ongoing basis at these

locations with confirmed cases, and close contacts are moved into isolation and quarantine as soon as cases are confirmed.

Vaccination

- As of January 21, 2021, 26,933 first COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered within Anchorage, and 5,117 second doses. This is equivalent to 9% and 2% of the population, respectively, although we do not know for certainty that all vaccines administered within Anchorage are administered to Anchorage residents. These numbers may be underestimated as there is often a delay between vaccine administration and reporting to VacTrAK and some vaccines may be administered by providers who do not report to VacTrAK. We encourage all vaccine providers to report vaccine administration to VacTrAK as quickly as possible.
- Vaccination rates vary by age, race, and ethnicity. One-quarter of Alaska Natives/American Indians have been vaccinated. Less than two percent of Black, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander and Hispanics have been vaccinated. See Table 10.

Table 9: Vaccination Rates by Dose

Geography	Dose # 1	Series Completed	Total	Percent of Population with First Dose	Population
Alaska	67,173	14,663	81,836	9.2%	728,903
Anchorage	26,933	5,117	32,050	9.3%	288,970

- [Currently, eligible groups](#) for vaccination include **ALL PERSONS AGE 65 YEARS OR OLDER (Phase 1b Tier 1)** and:

Phase 1A		
Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long term care facility staff and residents Hospital-based frontline health care workers and hospital personnel who are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frontline EMS and Fire Service personnel providing medical services, who are frequently exposed to COVID-19 patients Community Health Aides/Practitioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers in health care settings who meet all of the following criteria: Have direct human patient contact, or have direct contact with infectious

<p>frequently exposed to COVID-19 patients</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health care workers providing vaccinations to identified populations in Phase 1a 	<p>materials from patients, AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide essential services in a hospital, clinic, home, or community-based setting that cannot be offered remotely or performed via telework; AND Provide essential health care service in a health care setting that cannot be postponed without serious negative impact to the patient's health
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- [Next eligible groups](#) for vaccination include those in:

Phase 1B		
Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frontline essential workers aged 50 years and older People living or working in other congregate settings not covered in Phase 1a such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group homes Homeless and domestic violence shelters Transitional living homes Substance misuse and residential facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons aged 55-64 years Frontline essential workers with 2 or more high-risk health conditions All persons aged 16 and older living in "unserved communities" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons aged 50 years and older with 2 or more high-risk health conditions Frontline essential workers not covered in previous tiers

Guidelines for Phases 1c, 2, and 3 are still being developed. Learn more about the process and ways to participate at the Alaska Vaccine Allocation Advisory Committee information [webpage](#).

Table 10: Vaccinations by Race, Ethnicity and Age

Population Group	Population (2019)	% of Pop	COVID Vax #1* (Jan 21)	% of Total Vaxed**	% Vax / SubPop ***
Race					
American Indian / Alaska Native	25,556	8.9%	6,600	36.4%	25.8%
Asian	25,976	9.0%	680	3.7%	2.6%
Black	15,207	5.3%	220	1.2%	1.4%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	8,041	2.8%	44	0.2%	0.5%
White	180,389	62.6%	4,500	24.8%	2.5%
Two or more races	26,341	9.1%	4,100	22.6%	15.6%
Some other race	6,490	2.3%	2,000	11.0%	30.8%
Subtotal race known	288,000	100.0%	18,144	67.3%	N/A
Race unknown	N/A		8,800	32.7%	N/A
Total all vaccinated	288,000	100.0%	26,944	100.0%	0.0%
Ethnicity					
Hispanic	26,992	9.4%	381	2.9%	1.4%
Non Hispanic	261,008	90.6%	12,900	97.1%	4.9%
Ethnicity unknown	N/A		8,500		
Total all vaccinated****	288,000	100.0%	21,781	100.0%	0.0%
Age					
0 to 9	40,630	14.1%	-	0.0%	0.0%
10 to 19	36,798	12.8%	252	1.4%	0.7%
20 to 29	44,884	15.6%	2,500	13.8%	5.6%
30 to 39	45,361	15.8%	4,100	22.6%	9.0%
40 to 49	33,156	11.5%	3,600	19.8%	10.9%
50 to 59	36,662	12.7%	3,900	21.5%	10.6%
60 to 69	28,701	10.0%	5,900	32.5%	20.6%
70 to 79	16,226	5.6%	4,900	27.0%	30.2%
80+	5,582	1.9%	1,800	9.9%	32.2%
Total all vaccinated	288,000	100.0%	26,952	100.0%	9.4%

* Only used dose #1 data, complete dose numbers significantly smaller & most still scheduled for future 2nd dose.

** Only compared total for those where race is reported. This is only 67.3% of total records.

*** Proportion of vaccinated to total population, by race, ethnicity, or age: "What share of each population received a dose?"

****The total vaccinated varied by cross tab.

General notes

When calculating percentages for vaccination data, left off "unknown race" and "other."

Vaccination numbers are current as of the timestamp in source data below.

Dashboard numbers round to the nearest hundred if 4+ digits, not exact, unfortunately.

Sources

2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate

Alaska COVID Vaccine Monitoring Dashboard, filtered to Anchorage, accessed 1.21.21

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/op dashboard/index.html#/84691dc5b0184827af0fd8e4c20034d9>

Public Health Messages

To prevent unneeded serious illness and deaths, AHD urges everyone to do the following:

- **Stay home** if you feel sick, except to [get tested](#).
- **Wear a mask and stay at least 6 feet from others** in public.
- **Avoid crowds.** Keep gatherings small and outside as much as possible.

Testing identifies COVID-19 cases and helps reduce disease transmission.

- Individuals should get tested immediately at the first sign of any symptoms. Tests work best when obtained promptly after symptoms start. Testing early helps people know if they are positive quickly and helps prompt them to take immediate precautions to minimize the risk of transmitting the virus to others.
- More than half of COVID-19 transmission originates from asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic cases. CDC guidelines recommend regular testing for critical infrastructure workers and other groups at higher risk for COVID-19, even if they are asymptomatic. Anchorage has robust free testing available, and we encourage restaurant and grocery store workers, school staff, first responders, and healthcare workers to get tested weekly. We also encourage people who have attended large gatherings to get tested about a week after the gathering, or sooner if symptoms develop.
- Testing is required when returning to Alaska from out-of-state travel, and a second test is strongly encouraged approximately one week after returning to the state. **This two-test strategy will help us identify and contain new, more transmissible COVID-19 variants.**