



Coronavirus Disease 2019

About COVID-19

- > [COVID-19 Homepage](#)
- > [COVID-19 Testing](#)
- > [Case Counts](#)
- > [Media & Communications](#)

What to do

- > [If you are sick](#)
- > [If you may have been exposed](#)
- > [Precautions for high risk groups](#)
- > [Wash your hands](#)
- > [Stay home, save lives](#)
- > [Social distancing](#)
- > [Keep your social circle small](#)
- > [Cloth face coverings](#)
- > [Coping with stress](#)
- > [Child and family well-being](#)

Resources

- > [General Public](#)
- > [Health Care Professionals](#)
- > [Public Health](#)
- > [Specific Groups](#)
- > [Multi-lingual Resources](#)

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- > [DHSS Press Releases](#)

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Alaska COVID-19 Alert Levels

As part of the plan to reopen long-term care facilities to visitors, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) has defined three levels of community transmission. These alert levels complement additional considerations, listed below, that a facility or healthcare system could incorporate into its decision making process. Please note that policies dictated by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services or the State of Alaska may establish a minimum standard visitor policy, but facilities may elect to take a more conservative approach.

The levels are based on per capita incidence. Specifically, DHSS calculates the number of new cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 residents per day averaged over the past 14 days in each region.

ALERT LEVEL	Average daily incidence over the past 14 days	Interpretation
HIGH	>10 cases per 100,000 population	Widespread community transmission with many undetected cases and frequent discrete outbreaks
INTERMEDIATE	5-10 cases per 100,000 population	Moderate community transmission with some undetected cases and infrequent discrete outbreaks
LOW	<5 cases per 100,000 population	Minimal community transmission

Note: Alaska-specific rates by region are available on the DHSS COVID-19 dashboard in the summary tables (table 2c).

How accurate is this system at detecting the risk of transmission?

The average daily per capita incidence is useful because it is the single measure that most directly reflects transmission in a community; however, no one measure can fully capture the complex dynamics of the COVID-19 epidemic in Alaska. For example, other factors that may be considered include the extent to which cases occurring in the community represent community transmission (i.e., the source for the person's infection is not clearly identified), the percentage of tests that are positive in the community, and whether the trajectory of COVID-19 in Alaska is increasing or decreasing.

Additional limitations

- > COVID incidence levels will likely differ somewhat between communities within a given region.