

MEMORANDUM

TO: MAYOR JENSEN AND BOROUGH ASSEMBLY
FROM: KARL HAGERMAN, UTILITY DIRECTOR 
SUBJECT: EOC RESPONSE TO DANA THYNES QUESTIONS OF 10/20/2020
DATE: 10/26/2020
CC: STEVE GIESBRECHT, BOROUGH MANAGER
DEBRA THOMPSON, BOROUGH CLERK

Please find answers to Ms. Thynes's questions that she posed during the Assembly meeting on October 20, 2020.

#1: What is the EMERGENCY we are facing?

Answer: Petersburg has responded to the global pandemic caused by COVID-19 to declare an emergency as the State of Alaska did early on in the pandemic.

The State's Emergency Declaration is

here: <https://gov.alaska.gov/newsroom/2020/03/11/governor-issues-public-health-disaster-emergency-declaration-for-covid-19/>

Additionally, President Trump issued a declaration of a National Emergency Concerning the COVID-19 Outbreak which can be found

here: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-declaring-national-emergency-concerning-novel-coronavirus-disease-covid-19-outbreak/#:~:text=The%20Secretary%20of%20Health%20and,in%20response%20to%20COVID%2D19.>

Further, the Borough has been contracted to provide greeting, screening and testing services as mandated by the Governor. The recently revised mandate is

here: <https://covid19.alaska.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/10152020-COVID-MANDATE-010-REVISED.pdf>

#2: Is there a QUOTA system for the hospital/clinic, to try to reach a certain number of tests per day or week?

Answer: No. There is no quota system in place. The hospital/clinic only responds to the patient and testing loads as they develop. Testing is an effective method to determine the presence and spread of the virus in Petersburg, so the hospital/clinic have mobilized to provide that testing as appropriate. The goal of local testing, either asymptomatic or symptomatic is to detect the virus in the community and isolate COVID ASAP in order to protect and prevent the spread to the community.

#3: How much money does Petersburg receive for each test?

Answer: I believe the questions was framed around the airport testing contract. For that contract, and the Memorandum of Agreement that exists between the Borough and PMC, the PMC is reimbursed \$50/hr for each testing personnel and is reimbursed \$100 for each test taken. They can also claim a reimbursable PPE cost of \$50 per day for testing services and reimbursement for packaging and shipping costs of \$100 per day. The hospital pays for testing materials, test analysis, packing materials, shipping costs, PPE and employee

time at the airport and then is reimbursed these rates through the Borough agreement (ultimately by the State of Alaska). As this is not a sustainable model of reimbursement, the testing at the airport is also being subsidized by the Federal CARES act received by the PMC. The testing is being provided to meet the State's mandate and to protect the community from traveler spread, but it has proven to be a complicated staffing burden for the hospital in a time when the agency's main focus is on providing quality health care to Petersburg during the pandemic.

For other testing at the clinic not associated with the airport or supplied by the state, the cost for patients to test are \$250. This is often billed to insurance and covers the costs of the employee time, testing materials and test analysis at commercial labs.

There is no subsidy, payment or standardized revenue per test received from the State or federal government for testing services.

End of memorandum.