

Q: What is leadership's priority?

A: Leadership's priority is the health and safety of our military and civilian personnel and their families, safeguarding our national security capabilities and supporting the state of Alaska and local community's response to COVID-19. We recognize we are in a difficult time that is getting even harder the longer this goes on, and we are doing all we can to make well-informed, safe decisions that balance risk mitigation, resilience and mission success.

Q: How many attempted suicides and suicides have occurred on JBER since March? And how are you measuring the current mental health of our Armed Forces and their families?

A: Like COVID-19 cases, we don't release these numbers at the installation level. The mental wellbeing for our families and service members are always at the forefront of our thoughts. As we battle COVID-19 we also battle the challenge of isolation and fatigue. We stay engaged with our units and our mental health professionals to watch for concerning trends and take all this into consideration when making policy decisions. In addition to direct line supervisor engagement, JBER has many mental health resources, most of which are available 24/7. We understand that this can be a difficult time for some. We encourage anyone who is struggling or who feel like they need to talk to someone to reach out for help from their leadership team or any one of these resources.

Text CHAP to 970-00

Air Force Chaplain - (907) 552-4422

Army Chaplain - (907) 384-1461

JBER Suicide Hotline - (907) 440-0160

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

JBER Hospital main number - (907) 580-6260

[JBER Helping Agencies](#)

Q: Why is wearing masks still not being enforced by leadership at the lower levels?

A: Every chain of command on JBER is charged with enforcement of these orders. We must all do our part in ensuring the safety of ourselves and those around us. If you observe individuals or groups not adhering to these guidelines, please respectfully engage with them. If they still fail to comply elevate your concern to the level in your chain of command that will enforce the standard. Do not be intimidated by rank--mask wear is required of all personnel on JBER.

Q: Why are we having to limit our off-base activities, yet on-base non-essential facilities are still operational (bowling alley, pool, arts & crafts, etc.)?

A: Health and safety measures and enforcement in these facilities have shown to be effective. We do not have the ability to monitor and enforce such measures off base. We realize this does create some differences, but our goal is to minimize risk while maximizing the number of safe activities our service members and their families can still participate in. Mental health and family wellness are a priority for leadership and we will continue offering programs and services that promote wellness.

Q: Why are we not going back to the COVID schedule? And why aren't you pushing for CDCs to be open for only mission-essential parents to reduce the number of children in CDCs?

A: We have worked closely with healthcare professionals and the mission partner commands across the installation to ensure the best and most effective COVID mitigation measures are in place. It is up to each chain of command to determine who needs to physically be at work to successfully complete the mission. This may or may not look the same as it did earlier in the year because conditions are different than they were earlier in the year. Reducing CDC availability can create a significant hardship on families. To prevent taking this measure we've built in risk mitigation procedures and health screenings at the CDCs. We ask that customers continue to be patient and flexible, and comply with all preventive measures our staff implement. Our ability to continue to provide this vital service depends on compliance with these measures.

Q: Are soldiers going to be allowed to go home for the holidays?

A: Please refer to your chain of command for questions about your unit's leave policy and individual leave requests.

Q: For families who are going home for the holidays or on a vacation to get a mental break, are they allowed to go eat out and be around more than two families at a time if they are wearing a mask? If the spouse went alone on vacation without the active duty member and did all this, would she/he be allowed back on base if she/he has a negative test and follows the base 14 day quarantine rule?

A: Members and family that travel are encouraged to do all they can to protect themselves from contracting COVID-19. Anyone that leaves the local area for any reason, must make sure you know and comply with the COVID measures of wherever you are traveling to. If individuals live off base they are not to enter the base for 14 days from the date they return regardless of testing unless other arrangements are approved by their Command team. Individuals that reside on base will be allowed to return to their homes but are still prohibited from entering storefronts, customer service areas and duty locations for their 14 days of restricted movement.

Q: Do you anticipate the no visitor/no new visitor passes rule to be extended beyond the 30 days?

A: Base leadership will work with medical experts and the local community to determine if the PHE needs to be extended beyond the initial 30 days. If numbers are not trending in a direction that would support curtailing the PHE or limiting it to only 30 days it may be extended.

Q: Why can people still take leave and travel across the states and just quarantine when they get back, but we can't have any visitors? Couldn't we have visitors and just quarantine while they are here and after they leave?

A: Leave is a critical aspect of wellbeing. Visitors may be allowed depending on the situation. Personnel may apply for an exception to the Base Access policy from the installation commander or 673 ABW Vice Commander with the appropriate paperwork and an endorsement from their unit commander, in the grade of O-4 and above or comparable director level supervisor. Submit requests to 673abw.cc@us.af.mil. Find the ETP here: [ETP](#)

Q: I'm a civilian contractor working on JBER and my roommate works at a local restaurant. Am I allowed to go to work on the installation or does living with someone who works at a brewery/restaurant disbar me?

A: Yes, you would still be allowed to access base. Your roommate's employment is considered an essential activity. We do ask that everyone remain vigilant and reduce their risks through appropriate measures.

Q: With increased positive COVID tests, should all the squadrons go to lower manning split shifts? It seems like not all squadrons are following the same protocols.

A: Individuals that need to report to work in-person is at the discretion of each unit commander. Commanders are balancing the safety of their personnel with the imperative to execute their mission. This may drive different solutions for different units.

Q: With Thanksgiving coming, will we be able to have people over for Thanksgiving dinner?

A: Gatherings are limited to a maximum of two family groups. Requests for larger gatherings, like Thanksgiving, can be coordinated through unit commanders for approval with accountability measures put in place.

Q: What process can we come up with so people using both fitness centers during peak times don't have to queue up outside in these temperatures?

A: We take fitness -- as well as health and safety -- very seriously. Fitness is a mission-essential function, and fitness requirements must be met in a way that reduces risk. We encourage patrons to adjust their routines to avoid peak fitness times. Both Buckner and Elmendorf Fitness Centers are open and staffed seven days per week with varying hours, along with 24/7 access available on weekdays. Reservations are available to use the Buckner Fitness Pool seven days per week for lap swimming. Additionally, the Arctic Oasis Community Center offers reservations to use their new fitness equipment 1200-1800 on Wednesdays through Sundays. Please see facility Facebook pages for sign-up instructions.

Q: Are we allowed to still go to Alyeska during the PHE? Skiing and snowboarding there is an outdoor event with masks and social distancing, and positively affects morale and fitness for members.

A: Yes, you are allowed to, as this meets the criteria for engaging in safe off-base exercise while wearing masks and social distancing. However, members should vacate the facility as soon as they get their equipment and they should not stay inside among the potentially high number of people. Also, be aware that lift lines and Gondola rides may result in unsafe situations, so remain vigilant and remove yourself if an area becomes too crowded or if those around you are not wearing masks.