



COVID Statement

As of today, 7/13/21, the entire state of Washington is fully open. This means no capacity limitations except at large indoor events (>10,000), no physical distancing required. Facial coverings are still required in healthcare settings and as deemed by businesses on an individual basis¹. We are all watching developments very closely including the emergence of the delta variant of the disease and needs for possible boosters in the future with Pfizer announcing it is seeking authorization for the first booster shot. Fortunately it seems the vaccines including Johnson & Johnson, Moderna and Pfizer, remain highly effective against the delta variant².

As of 6/24, ~51% of Island County is vaccinated, 50% of Whidbey Island and ~58% of Camano island is vaccinated. The most highly vaccinated age group is between 65-79 with a vaccination rate of over 80%³. Younger peoples remain less vaccinated likely owing to several factors.

Fully vaccinated people continue to be able to safely engage in activities without wearing masks or physically distancing themselves, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal or territorial laws, rules and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance. This does not apply in the healthcare setting and on planes, buses or other forms of public transportation.

We continue to encourage those that cannot vaccinate or choose not to vaccinate to maintain 6 feet of social distance indoors and outdoors and to continue to wear a face mask. Continue to keep in mind that some people have a lowered immune response due to immunocompromised states or are taking medications that lower their immune response and those falling in this group may continue not be fully protected even if fully vaccinated.

We have received some questions regarding known exposure to SARS-COV2. According the the CDC, if you have been fully vaccinated (2 weeks after your second dose of Moderna or Pfizer vaccines or 2 weeks after your Johnson and Johnson vaccine) and have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for SARS-COV2, you do NOT need to stay away from other or get tested unless you have symptoms UNLESS you live or work in a correctional or detention facility or a homeless shelter and are around someone who has tested positive for the virus. In THAT case, you should still get tested, regardless of symptoms. This is done as a safeguard to prevent outbreaks in vulnerable populations⁴. However, IF you display symptoms including: high fever, chills, shortness of breath fatigue, new loss of taste or smell, body aches, headache,

nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, congestion or runny nose or sore throat, YOU should be tested and stay at home away from others. If you are NOT vaccinated, only partially vaccinated OR are immunocompromised and partially or fully vaccinated and are exposed to SARS-COV2 you are advised to self quarantine for at least 14 days after last exposure and get tested if you have symptoms. If you want to shorten your quarantine period, check with the health department to see what scenario could work with you as several factors would be at play in this scenario.

As a reminder, Sound Water Stewards defers masks mandates and social distancing rules to partner organizations for other activities including but not limited to: Crab Team with WA Sea Grant/University of Washington, docenting responsibilities at the Langley Whale Center, Sound Toxins, activities in Washington State Parks and Island County Marine Resources Committee (MRC) activities. When presented with conflicting guidance on social distancing and masking it is best to err with the most conservative guidance.

The Board of Directors will plan to revisit this statement monthly and update you with information and guidance as it regards to Sound Water Stewards activities. Given the almost daily changes in information, this statement should not supersede any announcements from the Island County Health Department, Washington State Health Department or the Centers for Disease Control or other medical entities.

Our job on the board is to serve you as volunteers. If you have any questions/concerns or require special accommodations for any activities in the field, please reach out to us.

Thank you and best wishes

Sound Water Stewards Board of Directors

1. <https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/WashingtonReady.pdf>
2. https://www.islandcountywa.gov/Health/COVIDDOCS/Island%20County%20Vaccination%20Report_06.24.21.pdf
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html>

1. <https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/WashingtonReady.pdf>
2. https://www.islandcountywa.gov/Health/COVIDDOCS/Island%20County%20Vaccination%20Report_06.24.21.pdf
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html>