HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

AFN’s statewide briefing will resume in January.

2021 AFN CONVENTION A SUCCESS

AFN’s virtual Annual Convention was held on Monday and Tuesday, December 13 and 14.

AFN wishes to thank the dozens of presenters, hundreds of AFN delegates, thousands of participants, Convention sponsors and exhibitors for making our 2021 AFN Convention a huge success. Quyana!

Congratulations to Ana Hoffman for her reelection as Co-Chair for another term. And congratulations to our newly elected village representatives to AFN’s statewide board of directors.

Thousands of viewers watched the Convention on live statewide television, radio, and online. Thousands followed on social media and participated via AFN’s app and virtual event platform. You can still log in to the AFN app for information on AFN President’s Awards winners, presenters, sponsors and exhibitors.

Watch the 2021 AFN Convention again!

Click HERE to watch or rewatch the unedited, live webcast archive.
Click HERE to watch the 2021 Quyana broadcast video, which originally aired Monday evening, December 13.
Thank you Sponsors

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AFN extends a heartfelt thank you to all of our sponsors for making this year’s convention possible.
# COVID-19 UPDATE

Protecting Our Loved Ones

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As Alaskans gather to celebrate Christmas and the New Year, tribal, state, and federal health professionals and scientists continue to urge Alaskans to stay vigilant with COVID-19 mitigation practices, including vaccination, vaccine boosters, masking, and social distancing. Alaskans will be gathering together indoors to celebrate the holidays. This could cause a resurgence of cases of both COVID-19 and the flu.

While many of us are ready to reboot our holiday traditions, COVID cases are once again rapidly climbing nationally. Experts warn we still need to keep COVID risk-reduction in mind. Even if your family is fully vaccinated, remember your most vulnerable family members, particularly people over 80 or the immunocompromised, are still at higher risk of severe COVID.

Nearly two years into this pandemic, we've learned a lot about how to reduce the risks of catching and spreading this virus, including the simple steps of masking and hand-washing. Let's not forget now.

Click HERE for some reminders on how to keep your family gatherings safe, compiled by National Public Radio.

**Holiday Travel**

Many Alaskans will be traveling during the holiday season as well. Below are travel guidances from the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services.

**Travel Advisories in Effect**

Health Advisory 2: International and Interstate Travel, which addresses recommendations regarding travel into Alaska, and Health Advisory 3: Intrastate Travel, which addresses travel within Alaska, went into effect on February 14, 2021, and have been updated on April 26, 2021. The changes keep protective protocols in place but are aimed at making the rules simpler and easier to understand. Read the detailed recommendations and information at Health Advisory Information.

**If I get vaccinated do I have to comply with Health Advisory 3, Intrastate Travel or Health Advisory 2, International and Interstate Travel?**

**Wear a Mask While Traveling**

All travelers into, within, or out of the United States, e.g., on airplanes, ships, ferries, trains, subways, buses, taxis, and ride-shares will be required to wear a mask. The mask requirement also applies to travelers in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and seaports; train, bus, and subway stations; and any other areas that provide transportation. Transportation operators must require individuals onboard to wear masks when boarding, disembarking, and for the duration of travel. Operators of transportation hubs must require individuals to wear a mask when entering or on the premises of a transportation hub.

For more information on President Biden's Executive Order or to view frequently asked questions, visit: Federal Register Notice: Wearing of face masks while on conveyances and at transportation hubs.
While many of us are ready to reboot our holiday traditions, COVID cases are once again rapidly climbing nationally — with nearly 95,000 new cases a day. Experts warn we still need to keep COVID risk-reduction in mind. Even if your family is fully vaccinated, remember your most vulnerable family members, particularly people over 80 or the immunocompromised, are still at higher risk of severe COVID.

Nearly two years into this pandemic, we've learned a lot about how to reduce the risks of catching and spreading this virus, including the simple steps of masking and hand-washing. Let's not forget now.

Click HERE for CDC guidance on how to stay safe for the holidays. Click HERE for some reminders for how to keep your family gatherings safe, compiled by National Public Radio.

State of Alaska Helpline

All Alaskans can also call the state’s coronavirus helpline at 907-646-3322 for assistance finding and making an appointment. That phone line is monitored from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on weekdays, and 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekends.

CDC FACTS

Click HERE for the U.S. Center for Disease Control’s tribal specific fact sheet: What Tribal Communities Need to Know About COVID-19 Vaccines.

Vaccination Is Our Best Tool to Stop the Spread of COVID-19

Getting vaccinated remains the best defense against serious illness and death, health authorities say. The recent report found unvaccinated Alaskans were 7 1/2 times as likely to be hospitalized as vaccinated people.

Don't miss out on your COVID-19 vaccine booster!

Booster doses are available for Moderna, Pfizer, and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines with mixed dosing allowed (PDF).

Find out if you’re eligible with this quick quiz:

Booster eligibility survey.

If you received a Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, the following groups are eligible for a booster shot 6 months or more after their initial series:

- Age 65+
- Residents and staff in long-term care settings
- Age 18+ and have underlying medical conditions including asthma, diabetes, obesity
- Age 18+ and work in high-risk settings including healthcare workers, teachers, grocery store workers
For the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine, booster shots are recommended for those who are 18 and older and who were vaccinated two or more months ago. Eligible individuals may choose which vaccine they receive as a booster dose. Some people may have a preference for the vaccine type they originally received while others may prefer to get a different booster.

Click HERE to go to the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Booster page.

**Misinformation about vaccinations** and how well they work and the downplaying of the seriousness of COVID-19 continues to be a big factor in why so many Alaskans remain unvaccinated. There is a lot of misinformation out there, particularly on social media. Click here for CDC's helpful page for mythbusting. For facts, guidance, and data at the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services' main COVID page, click here.

YOU CAN TAKE ACTION – Choosing to get vaccinated is the single most important action you can take to protect yourself and your community and to reopen our economy. Check with your local health care provider to get the facts about vaccines, wearing masks and protecting your families. If you haven’t been vaccinated yet, find a vaccine.

For more information about vaccines, visit covidvax.alaska.gov.

**Vaccinate to stop the spread of the flu!**

Keep yourself and those around you safe! Flu season is upon us and ANTHC, state, and federal health officials are urging Alaskans to vaccinate against the flu. Many tribal health organizations are running flu clinics across Alaska. Please check with your local facility for times and dates near you. It is important for all people to get vaccinated for the flu to protect ourselves, as well as our family, coworkers and community. In addition, influenza poses a greater risk to certain people like pregnant women, children and Elders – they are all at high risk for flu-related complications. For more information about flu vaccines from ANTHC, click HERE. For CDC info, click HERE.

A common myth about the flu vaccine is that it can cause you to get the flu. Fact: You cannot get the flu from a flu vaccine. The vaccine does not contain live flu viruses or in many cases, the flu virus at all. Vaccine safety is closely monitored annually by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). To learn more about influenza and vaccination myths and facts, click HERE.

Established in 1966 to achieve a fair and just settlement of aboriginal land claims, AFN is the oldest and largest statewide Native organization in Alaska. Its membership includes 169 federally recognized tribes, 166 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 12 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs. AFN is governed by a 38-member board, which is elected by its membership at the annual convention held each October. AFN’S mission is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community. Learn more at www.nativefederation.org.

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