



### **COVID Statement January 2022**

**Status of vaccinations and guidance:** As of 12/20/21, 82.2% of the population 12 and above in Washington State has received at least one dose of and 75.6% if fully vaccinated<sup>1</sup>. The most highly vaccinated age group is between > 65 with a vaccination rate of ~81%. Please visit [Island County COVID Response Community Guidance](#) for more information. Last published on 12/31/2021. This includes information for those who have either been exposed to COVID or have been infected with COVID as it relates to isolation and quarantine.

**Masking and social distancing:** Masking for people age 5 and over in indoor settings and outdoor settings with more than 500 attendees per Governor Inslee's mandate<sup>3</sup>. 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. Sound Water Stewards continues to require masks or face shields in ALL SETTINGS when gathering with others outside of your household. This is due to several factors including a high stress burden on local hospital systems, the transmissibility of the current Omicron variant and the vulnerability of many of the populations we serve.

**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:** All patients 12+ now qualify for a booster vaccine as long as it has been longer than 5 months since the 2nd shot of your initial series for those who received Pfizer BioNTech and boosters at 5 months after initial series for those 18 and up who received the Moderna vaccine. mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are now preferred over J&J for both primary and booster vaccination. If a person elects to receive J&J COVID-19 vaccines, the schedule recommended is: 1 primary dose and 1 booster dose at least 2 months after primary dose<sup>2</sup>.

**Vaccine and/or negative COVID requirements for the upcoming months of January and February** : Volunteerism opportunities this time of the year in person are fairly scant. However, we continue to have some volunteers in the field as well as volunteers for our new in person field trip opportunity for Sound Water's University.

For Sound Water's University, ALL field trips will require masking. The Skagit Flats Winter Birding Caravan will ALSO require vaccination.

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://www.islandcountywa.gov/Health/COVIDDOCS/Newsletter%20Vol%201,%20No.%206%20211231.pdf>
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html>