



# Valdez COVID-19 Unified Command

## NEWS RELEASE # 058 Valdez Weekly Summary

For immediate release: 01/08/2021, 6:30 p.m.

**Valdez, AK** – Valdez COVID-19 Unified Command provides the following local weekly summary covering developments over the last seven days.

### **Valdez Case Count Updates & Trends**

As of midnight on Jan. 7, Valdez has zero active resident cases and zero active non-resident cases. Since the time of our last weekly summary on Dec. 31, the community of Valdez received notification of zero new cases of COVID-19.

Please continue to work together to protect our community and our healthcare system. Please remain extra cautious and make thoughtful decisions as you go about your day. Please continue to wear a mask which covers your mouth and nose when you are around anyone outside of your household, even if you are outdoors or can maintain six feet of physical distance. Continue to keep your social circle small and consistent. Try to limit your time traveling outside Valdez to only that which is necessary.

### **COVID-19 Vaccine Update**

COVID-19 vaccine is allocated in Valdez based upon state and federal guidelines. Local officials do not make allocation decisions. Valdez Unified Command's Vaccine Task Force, comprised of members of the local medical community, public health, city staff, Valdez Native Tribe representatives, and others, work together to determine logistics for vaccine distribution based upon state/federal allocation guidelines.

The following people are currently eligible for vaccine in Valdez under state guidelines:

- **Phase 1A – Tiers 1, 2, & 3:** Healthcare/medical workers and long term care residents.
- **Phase 1B – Tier 1:** Alaskan elders age 65 and older.

The local distribution process used for eligible groups consists of several closed point of dispensing (POD) clinics, similar to what is practiced each fall in Valdez. Appointments for COVID-19 closed PODs are required to verify eligibility, ensure equity of distribution, and provide time for the standard 15 to 30 minute post-vaccination observation period.

Two Valdez options exist to make appointments for those eligible under Phase 1A and Phase 1B – Tier 1:

- **Preferred Option:** Make a vaccination appointment online (<http://covidvax.alaska.gov>). Please note, the Valdez online scheduling button will only be shown when appointment slots are available. Check back often as new appointment options will be added regularly.
- **Alternate Options:** If you do not have internet access or need help with scheduling online, you can also make a vaccination appointment by calling the DHSS Valdez Public Health Clinic at 907.835.4612.

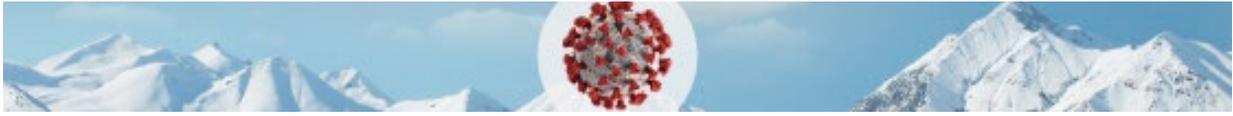
No additional information is available regarding the timeline for vaccine distribution for future tiers of Phase 1B. No sign-up or future vaccine reservation option is available for anyone except those currently eligible.

As of Jan. 7, the following cumulative number of state allocated COVID-19 vaccinations have been administered in Valdez:

- **Pfizer-BioNTech:** 114 first doses and 55 second doses.
- **Moderna:** 100 first doses.

To view the weekly local vaccine dashboard and additional information on Valdez vaccine distribution, visit <http://www.valdezak.gov/595/Valdez-COVID-19-Vaccine-Updates>

Those interested in volunteering for upcoming vaccine distribution efforts should contact the Valdez Unified Command volunteer coordinator, Rhea Cragun, at 907.843.3416 or [rcragun@valdezak.gov](mailto:rcragun@valdezak.gov). All skill levels are welcome, including people to help with patient registration, clinic logistics, and vaccine administration.



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Please note, Alaska's distribution process and specific phases/tiers do not include military service members or Valdez Native Tribe members. They will be vaccinated through a direct federal or Indian Health Service allocation. Timing of eligibility under the direct federal or Indian Health Service allocations may differ from timing of eligibility under the state's phases/tiers. Valdez Native Tribe members should call the VNT office at 907.835.4951 for assistance scheduling appointments.

### **Valdez Testing Options**

Please stay home and get tested if you have even one mild symptom of COVID-19. If you think you may have been exposed to the virus, please reach out to the Valdez Public Health Nurse (835-4612) or your medical provider for guidance on next steps.

Multiple options exist for both symptomatic and asymptomatic testing in Valdez. All local testing options are by appointment only and at no out-of-pocket cost to the patient. Please visit the Valdez Unified Command website to learn more: <http://www.valdezak.gov/COVID-19>.

### **Valdez Economic Relief & Recovery**

In addition to mitigating the health impacts of COVID-19 in Valdez, our community has been working diligently to address the economic impacts from the pandemic felt by residents, businesses, and non-profit organizations.

The City of Valdez split local economic relief and recovery efforts into three phases, consisting of immediate emergency assistance thru waivers of fees and penalties, direct assistance thru the May 2020 distribution of approximately \$3M in relief funds to Valdez businesses and residents, and the ongoing Economic Recovery Initiative.

The first Economic Recovery Initiative programs rolled out to the community in Dec. 2020 and early Jan. 2021.

- **Valdez COVID-19 Business Economic Recovery Grant Program.** Provides financial recovery assistance to Valdez businesses negatively impacted by COVID-19. Businesses with active Valdez and state of Alaska business registrations in 2020 and 2021, as well as certain commercial fishing operators, are eligible for the program. Grant award amounts will be determined by established program criteria, up to \$10,000 per business. Grant applications are available on the city website or at City Hall and due no later than 5:00 p.m. on Feb. 12.
- **Considerations for Event Organizers and COVID-19 Mitigation Plans Guide.** The guide provides detailed considerations to assist in planning safe, COVID conscious events in our community. Mitigation plan review and assistance is available at no cost to event organizers. Download the guide on the city website or request a paper copy from the city events coordinator by emailing [events@valdezak.gov](mailto:events@valdezak.gov) or calling 907.834.3404.
- **Valdez Advertising & Marketing Matching Grant Program.** Provides a matching grant up to \$5,000 to assist local tourism-related small businesses market their company and our community to visitors. A wide variety of advertising efforts are eligible under the program. If you are unsure if you qualify for the grant, please email [mbarberio@valdezak.gov](mailto:mbarberio@valdezak.gov) for guidance. Grant applications are available on the city website or at City Hall and due no later than 5:00 p.m. on Jan. 15.

To learn more about the City Economic Relief & Recovery Initiative and download applications for the current Valdez Economic Recovery programs, visit: <http://www.valdezak.gov/557/Valdez-COVID-19-Economic-Relief-Recovery>. Please check the website regularly for announcements on additional Economic Recovery Initiative programs coming soon.

### **For More Information**

The Valdez Unified Command remains committed to providing information, support, and resources for our community. For the most up-to-date local information, please continue to monitor the Valdez Unified Command website ([www.valdezak.gov/COVID-19](http://www.valdezak.gov/COVID-19)) and Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/ValdezUCRG](http://www.facebook.com/ValdezUCRG)).

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