

CORONAVIRUS – COVID19

YKHC OFFICIAL ADVISORY — January 5, 2022

Community Advisory Update

*Separate guidance for schools is included in the YKHC Recommendation for Schools. YKHC guidance for safe-in person learning at schools may differ based on variables specific to the school setting. The most updated recommendations for schools are posted on YKHC's website at: <https://www.ykhc.org/covid-19/resources/>

The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta's vulnerability to COVID-19 is significantly higher than many places in the state due to transportation challenges, limited healthcare infrastructure, limited access to running water and sewer, and multi-generational housing.

While vaccination remains our strongest tool for protecting people from getting seriously ill or becoming hospitalized with COVID-19, YKHC recommends communities continue to implement protective measures that help to reduce the transmission of COVID-19.

YKHC has put the following framework together to help identify **when** to implement these mitigation activities based on the availability of vaccines, stakeholder feedback, and recommendations from the State, and the CDC. Regardless of a sub-region's particular risk level, YKHC urges all individuals to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and to continue practicing certain protective health recommendations at all times as identified below.

Assessing community risk level of COVID-19 transmission: The CDC and YKHC use two primary measures to assess, or calculate, the risk of transmission in a particular area:

1. the total number of new cases over the past 7 days
2. the percentage of positive tests, over the past 7 days.

YKHC's recommendations also incorporate additional factors based on feedback from stakeholders.

The following table is a tool that can be used to determine the five Sub-Regional Clinic Service areas current risk level. The remaining villages fall into the Bethel area.

Indicator (As measured over the past 7 days)		Low Transmission Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
Number of positive cases	Aniak Sub-Region	0	1	2	≥3
	Bethel Sub-Region	1	2-7	8-13	≥14
	Emmonak Sub-Region	0	1	2	≥3
	Hooper Bay Sub-Region	0	1	2	≥3
	St. Mary's Sub-Region	0	1	2	≥3
	Toksook Bay Sub-Region	0	1	2	≥3
Percentage of positive tests		<3%	3.0-3.9%	4.0%-4.9%	≥5%
Percentage of eligible population that has been vaccinated		≥50%	30%-50%	10%-30%	<10%
Contact Tracing of Local Cases Linked to Travel: Each individual community should go two weeks without any cases that are not clearly linked to travel. This period reflects one full disease cycle, and helps ensure the virus has not spread in the community.					

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Guidance for Both Vaccinated and Unvaccinated People

Whether or not certain activities can be performed safely depends on three factors: (1) if a person is vaccinated and boosted, (2) the transmission rate of COVID-19 in the community, and (3) the size and location of the gathering. Small gatherings are safer than large gatherings (typically comprised of greater than 10 people). Outdoor activities are safer than indoor activities.

If a community is experiencing high or substantial transmission, YKHC recommends the immediate implementation of strategies that reduce the spread of COVID-19, including but not limited to: universal masking, avoiding or rescheduling large gatherings, social distancing, and expanded testing.

Testing:

Testing may be utilized in a variety of situations such as:

- If you have COVID-19 symptoms
- If you have been exposed or potentially exposed to an individual with COVID-19.
- Before and after gathering indoors with others.
- Before travel or high-risk activities like attending large gatherings or participating in contact sports
- 5 days after travel or high-risk activities

Testing can give you information about the risk of spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. This is especially important when in contact with unvaccinated children, older individuals, those who are immunocompromised, or individuals at risk of severe disease.

A positive test result indicates that you likely have a current infection, and you should isolate and inform close contacts.

A negative test result indicates that you may not be infected and may be at low risk of spreading disease to others, but it does not rule out an infection. Performing serial tests, meaning two or more tests over several days with at least 24 hours between tests improves the reliability of testing and reduces your risk of transmitting disease to others even further. Some self-tests require this type of repeat testing in the manufacturer's instructions.

Isolating After a Positive Test

Isolation is used to separate people with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 from those without COVID-19. People who are confirmed to have COVID-19 or are showing symptoms of COVID-19 need to isolate regardless of their vaccination status. This includes:

- People who have a [positive viral test](#) for COVID-19, regardless of whether or not they have [symptoms](#).
- People with [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, including people who are awaiting test results or have not been tested. People with symptoms should isolate even if they do not know if they have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19.

People who are in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others, typically 10 days. At home, anyone sick or infected should separate from others, or wear a **well-fitting mask** when they need to be around others. Avoid people who are **immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease**, and nursing homes and other high-risk settings. People in isolation should stay in a specific "sick room" or area and use a separate bathroom if available.

Isolation can be discontinued after day 5 with a negative Antigen test (BinaxNow, Quickvue, SOFIA, etc.) if symptoms are resolving and fever has resolved for at least 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications). If isolation is ended after 5 days, a well-fitting mask should be worn when around others both at home and in public for an additional 5 days.

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If you do not have a negative antigen test, are unable to wear a mask when around others, continue to have fever, or your other symptoms have not improved, you should continue to isolate for a full 10 days or until the above conditions are met.

Quarantine After Contact with Someone with COVID-19-

Anyone who develops symptoms within 14 days of an exposure (regardless of vaccination status) should immediately self-isolate and seek testing. Local communities may decide to continue a 14-day quarantine for residents. Local travel or quarantine restrictions must still be followed. All persons should check with their local government and employer for further guidance. YKHC has the following quarantine recommendations:

If you:

- HAVE NOT been boosted; OR
- HAVE NOT completed the primary series of Pfizer within the last 5 months; OR
- HAVE NOT completed the primary series of Moderna within the last 5 months; OR
- HAVE NOT completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months

You should quarantine at home and away from other people for 10 days after your *last contact with a person who has COVID-19*. Quarantine can end after day 5 with a negative COVID-19 test. The test should be performed on the last day of quarantine.

The date of your exposure is considered day 0. Individuals with ongoing contact, such as people living with household members who are COVID-19 positive are exposed every day until that person is cleared from isolation. Every day you are exposed, you must restart at 0.

If you live with someone who is positive for COVID-19 are asymptomatic AND you HAVE

- Been boosted; OR
- Completed the primary series of Pfizer within the last 5 months; OR
- Completed the primary series of Moderna within the last 5 months; OR
- Completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months

YKHC recommends you quarantine for the same length of time the person who tested positive is in isolation. COVID-19 testing should occur on Day 1, followed by repeat testing on Day 5, and the end of quarantine.

Continue to wear a well-fitting mask when around others at home and in public, and monitor for symptoms like fever, cough, shortness of breath for 10 days after your last close contact with someone with COVID-19. You should also stay away from places you would remove a mask like restaurants and gyms, avoid eating around others, and avoid close contact with people at a high risk for severe COVID-19 infection during this time. If you test positive or develop COVID-19 symptoms, isolate from other people and follow recommendations in the *Isolation* section above.

If you DO NOT live with someone who is positive for COVID-19 AND are asymptomatic AND you HAVE

- Been boosted; OR
- Completed the primary series of Pfizer within the last 5 months; OR
- Completed the primary series of Moderna within the last 5 months; OR
- Completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months

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You should wear a **well-fitting mask** around others. **Get tested** at least 5 days after you last had close contact with someone with COVID-19 (the date of last close contact is considered day 0). If you do not develop symptoms and your test is negative you can leave isolation.

Continue to wear a well-fitting mask when around others at home and in public, and monitor for symptoms like fever, cough, shortness of breath for 10 days after your last close contact with someone with COVID-19. You should also stay away from places you would remove a mask like restaurants and gyms, avoid eating around others, and avoid close contact with people at a high risk for severe COVID-19 infection during this time. If you test positive or develop COVID-19 symptoms, isolate from other people and follow recommendations in the **Isolation** section above.

Have questions?

If you would like additional guidance for yourself or your community, please reach out to YKHC.