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AMHS Crewmember Tests Positive for COVID-19 in Dutch Harbor

(JUNEAU, Alaska) – This afternoon, a crewmember on the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) *M/V Tustumena* was notified that a person they had been in close contact with tested positive for COVID-19. At the time, the crewmember on the Tustumena was displaying mild symptoms including a runny nose, cough and body aches, but they did not have a fever. The crewmember isolated on board, and a rapid test was conducted at about 5 p.m. That test came back positive at 6 p.m.

The Alaska Division of Public Health is currently working to identify contacts. The vessel had a crew of 35 and no more than 60 passengers at any time during the voyage south from Homer to Dutch Harbor. At this time, 16 close contacts have been identified, all of whom were other crewmembers. All crew stayed onboard in Dutch Harbor. No passengers have been identified as close contacts.

Northbound passengers who boarded the vessel this afternoon did not have contact with the COVID-19 positive crewmember and were only on the ship briefly. These passengers were notified of the crewmember's COVID-19 positive status and disembarked the vessel at 7 p.m., with instructions to self-monitor. Six passengers who originally boarded the vessel in Homer did not disembark the vessel in Dutch Harbor.

Medical personnel screened the AMHS crewmember and remaining six passengers prior to departure from Dutch Harbor. During transit, only essential crew will operate; the remaining crew and six passengers will self-quarantine. No additional stops will be made along the way. After arrival to their final destination, crewmembers and passengers will be tested for COVID-19, they will then quarantine and self-monitor.

The Tustumena returned to service June 2 and just completed the first run down the Aleutian Chain. The vessel started service in Homer, and visited Seldovia, Kodiak, Chignik, Sand Point, King Cove, Cold Bay, False Pass, Akutan and Dutch Harbor. The Tustumena arrived in Dutch Harbor this morning.

All passengers who were onboard the Tustumena earlier this week are asked to follow the guidance below for 14 days after they left the ship. As the investigation continues,

the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services will provide guidance, if warranted.

- Wear a mask/face covering when in public.
- Minimize their exposure to others.
- Monitor for any symptoms including fever twice a day.
- Get tested for the virus that causes COVID-19 if they are symptomatic and consider getting tested 7-14 days after they left the ship if they remain asymptomatic.

Tustumena sailings are canceled until further notice. Passengers with upcoming reservations will be contacted and their fare will be refunded. Passengers who have questions can contact reservations at 1-800-642-0066, Monday-Friday from 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. Alaska Time.

The Tustumena is being thoroughly disinfected before returning to service. AMHS has COVID-19 mitigation protocols in place. These protocols include:

- Reminders to passengers and AMHS employees to practice good hygiene and follow social distancing guidelines.
- Passenger capacity on each vessel is reduced to 1/3 to enable social distancing.
- Passengers and AMHS employees complete a health screening form before boarding. People who are sick or have recently had contact with an infected person are not permitted to travel.
- The CDC's COVID-19 prevention guidance is posted on at AMHS terminals and aboard vessels.
- Modifications to food service spaces to ensure social distancing.
- Intensified cleaning of all areas, including routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces.

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities oversees 239 airports, 10 ferries serving 35 communities, more than 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."