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Governor Michael J. Dunleavy
STATE OF ALASKA

AMENDED COVID-19 HEALTH MANDATE

Revised: April 7, 2020

By: Governor Mike Dunleavy
Commissioner Adam Crum, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services
Dr. Anne Zink, Chief Medical Officer, State of Alaska

The Public Health Disaster Emergency Declaration signed by Governor Mike Dunleavy on March 11, 2020 provides for health mandates to be issued when deemed necessary by the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, the Alaska Chief Medical Officer, the Alaska Division of Public Health, and the Office of the Governor.

COVID-19 Health Mandate 005, issued on March 19, 2020, required patients, providers, hospitals, and surgical centers to postpone or cancel non-urgent or elective procedures in order help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and thereby decrease the overall impact on the Alaska health care structure, and also to preserve personal protective equipment.

Following ongoing guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that healthcare facilities and clinicians should prioritize urgent and emergency visits and procedures now, the State of Alaska is clarifying non-urgent or elective procedures that are to be postponed or canceled under COVID-19 Health Mandate 005. **These actions can preserve staff personal protective equipment (PPE) and patient care supplies; ensure staff and patient safety; and expand available hospital capacity.**

COVID-19 Health Mandate 005 is revised by adding Attachment C – Non-Urgent or Elective Procedures and Surgeries. This revised Mandate 5.1 supersedes the version issued on March 19, 2020.

Mandate 5.1 – Elective Procedures
All patients, providers, hospitals, and surgical centers are **required to postpone or cancel all non-urgent or elective procedures until June 15, 2020** to decrease the overall impact on the Alaska health care structure and preserve personal protective equipment. This would include pre-scheduled surgeries deemed non-essential. This mandate does not apply to surgical cases coming through the emergency room or for an existing hospitalized patient.

The terms "non-urgent or elective" include, but are not limited to, the procedures described on Attachment C – "Non-Urgent or Elective Procedures". To the extent that the terms "non-urgent or elective" are not fully defined, the state directs each medical office, clinic, surgical center, and hospital create a physician task force that will evaluate all proposed procedures and surgeries on a case-by-case basis to determine if they are non-urgent and elective or can be deferred, and the physician task force will make a determination on all borderline procedures or surgeries for each patient.

This action is taken with the guidance from U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams and the American College of Surgeons: www.facs.org/about-acs/covid-19/information-for-surgeons and www.facs.org/about-acs/covid- 19/information-for-surgeons/triage.

Following guidance from CDC, all routine dental and eye care visits are required to be postponed.

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhealthcare-facilities%2Findex.html

Given Alaska's distances and limited health care capacity, it is especially important to open acute health care beds for anticipated COVID-19 care and conserve personal protective equipment. The State of Alaska believes that delaying non-emergent procedures is a protective measure both for patients and the health care workforce and will better prepare us for the anticipated impact COVID-19 will have on our health care system.

We appreciate the public's understanding of this mandate in an effort to mitigate the impacts of this virus.