



Date: July 23, 2021

To: Assembly Health Policy Committee

Thru: David Morgan, Anchorage Health Department Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "DM", is positioned to the right of the "Thru:" line.

From: Dr. Janet Johnston, Anchorage Health Department Epidemiologist

Subject: July 23, 2021, COVID-19 Risk Assessment Update for the Municipality of Anchorage

This weekly report shares data available on the State of Alaska (SOA) and Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) websites for the period July 14, 2021 – July 20, 2021, as well as some older data as noted. Unless otherwise indicated, this data is for cases reported in the MOA.

Cases, Hospitalizations, Deaths, and Clusters

- **Daily new cases.** The current 14-day rolling daily average of 20.1 cases per 100,000 residents is an 81% increase over last week. The 14-day average for new daily cases has not been this high since April, and this is the fifth week in a row that this 14-day average has increased.
- **New cases this week.** There were 531 new resident cases this week, which is an 88% increase over the 283 new resident cases reported last week.
- **Risk by vaccination status.** With approximately 58% of eligible residents age 12 and older and 60% of residents age 16 and older having completed a COVID-19 vaccines series, Anchorage comprises two subpopulations with very different COVID-19 risk profiles. Unvaccinated individuals currently experience a risk for COVID-19 infection equivalent to an average daily new case count of approximately 32.9 per 100,000 residents, while their vaccinated counterparts experience a risk equivalent to 6.6 per 100,000.
- **Age and race distribution:** Age and race breakdowns are provided in the first report of each month.
- **Cumulative cases.** As of July 20, there are 32,258 confirmed cases in the MOA. This includes 31,579 Anchorage residents in- and out-of-state and 679 nonresidents testing positive in Anchorage.
- **Current hospitalizations.** As of July 19, there are 49 hospitalized COVID-19 cases. The number of hospitalized cases ranged between 40 and 49 this week. The number of hospitalized COVID-19 patients has been trending steadily upward since hitting a low of six on June 26. The last time there were more than 40 hospitalized COVID-19 patients was January.
- **Deaths.** There have been 184 Anchorage deaths, 182 among Anchorage residents, and two among nonresidents. No additional resident deaths have been reported since last week. The State of Alaska Health Analytics and Vital Records (HAVRS) system is currently inaccessible which impacts our ability to identify some COVID-19 deaths.

- **Clusters.** There were 13 Anchorage cases opened in CommCare during the past week, July 14 through July 20, identified as part of a cluster. Four were associated with a community service organization, three with a skilled nursing facility, three with a day care facility, two with a retail store, and one with a residential medical facility.

Health Care Capacity

- **ICU beds.** On average, between July 13 and July 19, 17.0% of staffed adult ICU beds at the three acute care hospitals in Anchorage were available. This is similar to adult ICU bed availability over the past six weeks. Between July 13 and July 19, the number of staffed adult ICU beds ranged from 67 to 70, and the number of available staffed adult ICU beds ranged from 10 to 13.

Infection Rate

- The consensus R_t of 1.35 is higher than last week’s consensus estimate of 1.25. R_t above one indicates that the virus is continuing to spread. See Table 1.
- The SOA model has estimated R_t to be above 1.25 for the past four weeks, slightly higher than the sustained R_t Anchorage experienced last fall when cases increased from a 14-day rolling daily average of 14 per 100,000 residents in September to 117 per 100,000 in November.

Table 1: Reproductive Number Estimates

Geography, Source	July 7	July 7 (updated)	July 14
Anchorage, COVID ActNow	1.33	1.31	1.36
Anchorage, SOA model, (in-state residents only)	1.23	1.33	1.34

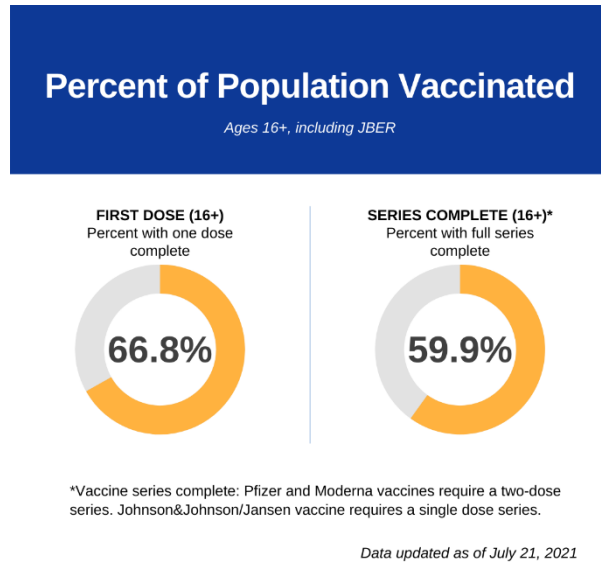
Testing

- **Percent positivity:**
 - On average, between July 14 and July 20, approximately 5.2% of COVID-19 PCR and antigen tests had positive test results. This is a 44% increase over last weeks’ seven-day average percent positivity rate of 3.6%. Percent positivity increasing above 5%, indicates that some cases are likely being missed due to lack of sufficient testing. All symptomatic residents should get tested, regardless of vaccination status.
- **Test volume:**
 - Tests are not counted until test results are received. Test counts for the most recent weeks will increase as more test results are received. The numbers reported in Table 2 indicate increased demand for testing. Increasing test volume accompanied by increased test positivity suggests that the increased case counts are real and not just an artifact of testing.

Table 2: Weekly Test Volume Indicators, updated as of July 21

Indicator	June 29 - July 5	July 6 - July 12	July 13 - July 19	White House Target (>2,000 per week)
Tests in the week	8,369	10,558	10,486	5,780
Average daily tests per 100,000	414	522	518	>285

Vaccination



According to VacTrAK, 147,391 first COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered to residents aged 12 and older within Anchorage, and 130,983 vaccine series have been completed as of July 21. VacTrAK does not include data regarding vaccine doses administered by the Veterans Administration (VA) or the Department of Defense (DoD).

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) provides vaccine dose counts directly to the MOA. As of our most recent update on June 30, 10,579 first doses have been administered at JBER, and 9,662 vaccine series have been completed.

Age and race breakdowns for individuals receiving first vaccine doses are provided in the first report of each month.

Table 3: Resident Vaccination by Dose and Population Percentage, Municipality of Anchorage. (VacTrAK & JBER)

Anchorage	First Dose	Series Complete	Anchorage Population
Total Vaccinated Individuals	157,970	140,645	288,970
12+ Percent Vaccinated	64.8%	57.7%	243,890
16+ Percent Vaccinated	66.8%	59.9%	228,217
65+ Percent Vaccinated	80.0%	76.1%	35,455
Total Population Percent Vaccinated	54.7%	48.7%	288,970

Additional Community Factors

We continue to watch the following community factors which may increase risk of COVID transmission:

- The more transmissible Delta variant is spreading broadly in Anchorage.
- Case counts and hospitalizations are increasing rapidly in Anchorage and across the state.
- Cases counts and hospitalizations are expected to continuing increasing until we see a significant increase in vaccination coverage and/or the use of non-pharmacologic interventions, such as masks and social distancing.