

# FAQ's about Interstate traveling to Gustavus

## **What should I do before I travel to Gustavus?**

Advance planning is the best way to ensure a successful trip. There are a few key steps you can take to protect yourself prior to arrival:

1. Get a PCR test 72 hours prior to travel and provide proof of the negative test result with your Declaration Form.
2. Read the educational materials provided with the Traveler Declaration Form <https://covid19.alaska.gov/travelers/>
3. Protect your trip from unforeseen expenses by having medical and travel insurance.
4. Limit interactions in public to avoid exposure and maximize protective precautions (such as mask wearing) prior to your planned travel.
5. Have a plan in place if you get sick while in Alaska. If you test positive when you get here, or if you sit nearby someone who tests positive you will need to be put into a 14 day quarantine, and you will be unable to travel until you are cleared by health officials. If you are asymptomatic, you will need to wait at least 10 days since your last positive result, or have two negative tests 24 hours apart, according to CDC guidelines. The duration of quarantine is 14 days since the last close contact to a confirmed case.

Set up what you can before travel, such as getting your fishing license, groceries etc.

## **I am a Gustavus resident and need to take a short trip out of State. What do I have to do?**

Alaskans who travel outside the state for trips of five days or less:

- Do not need to test in Alaska before leaving; and
- Do not need to pre-test in the other state before returning home.

They do need to quarantine upon return to Alaska for 14 days or until a negative test result is received in Alaska (to be followed by a second test 7-14 days after arrival).

If you are an Alaska resident travelling out of state and your trip is six days or more, you should follow the procedures outlined for travelers visiting the state.

Please remember that each state and locality may have different travel restrictions, so please check before leaving Alaska so that you are prepared.

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## **What happens if I must pass through Canada to get to Gustavus?**

If you are in an Alaskan community but you have to drive through Canada to get to another Alaskan community on the road system, you do not have to quarantine IF:

- You take the most direct route; and
- Your interactions are limited to border and customs officials.

If you stop in Canada for any extended period, you will be subject to Mandate 10 requirements to quarantine upon arrival in Alaska. Check for the latest Canadian and provincial government requirements before you plan your trip. At this time, the border is closed except for exempted travel, which you will need to prove. Campgrounds and many amenities are closed on the Alaskan Highway, and there is a limit to how long you can be in the Yukon Territory when passing through.

## **What does quarantine mean?**

When you are under quarantine, you must:

1. Proceed directly to your designated quarantine location. Remain in your designated quarantine location for a period of 14 days, or the duration of your stay in Alaska, whichever is shorter.
  - You may leave your designated quarantine location only for medical emergencies or to seek necessary medical care.
  - Do not visit any public spaces, including, but not limited to: both the City-owned float and harbor, Post Office, Salmon River Park, Fireweed coffee shop, Toshco or Snug Harbor stores, etc.
  - Do not allow visitors in of your designated quarantine location other than a physician, healthcare provider, or individual authorized to enter the designated quarantine location by DHSS Unified Command.
2. Comply with all rules or protocols related to your quarantine as set forth by your hotel or rented lodging.

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## **What does “minimize interactions” mean?**

When a person has a negative test result, it provides value as a measure from a single point in time. That's why travelers with a single test result do not have to go into quarantine. However, that single test doesn't account for possible exposure just before or after the test (for example, if you test before you travel, you could be exposed to another traveler who is carrying the virus).

Individuals are expected to get pre-tested, and with that negative test result they are asked to minimize their public interactions until they've received a second negative test result or 14 days have passed. Minimizing interactions does not mean quarantine, but you do need to take more precautions than the usual COVID safety advice.

Wear a face covering if you go into public areas. Use the drive-thru at the Fireweed, order and pick up your food from the Clove Hitch, email/call and pick-up your items from Toshco and Snug Harbor Liquor. Postpone attending gatherings or interacting with people until after this window is over. Call businesses ahead of time and ask what their most current policies are before visiting.

## **Am I required to complete a second test, or it optional? What does the voucher mean?**

Receiving a voucher does not necessarily mean you are required to use it – the voucher is provided to offset the cost of a test if not covered by insurance. To use the voucher, go back to the airport screening location between 5:00pm and 5:30pm.

However, you might be required to complete a second test depending on which travel category you fall under. Unless you have completed a 14-day quarantine, you are required to take a second test within 7-14 days of arrival if:

- You took your first test within 72 hours or 5 days before departure; or
- You took your first test after you arrived in Alaska.

## **What happens if I am processed through another port of entry prior to arrival in Gustavus and want do follow-up testing?**

If you received a voucher from another point of entry, proceed to the Gustavus airport screening location between 5:00pm and 5:30pm for testing and minimize interactions until you receive your test results. You must email your results back to the State at [traveler@alaska.gov](mailto:traveler@alaska.gov) or fax them to 907-269-7952.

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## **How long will it take to get the test results? What do I do with my results?**

All tests that are taken Monday through Friday at the Gustavus Airport screening location are sent off the next morning. Tests that are taken on Saturday and Sunday are sent out Monday morning on Alaska Seaplanes. Alaska Airlines currently doesn't accept cargo, and Alaska Seaplanes currently is not flying on Sundays.

Test are currently being sent to the SEARHC Lab in Sitka for processing. Test results can take 3-5 days. If you take an initial test at the airport you are to quarantine until your results come back.

You must email your results back to the State at [traveler@alaska.gov](mailto:traveler@alaska.gov) or fax them to 907-269-7952.

## **Will the State of Alaska or the City of Gustavus provide me housing if I become exposed to COVID-19 on the airplane or after I arrive in Alaska and need to be placed in quarantine for 14 days?**

No. Each traveler will be responsible for their own expenses while in quarantine, which lasts 14 days after the most recent exposure took place. This includes the cost of food and lodging.

## **Where can I quarantine while I wait for results, or during my 14-day quarantine?**

You may quarantine in any lodging where you can physically separate yourself from other individuals for the length of quarantine at your own expense. This includes hotels, lodges, cabins, or residences where you have space separate from the other people in the residence.

Remember that while under quarantine, you cannot have contact with anyone other than medical providers in cases of medical necessity.

## **What happens if I test positive after arriving in Gustavus?**

You will be notified by the State of Alaska Public Health Nurses Office. You will be required to isolate at your own expense for 14 days, or until you are cleared by a public health nurse after receiving a subsequent negative test. You will not be able to fly unless cleared by public health.

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## **If a business or individual isn't following Mandate 10, who should I report this to? What happens to someone who doesn't follow this mandate?**

Violations may be reported to [investigations@alaska.gov](mailto:investigations@alaska.gov). DHSS will treat the sender's identity as confidential information and protect it to the maximum extent state and federal law permit.

Failure to follow Mandate 10 is punishable by a fine of up to \$25,000, or imprisonment of not more than one year, or both pursuant to Alaska Statute 12.55.035 and Alaska Statute 12.55.135.

## **What will be done with the traveler declaration forms? Are they public record?**

All forms will be collected and provided to Alaska Department of Health and Social Services staff in all locations and will be secured and stored with DHSS. They will not be given to municipalities (City of Gustavus) or to any local, state or federal law enforcement agencies. As soon as they are faxed to DHSS, the Fire Chief shreds them according to the DHSS contract.

If in the future a misdemeanor criminal investigation is ongoing, law enforcement will request specific documentation (evidence) from the department, which will be processed in the customary way documentation is provided during criminal investigations, ensuring protocols for chain of custody are applied.

## **We are still waiting on guidance from the State on ferries, boats, and private planes.**

All questions and answers were taken from the State of Alaska DHSS FAQ's page. <https://covid19.alaska.gov/faq/>