



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 20, 2020**

Contact: Meadow Bailey, (907) 378-2340, [meadow.bailey@alaska.gov](mailto:meadow.bailey@alaska.gov)

---

### Alaska Airports Remain Open - Precautions are in Place

**(ANCHORAGE, Alaska)** – This week, the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) received inquiries about closing airports. The department recognizes community concerns related to the potential spread of the COVID-19 disease due to passenger activity, and at the same time, the need for continued community access across the state.

At this time, all state owned airports across Alaska will remain open and fully operational. Airports are a critical lifeline across Alaska and provide essential life, health, commerce and safety access. DOT&PF continues to monitor conditions closely, and should situations warrant, will coordinate any requests to close an airport with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). As of today, the FAA is not ready to approve airport closures.

The safety of our customers, tenants and employees is our top priority. We closely follow COVID-19 developments and strictly adhere to the guidance set forth by the Alaska Department of Health & Social Services, Center for Disease Control and the FAA. This includes using enhanced cleaning protocols throughout airport facilities that are operated by the State of Alaska.

What can you do if you're flying? Adhere to [Health Mandate 4](#), issued March 17, that provides guidance for travelers. Remember, if you are displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 disease, please stay home, be sure to wash your hands frequently and thoroughly and practice social distancing.

Please note. If you are traveling, food and beverages are still available inside the secure zones at airports per an exemption in [Health Mandate 3](#), issued March 17. This ensures that passengers, who do not leave the airport, will have access to food and beverages. It is safer to have passengers consume food and beverages in airport restaurants, where social distancing is being maintained, than in the gate areas.

One thing we've learned this week is that things continue to change. That could not be more true with aviation. Alaskan airports, we are seeing a large reduction in passengers. We have reports of 55% fewer passengers this year as compared to the same time last year. This reduction in passengers requires airlines to make real-time adjustments to routes based on passenger numbers. If you are traveling, be sure to regularly check flight schedules for changes.

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities oversees 239 airports, 10 ferries serving 35 communities, over 5,600 miles of highway and 776 public facilities throughout the state of Alaska. The mission of the department is to “**Keep Alaska Moving** through service and infrastructure.”

# # #

---