

## Sector Email 4.8.2021

Subject header: Updates on COVID-19 from Public Health - Seattle & King County (PHSKC)

### Schools

Dear school partners,

It's often at this point in the spring term that students and teachers alike begin to feel the itch of summer's freedom. We are all likely beginning to feel a similar itch as restrictions lift and vaccinations increase. In both cases, though, we must keep going for just a bit longer!

**Reminder: please review the [King County Schools COVID-19 Response Toolkit, related resources, and training videos](#).**

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This week's Public Health—Seattle & King County (PHSKC) Schools and Child Care Task Force sector email includes the following topics:

1. Key Indicators of COVID-19 Activity
2. Distancing Guidance from the Department of Health
3. Guidance Updates for Phase 3
4. Vaccine Updates
  - a. Updates to Vaccine Eligibility
  - b. Youth Eligible
  - c. Vaccine Access
  - d. Getting Vaccinated Resources
  - e. Signs and Symptoms Following Vaccination
  - f. Now that You're Vaccinated . . .
5. Cleaning and Disinfecting: Best Practices Fact Sheet from the EPA
6. Return to In-Person Learning Support from WCAAP
7. Please Share with Your Community
  - a. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care
  - b. Pandemic EBT Update
8. Travel Guidance
9. Schools and Child Care Task Force Office Hours

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### **1. Key Indicators of COVID-19 Activity**

DOH has removed the K-12 metrics toolkit and updated guidance to align more closely with [CDC Indicators](#). In its [K-12 Schools 2020-2021 Guidance](#), DOH recommends that in areas with high community transmission, middle and high school students use cohorting (grouping students) and at least three feet of distance between students or at least six feet of physical distance between students if cohorting is not possible. The following chart includes King County data aligned with these indicators of high community transmission. The following data are current as of **April 8, 2021** and are regularly updated on the [PHSKC COVID-19 data dashboard webpage](#).

Indicator	Current Status	High Community Transmission Rate <sup>1</sup> (Y/N)
Cases/100K/14 days <sup>2</sup>	178/100K	N
Test Positivity Rate <sup>3</sup>	4.2%	N

**2. Distancing Guidance from the Department of Health**

On March 25, Governor Inslee announced that the DOH is updating physical distancing guidance to align with recent changes from the CDC. These changes will require physical distancing of at least three feet or more between students within groups and in classrooms as much as possible. In certain circumstances (described below), students must still maintain six feet of distance. Staff should continue to maintain six feet of physical distance from other staff and students in classrooms and otherwise. Schools may always choose to continue to use six-foot physical distancing.

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.

Full updated guidance is available on the DOH website, or [at this link](#).

Even if fully vaccinated, school staff should follow the K-12 DOH and appropriate LNI guidance while at work.

**3. Guidance Updates for Phase 3 of Healthy Washington**

King County, along with the rest of the Puget Sound region, entered into Phase 3 of Governor Inslee's [Healthy Washington: Roadmap to Recovery](#). Healthy Washington Metrics will be reviewed by the state on April 12, 2021 to reassess current phase. King County's current *Healthy Washington* metrics can be found on Public Health's data dashboard, [located here](#).

There are several guidance documents that have been updated, revised, or created to guide communities in meeting updated guidelines. The following are some of the resources that K-12 schools and child care providers may find helpful:

- a. [Outdoor Recreation During COVID-19, including overnight summer camps](#)
- b. [Weddings, Funerals and Events During COVID-19, includes guidance for dances and proms](#)
- c. [2021 Graduation and Commencement Ceremonies](#) (DOH)
- d. [Miscellaneous Venue Guidance](#)
- e. [Spectator Event Guidance](#)

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<sup>1</sup> DOH defines high community transmission as COVID-19 case rate of greater than 200 cases per 100K population over 14 days or test positivity greater than 10%

<sup>2</sup> Total number of cases for the last 14 days per 100,000 residents.

<sup>3</sup> Percent of COVID-19 tests with positive results over the past 14 days - **Test positivity is reported with a 3-week lag, due to reporting delays**

#### 4. Vaccine updates

##### a. Updates to Vaccine Eligibility

*Beginning April 15, 2021, all Washington residents age 16 and older will be eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. An updated list of who is currently eligible for vaccination can be found [here](#).*

##### b. Youth Eligible for Vaccination

Next week, all Washingtonians 16 and older will be eligible for vaccination. Please note that Pfizer BioNTech is the **only** vaccine approved for use in people who are 16 & 17 years old. The Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are approved for use in people who are 18 and over.

DOH is currently working to add vaccine type to the [Vaccine Locator](#) web page and mobile app to help simplify the process. In the meantime, Public Health recommends that 16- & 17-year old's and/or their caretakers who are scheduling vaccination appointments call to confirm that the vaccination site carries the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine when scheduling.

##### c. Vaccine Access

The following are suggestions to help those eligible find vaccine appointments.

*Please note, the DOH PhaseFinder tool is no longer needed to verify eligibility.*

- i. The [Federal Retail Pharmacy Program](#) is now available for everyone who is eligible to be vaccinated.
- ii. [VaccineFinder](#) is a national site that may include some sites not yet available in the Vaccine Locator.
- iii. [DOH Washington Vaccine Locator tool](#) – an updated and easier to use website that allows you to enter your zip code and find appointments within 50 miles.

##### d. Getting Vaccinated Resources

The Public Health [Getting Vaccinated](#) page now has links to translations in Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), French, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Oromo, Russian, Samoan, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya, Tongan, Ukrainian and Vietnamese. The [Vaccine FAQ](#) page answers many common questions about COVID vaccine, and includes links to translations in Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), French, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Oromo, Russian, Samoan, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya, Tongan, Ukrainian and Vietnamese.

##### e. Symptoms after Vaccination

With more school and child care employees receiving vaccines, questions have come up about if individuals need to quarantine if they experience symptoms of COVID-19 soon after receiving a vaccination. Employees may return to work and *not* quarantine if they have symptoms of COVID-19 within a few days of vaccine administration, **IF:**

- They **have not** been in contact with someone with COVID-19 **AND**
- They feel well enough and are willing to perform normal activities such as work **AND**
- They do not have a fever **AND**

- Signs and symptoms are **limited only** to those observed following COVID-19 vaccination (including pain, swelling, tiredness, chills, headache – [see a list of symptoms](#)) **AND**
- They **do not** have other signs and symptoms of COVID-19, such a cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, or change in smell and taste.

Public Health provides information on this and other frequently asked questions on our [Vaccine FAQ page](#).

#### f. Now that You're Vaccinated...

While the vaccine trials established that the COVID-19 vaccine prevents severe illness and death in those who are vaccinated, we are still learning more about their effectiveness in limiting transmission of the virus to others yet. [Fully vaccinated individuals](#) may follow the guideline below in personal and public settings; ***the K-12 guidance must be followed while in K-12 settings.***

- Can gather indoors with fully vaccinated people without wearing a mask in personal settings.
- Can gather indoors with unvaccinated people from one other household without masks, unless any of those people or anyone they live with has an [increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19](#).
- Do not need to quarantine or test if you've been around someone who has COVID-19, unless you develop symptoms.

#### 5. Cleaning and Disinfecting: Best Practices During the COVID-19 Pandemic – Factsheet from EPA

According to a new [science brief](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the risk of catching COVID-19 by touching a contaminated surface is considered to be low. EPA's new [factsheet](#) has cleaning and disinfecting best practices and tips you can use during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the best practices included are:

- Clean surfaces with soap and water to lower the risk of spreading COVID-19 by removing germs and dirt. In most situations, cleaning is enough to reduce risk. For more information, see [CDC's website](#).
- Be careful when using disinfectants around people with asthma, as disinfectants can trigger asthma attacks. Learn more on [CDC's website](#).
- Don't ask children or students to apply disinfectants, including wipes.

#### 6. Return to In-Person Learning Support from WCAAP

We are excited to be partnering with the Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (WCAAP) to support your return to in person learning. Many pediatric health care providers in King County have been trained by WCAPP on best practices for children, educators, and staff to safely return to in-person learning. They have volunteered to partner with us and to consult with your school leaders, nurses, and teachers to share information on COVID-19 and infection prevention, answer questions as they arise, and serve as resources for your schools within their capacity. Pediatric providers are also available to support schools and districts in hosting virtual Town Hall events or larger meetings with staff or parent communities. Please reach out to us at [schoolresponse@kingcounty.gov](mailto:schoolresponse@kingcounty.gov)

## 7. Please Share with Your Communities

### a. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care

The pandemic continues to rage on, harming not only our physical health, but also devastating jobs. Many people are finding themselves in sudden need to health insurance. There is now a [Special Enrollment Period for](#) free or low-cost insurance through Washington's Affordable Care Act health exchange – *Washington Healthplanfinder*. The enrollment period is open from **Feb. 15-May 15, 2021**. The enrollment period is open to anyone who is currently uninsured. Public Health – Seattle & King County has a team of [Health Insurance Navigators](#) available to help answer questions and walk through the process of applying and selecting the right insurance plan. You can also browse plans and sign up directly through [Washington Healthplanfinder](#).

### b. Pandemic EBT Update

Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) benefits are now being mailed out to eligible students. If families with eligible students do not receive a notice in the mail, they should contact the P-EBT Contact Center at 1-833-518-0282. For more resources and information for schools to share, visit [OSPI's PEBT communications toolkit](#).

### c. Household and Food Assistance for Quarantine and Isolation

If you or members of your community need financial support to successfully isolate or quarantine, King County has two different programs available to support household bills and emergency food access. There is no income or citizenship requirement. For more information about the household assistance program, please [visit this website](#). Emergency Food assistance information can be [found here](#).

## 8. Travel Guidance

The safest option is to eliminate all non-essential travel to limit the spread of COVID-19. If you choose to travel, you should follow the [CDC's recommendations](#) based on where you travel, how you travel, and if you are fully vaccinated or not. *Everyone – vaccinated or unvaccinated – should self monitor for symptoms for 14 days following travel and should wear a mask and take other precautions during travel.* Those who are unvaccinated should also be tested 1-3 days prior to travel, and should self-quarantine for 10 days following travel, or get tested again 3-5 days afterwards and complete a 7-day quarantine. The full guidance is [available here](#).

## 9. Schools and Child Care Task Force Office Hours

PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force office hours are held each Thursday from 3:30-4:30pm. Please come with your specific COVID-19 questions related to your K-12 school (e.g., environmental health, clarification of King County guidance) – *and please join us to share promising approaches that your school is using to implement COVID-19 protocols as well!* If you have questions prior to office hours, please submit them to [schoolresponse@kingcounty.gov](mailto:schoolresponse@kingcounty.gov) with the subject line "Office Hours." We will do our best to answer them during the following Thursday office hours session.

**\*\*Attendees are expected to review the [King County Schools COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#) and the associated [training videos](#) (scroll to the bottom of the page) **BEFORE** attending office hours.\*\***

[Join here](#) using password **COVID19**

*In health,*

*The PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force*

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## Childcare

Dear childcare partners,

This week's Public Health — Seattle & King County (PHSKC) Schools and Childcare Task Force sector email includes the following topics:

1. Vaccine Updates
  - a. Updates to Vaccine Eligibility
  - b. Vaccine Access
  - c. Getting Vaccinated Resources
  - d. Signs and Symptoms Following Vaccination
  - e. Now that You're Vaccinated . . .
2. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care
3. Updated CDC Guidance for Operating Child Care Programs
4. Resources from the Children's Environmental Health Network
5. Cleaning and Disinfecting: Best Practices Factsheet from the EPA
6. DCYF Early Learning Provider Toolkits

1. **Vaccine Updates**
  - a. **Updates to Vaccine Eligibility**

Although vaccine eligibility continues to expand, and vaccine supply and access are increasing, vaccine doses remain in limited supply. Not everyone who is eligible will be able to get vaccinated right away.

*Beginning April 15, 2021*, all Washington residents age 16 and older will be eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. An updated list of who is currently eligible for vaccination can be found [here](#).

1. **Vaccine Updates**
  - a. **Vaccine Access**

The following are suggestions for school and child care staff to access vaccination.

*Please note, the DOH PhaseFinder tool is no longer needed to verify eligibility.*

- i. The [Federal Retail Pharmacy Program](#)
- ii. You may also find vaccination appointments at pharmacies using [VaccineFinder](#). This site lists some pharmacies that are not in Phase Finder yet.
- iii. Some school districts, health care providers, or counties may host clinics specifically for schools and child care workers. [OSPI's Q&A document](#) describes some opportunities that may be available specifically to educators.

- iv. [DOH Washington Vaccine Locator tool](#) – an updated and easier to use website that allows you to enter your zip code and find appointments within 50 miles.

### c. Getting Vaccinated Resources

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## 2. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care

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County has a team of [Health Insurance Navigators](#) available to help answer questions and walk through the process of applying and selecting the right insurance plan. You can also browse plans and sign up directly through [Washington Healthplanfinder](#).

### **3. Updated CDC Guidance for Operating Child Care Programs**

The CDC recently updated its Guidance for Operating Child Care Programs during COVID-19. The guidance includes information on mask use, screening, keeping children in contained groups, staggering schedules, ventilation, and more. The full guidance document can be [accessed here](#). In addition, the CDC has created a document toolkit to support this guidance, [available at this link](#).

State DOH [Child Care, Youth Development, and Day Camps During the COVID-19 Outbreak](#) guidance is currently being reviewed for forthcoming updates, and programs should continue to follow this guidance.

### **4. Resources from the Children’s Environmental Health Network**

Children’s Environmental Health Network (CEHN) website includes a wide variety of environmental health resources for child care providers, including webinar slides, hand-outs, and resource lists. These resources address needs from ventilation to mental health concerns to equity. The full resource page can be found at [this link](#).

### **5. Cleaning and Disinfecting: Best Practices During the COVID-19 Pandemic – Factsheet from EPA**

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- Be careful when using disinfectants around people with asthma, as disinfectants can trigger asthma attacks. Learn more on [CDC’s website](#).
- Don’t ask children or students to apply disinfectants, including wipes.

### **6. DCYF Early Learning Provider Toolkits**

The Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) has assembled classroom toolkits for early learning programs to help with implementing COVID-19 guidance. This toolkit includes materials and books to use with children in your care during daily activities to:

- Promote social distancing
- Learn about germs and handwashing
- Support social-emotional needs

You’ll also receive printed materials to use as resources when implementing COVID-19 guidance, as well as an introduction letter with some ideas on how to use each one of the items in your toolkit. Your local Child Care Aware office will coordinate the distribution of the toolkits in your area through various ways, such as



delivery to your location or local distribution events. Early Achievers coaches will assist in this process, and you can expect to hear how you can receive your toolkit in the next couple of weeks.

*In health,*

*The PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force*