

April 23, 2021

### *A Message from the COVID Safety Team*

As part of our ongoing work to keep you informed about COVID safety practices and protocols we will be sharing regular updates. Each update will include the latest information from local and regional agencies as well as stories and resources within our district.

Please continue reading to learn more about the following topics: **in-person staff meetings; physical distancing in schools (three feet); and vaccine opportunities.**

#### In-person staff meetings

We continue to follow COVID-19 health and safety protocols in our workplace according to [guidance from Labor & Industries](#). No changes to guidance have been made in regards to vaccination status with regard to in-person meetings.

Remote meetings are still the lowest-risk choice in terms of COVID-19.

In-person meetings are possible if necessary. Any meeting in-person should happen intentionally, with the following requirements in place:

- Masks on
- Maintain six feet physical distance between adults
- Ventilation is important: outside is best
- Keep your meetings short if possible
- Note attendance for contact tracing
- Please keep community perception in mind for meetings on site
- Additional Resources: [COVID-19 Prevention in the Workplace: L&I Safety and Health Requirements](#) and [K-12 Schools Guidance 2020-21](#)

#### Physical Distancing in Schools

Guidance from OSPI has shifted for schools. After working with the Whatcom County Health Department on local COVID-19 data, we are now adjusting our classrooms to allow for a minimum three feet of physical distance between students rather than six feet.

To assess spaces for new capacity allowances, please:

- Consider how to space students three feet apart from other students (e.g, adding individual desks or seats to larger tables).
- Three feet measures “shoulder to shoulder” per OSPI. Our health authorities remind us that COVID is spread through respiratory droplets that are exhaled, coughed, sneezed or otherwise expelled (from the mouth or nose).
- Adults are still required to maintain six feet space from other individuals. Consider staff space in the room and potential space for a support person to push in.

School Building Advocacy Teams (BAT), COVID site safety teams and the district COVID safety team are all available to discuss, consult and walk through learning spaces if needed.

At least six feet of distance must be maintained for the following circumstances:

- Between staff in the school building and between adults and students.
- For all staff and students:
  - In common areas, such as auditoriums.
  - When masks can't be worn, such as when eating.
  - During activities when increased exhalation occurs, such as singing, shouting, band practice, or physical education. These activities should be moved outdoors or to large, well-ventilated spaces whenever possible.

## Whatcom County Data

Here are our current case rates:

Complete data	April 1 – April 14	153.5 per 100,000
Preliminary data	April 8 – April 21	161.0 per 100,000

[Roadmap to Recovery Metrics](#), see [Risk Assessment Dashboard](#) and select [Whatcom County](#)

## Vaccine Opportunities

All adults are now eligible for COVID-19 vaccines. Reminder that only Pfizer is FDA approved for people 16 and 17.

Here are helpful resources to make vaccine appointments:

- [Vaccine Locator](#)
- [WA COVID Vaccine Finder \(covidwa.com\)](#)
- [My PeaceHealth - Schedule your COVID-19 Vaccination](#)
- [Call 1-800-525-0127, then press #. Language assistance available](#)