

Sector Email 4.1.2021

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

Schools

Dear school partners,

This week brings news that vaccine eligibility is expanding further, and in just a few weeks all Washington residents over the age of 16 will be eligible to be vaccinated. This is exciting news! Although vaccine eligibility continues to expand, and vaccine supply and access are increasing, vaccine doses remain in limited supply. Unfortunately, not everyone who is eligible will be able to get vaccinated right away.

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

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. Some youth now eligible for vaccination
 - c. Vaccine Access
 - d. Getting Vaccinated Resources
 - e. Signs and Symptoms Following Vaccination
 - f. Now that You're Vaccinated . . .
5. Return to In-Person Learning Support from WCAAP
6. Please Share with Your Community
 - a. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care
 - b. Events
 - c. Pandemic EBT Update
7. Travel Guidance for Spring Break and Beyond . . .
8. Guidance Spotlight: School Bus Safety During COVID-19
9. Now that You're Vaccinated...
10. Schools and Child Care Task Force Office Hours

1. Key Indicators of COVID-19 Activity

DOH has removed in 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 1, 2021** and are regularly updated on the [PHSKC COVID-19 data dashboard webpage](#).

Indicator	Current Status	High Community Transmission Rate ¹ (Y/N)
Cases/100K/14 days ²	149.1	N
Test Positivity Rate ³	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 choose to continue to use six foot physical distancing at all times.

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](#). There are a number of 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](#)

¹ 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%

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

³ 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

As of March 31, 2021, vaccination is available for anyone between the ages of 60-64; people 16 years and older with 2 or more co-morbidities or underlying health conditions per the [CDC's criteria](#); Residents, Staff and volunteers in certain congregate living settings; and High-medium risk critical workers in congregate settings in restaurants and food service, manufacturing and construction.

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. Some youth now eligible for vaccination

People age 16 and older are now eligible for vaccination if they are pregnant or have a disability that puts them at high risk for severe COVID-19 illness or if they have two or more co-morbidities or underlying conditions. 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.

Public Health recommends that 16 & 17 year old young people or their caretakers who are scheduling vaccination appointments try to confirm that the vaccination site carries the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine when scheduling.

c. Vaccine Access

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

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

- i. The [Federal Retail Pharmacy Program](#) is prioritizing vaccination of school staff and child care workers during the month of March. Pharmacies participating in this program will likely have the most vaccine supply and the greatest ability to vaccinate school and child care staff quickly.
- ii. Through OSPI and Kaiser Permanente's [Get Ready](#) program partnership. You can sign up for appointments through Kaiser Permanente at [this link](#) or by reviewing the [Get Ready Program FAQ](#).
- iii. You may also find vaccination appointments at pharmacies using [VaccineFinder](#). This site lists some pharmacies that are not in Phase Finder yet.
- iv. Some school districts, health care providers, or counties may host clinics specifically for schools and childcare workers. [OSPI's Q&A document](#) describes some opportunities that may be available specifically to educators.
- v. [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 FDA has authorized a third COVID-19 vaccine, made by Johnson & Johnson. This vaccine was shown to be 85% effective in preventing severe illness and only requires one dose. [Learn more here](#).

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. 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

6. 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. Upcoming events

i. Public Health's upcoming trainings and community discussions on COVID-19 updates, risk reduction, and resources:

- a. Con Confianza y En Comunidad: Hablando sobre COVID-19 y temas que nos afectan

Martes a las 5:00 PM en español

Página del [Condado de King](#) en Facebook

- b. Biweekly Community Partners' Call to hear updates and ask questions:

Every other Monday at 4:00 PM in English

Next call on Monday, March 29th at 4:00 PM

Join via Zoom: <https://kingcounty.zoom.us/j/93431287120>

c. 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](#).

7. Travel Guidance for Spring Break and Beyond

Governor Inslee now recommends that Washingtonians align with the CDC's current recommendations regarding out-of-state travel. The safest option is to eliminate all non-essential travel to limit the spread of COVID-19. *Anyone* arriving from other states or countries – including returning Washington residents – should get tested 3-5 days after travel. Returning travelers should stay in quarantine for 7 full days after travel, even if the test is negative. If travelers are unable to get tested, they should remain in quarantine for 10 days after travel. Regardless of the quarantine period, travelers should monitor for symptoms for 14 days after travel and should avoid being around people who are at increased risk for severe illness. The full guidance is [available here](#).

These recommendations apply to **all people, including those who are fully vaccinated.**

8. 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 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

Childcare

Dear childcare partners,

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

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 - a. Updates to Vaccine Eligibility
 - b. Some Youth Now Eligible for Vaccination
 - c. Vaccine Access
 - d. Getting Vaccinated Resources
 - e. Signs and Symptoms Following Vaccination
 - f. Now that You're Vaccinated . . .
2. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care
3. Upcoming Events
 - a. Public Health's upcoming trainings and community discussions on COVID-19
4. Updated CDC Guidance for Operating Child Care Programs
5. Child Care and Early Development Grants from the Snoqualmie Tribe
6. DCYF Early Learning Provider Toolkits

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

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4. 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.

5. Child Care and Early Development Grants from the Snoqualmie Tribe

The Snoqualmie Tribe is offering Spring 2021 Coronavirus Response and Relief Grants to help stabilize the child care and early learning market that has been adversely affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The funds should be used to offset costs or lost revenue directly caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds can also be used by child care or early learning facilities that are currently closed due to the pandemic to assist with reopening. Additional information and an application form is available at [this link](#).

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