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Department of Health  
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Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Alaska's public health laboratories can now test for novel coronavirus**

February 28, 2020 ANCHORAGE – Alaska's state public health laboratories now have the ability to test for the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). This is a new capacity for Alaska's labs, made possible by test kits provided to states by the Centers for the Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to allow for rapid COVID-19 testing.

If a hospital or a health care provider suspects that a patient has novel coronavirus based on the [CDC guidance](#), they should contact the Section of Epidemiology within the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). If DHSS epidemiologists determine that testing for COVID-19 is warranted, they will provide guidance on how to test and ship samples to the labs. Both state public health laboratories (Anchorage and Fairbanks) are able to test samples. Under most circumstances, initial test results should be available within 4-6 hours of specimen arrival at the laboratory. Personal health information will remain confidential, but the public will be notified if Alaska has a positive case of novel coronavirus.

"Alaska has had no cases of COVID-19 as yet," said Alaska's Chief Medical Officer Dr. Zink. "We're grateful that we now have the capacity to conduct these tests in state, before any testing needed to be done."

Providers can reach the Section of Epidemiology by calling (907) 269-8000 or (800) 478-0084 after hours.

For more information about this novel coronavirus:

- CDC: [2019 Novel Coronavirus Situation Summary](#) (for the latest CDC information on this outbreak)
- DHSS: [Human Coronavirus](#) (DHSS webpage for Alaska-specific information)
- Alaska Public Health Alert Network: [Update and Interim Guidance on Outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- DHSS: [Information for Alaska's Healthcare Providers regarding 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

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