



COVID Statement October 2021

Status of Island County vaccinations: As of 10/12/21, ~60% of Island County is vaccinated, ~58% of Whidbey Island* and ~65% of Camano island is vaccinated. The most highly vaccinated age group is between > 65 with a vaccination rate of ~81%. 16-17 year olds have now cleared 70% vaccination initiation. The 12-17 age range group is making good progress with now 50% of this age range vaccinated⁷.

Masking and social distancing: On August 18th, Governor Inslee announced all people must be masked indoors regardless of vaccination status¹ that went into effect on August 23, 2021 and now also extends to outdoor gatherings larger than 500 people². We continue to encourage those that cannot vaccinate or choose not to vaccinate to maintain 6 feet of social distance 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. Given the new recommendations and requirements, Sound Water Stewards is requiring masks or face shields in ALL SETTINGS when gathering with others outside of your household.

Exceptions: speakers in the field that are speaking to the whole group as long as they maintain 6 feet of social distance and for filming purposes for videos produced by the education committee.

Vaccine recommendations: The HHS and CDC continues to recommend booster shots for those who received **Pfizer** for those people with moderately to severely compromised immune systems and those who are aged 65 and older, those that are 18+ with certain underlying medical conditions and those that work and live in high-risk settings⁵. The FDA released briefing documents today (10/12) booster shots for both Moderna and Johnson & Johnson which precedes a two day meeting that is expected to occur on Thursday 10/14 of FDA advisers⁸.

Vaccine and/or negative COVID requirements for the upcoming month: For our upcoming annual meeting on November 16th, 2021 at WSU Research and Extension Center in Mount Vernon, we will be requiring either proof of vaccination at the door or proof of negative COVID test within 72 hours for those who would like to attend in person. For those not comfortable with this, there will be a virtual option for those who would like to participate remotely.

*Oak Harbor's vaccination rate (and therefore Whidbey Islands vaccination rate) is disproportionately impacted by the segregation of federally distributed vaccines from the Washington State WAIS system that provides the information in this report.

Further recommendations at the state level surrounding **vaccine requirements** that will affect volunteerism at Washington State Parks are currently being investigated by staff. Once it is fully clear how this will affect us as an organization, the board will be sure to let you know hopefully during next month's scheduled update.

The Board of Directors will plan to revisit this statement monthly and update you with information and guidance as it relates 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://medium.com/@GovInslee/inslee-announces-educator-vaccination-requirement-and-statewide-indoor-mask-mandate-a2f5a47d8a31>
2. <https://www.king5.com/article/news/health/coronavirus/masks-required-at-large-outdoor-events-in-washington-state-starting-monday/281-ee372a4d-a1a2-4db1-ae89-40f90e595979>
3. <https://www.king5.com/article/news/health/coronavirus/vaccine/clallam-jefferson-counties-requiring-proof-of-covid-19-vaccination-restaurants-bars/281-c9376eb1-1bda-4790-a386-60014213e4d7>
4. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/covidplan/>
5. https://getvaccineanswers.org/question/vaccine-expectations?gclid=Cj0KCQjwkIGKBhCxARIsAINMioLiyvbuG2RvOUbbygprHkxgzvVAEIEs-VIFXdIXx4TSArz3ZlIkAkaAkdnEALw_wcB#will-i-need-a-covid-19-booster-shot
6. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2021/09/13/covid-19-vaccine-booster-shots-who-can-get-them-when-still-uncertain/5773405001/>
7. https://www.islandcountywa.gov/Health/COVIDDOCS/Island%20County%20Vaccination%20Report_10.01.21.pdf
8. <https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2021/10/12/1045149078/moderna-and-j-j-say-their-data-supports-covid-vaccine-boosters>

