



## HAINES BOROUGH, ALASKA

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Haines Borough emergency disaster declaration and mitigation steps regarding COVID-19**

*Haines, Alaska, March 17, 2020* – The Haines Borough (“Borough”) is working diligently to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the community. The Emergency Operations Center has been meeting daily to update response protocols with the latest information from the CDC, State of Alaska and local health officials. The EOC team will continue to meet daily or as often as the situation warrants. The Borough will continue to provide daily updates no later than 3 pm and more often throughout the day if information significantly changes. All announcements will be posted on the Haines Borough website, Haines Borough Facebook page, posted on NIXEL and announced on KHNS-FM.

On Tuesday, March 17, Haines Borough Mayor Jan Hill declared an emergency in the Haines Borough as allowed under HBC 2.16.010 and AS 26.23.140. This declaration may be approved by the assembly at its regular scheduled meeting on March 24, 2020. We are doing this because a local disaster declaration allows the Borough to activate all applicable local or interjurisdictional disaster emergency plans and authorize the furnishing of aid and assistance under those plans. Several other neighboring communities in also issued local emergency declarations, including Skagway and Sitka.

In light of the local emergency declaration, we ask that everyone in the Haines Borough follow these guidelines until further notice:

- If you are aware of people planning to visit Haines in the next two weeks, please let them know the Borough recommends they postpone their travel to our community. This does not apply to people whose primary, year-round residence is Haines.
- When returning to Haines and if you traveled overseas or through Seattle or Vancouver, or are driving up from the Lower 48, we ask individuals to self-quarantine for 14 days.
- Please cancel all non-essential meetings or gatherings or hold them via teleconference until further notice.
- Practice social distancing at all times and in all public and private venues.
- Follow all [existing CDC protocols](#).

Please note that the Borough is taking the following actions in addition to current protocols:

- All borough buildings are closed to the public beginning March 17 including the pool, library, museum, Mosquito Lake School Community Center, Chilkat Center (except for KHNS operations), visitor center and others. The borough administration offices are closed to in-person visits; administration staff, police, fire and EMS will respond to phone calls and emails. Please use our drop box at the administration building for payments and applications.
- Arrangements for the regularly scheduled March 24 Assembly meeting will be announced in coming days.

These actions are being taken to protect the health of every Haines resident. COVID-19 carriers in their 20s rarely show symptoms, which puts our senior population at high risk. We recommend that everyone over 60 years of age be extra diligent when it comes to following social distancing protocols, especially in common areas like the bank, post office, airport, and ferry terminal. Seniors who need assistance with food delivery may contact the Senior Center at 766-2383.

There is no reason to believe supply chains to Haines will be disrupted. We do not expect any interruption to the delivery of food, fuel, mail and other goods to the community at this time. Please do not buy excessive food or supplies. Consider placing special orders with stores if you wish to acquire a specific quantity of a product.

Thank you to all Haines businesses who are proactively addressing COVID-19 risks by offering curbside pickup, home delivery, or closing entirely. Thank you for working together as a community during this stressful time.

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