



City and Borough of Sitka

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A Coast Guard City

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Eisenbeisz and Assembly Members

From: Assembly Members Christianson and Himschoot

Date: July 26, 2021

Subject: Approval of emergency ordinance providing grants to Sitka Residents with positive Covid-19 test results that quarantine and isolate for ten days

Background

In recognition of the hardships to the workforce presented by shutdowns and other mitigation measures the federal government provided both paid sick leave and stimulus funding universally in 2020. The 10 days of sick leave paid by federal sources expired on December 31, 2020. However, CDC guidance to isolate and quarantine after a positive Covid test remains in place.

Sitka had few and sporadic cases of Covid-19 in 2020 thanks in large part to the strong mitigations and community response to the emergency. While the case rate in Sitka has recently spiked, the numbers don't mean what they did even just half a year ago: our vaccination rate is around 70%, more is known about treatments, and our hospital is more prepared to serve the region. However, roughly one third of Sitka's cases are "breakthrough" cases, and all positive cases still require quarantining for 10 days.

This ordinance would provide \$1000.00 from the General Fund to Sitkans who provide proof of employment and a positive Covid test and a signed affidavit committing to quarantine at home via email and will be retroactive to July 1.

Analysis

The ability of a family to withstand 10 days of quarantine may determine whether a positive person chooses to stay home. Providing support to families for lost work time will decrease the burden of unpaid time off, including parents who must stay home with a Covid positive child.

Fiscal Note

This grant program will provide \$1,000 to Sitkans who provide proof of employment and proof of a positive Covid test for themselves or for a child under age 13 up to \$300,000.