



ISLAND COUNTY COVID-19
Updated Community Guidance
November 10, 2020

Island County Public Health wants to make sure that the citizens of Island County have access to reliable guidance surrounding COVID-19. We update guidance bi-weekly and hope that you use this to help inform and empower yourself and our community.

Numbers and data

At the time of this writing, Island County has 439 confirmed COVID-19 cases, including 12 deaths. A case rate of 62.49 COVID-19 cases per 100,000 was calculated for the two-week period of 10/25/20-11/07/20. Updated Island County [data edition](#), [October Epidemiology Brief](#), and [October Behavioral Health Report](#) are now available. Island County remains in modified, reduced Phase 3.

Rapid COVID-19 spread

Last week, COVID-19 activity broke two records within WA State with 1,454 new cases on 11/04/20 and 1,777 new cases on 11/07/20. The United States also broke two records, with more than 100,000 cases reported on 11/04/20 and more than 116,000 on 11/05/20. "COVID-19 is currently [spreading very quickly](#) in Washington State," said Secretary of Health John Wiesman. "We are very concerned that disease transmission will only grow over the next few weeks with the holidays coming up. The threat to overwhelming not just our hospital systems, but our ability to do contact tracing, is real. We need everyone in Washington State to take action now to stop the spread." As the holidays approach, everyone should take steps to reduce the spread of COVID-19, including:

- Limit in-person gatherings as much as you can. That means reducing the number of times you gather, how many people attend and how long you spend together.
- Always wear a face covering when you are around people who you do not live with. This includes close friends and family.
- Talk to your family and friends about alternate ways to celebrate the holidays. Brainstorm [ideas for virtual celebrations](#) so you can still enjoy spending time together without putting each other at risk.
- Make a safety plan for in-person gatherings. [Have a conversation](#) with your family and friends about what you're going to do to reduce risk of spreading COVID-19 if you gather.
- Stay home if you are sick or have been exposed to COVID-19. If you're feeling a little under the weather but aren't sure if you're getting sick, take the cautious approach and protect others by staying home.
- Keep up your good hygiene habits. Wash or sanitize your hands often and avoid touching your face.

Thank you to our Veterans

Veteran's Day may look different this year without the parades and large community events, but we can still take this important opportunity to reflect upon the service and sacrifice of military veterans. Many families and friends

have shown impressive creativity in finding safe ways to honor those who have served our country. Find or host a virtual celebration to reduce your risk of COVID-19 transmission. If you host a small gathering (ideally outdoors!), this [checklist](#) offers tips with COVID-19 safety in mind. Some additional resources are listed below:

- The U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs [webpage](#) shares a variety of virtual ceremonies and celebrations, including a concert featuring Brad Paisley, Leon Bridges and more!
- Virtual Veterans Career Fair - Free for veterans and their spouses - [Learn more](#)
- Auburn Virtual Remembrance Ceremony - [Learn more](#)
- Visit the Office of [Veterans Business Development website](#) to learn more about the programs available to help veterans, service members and their families start or grow their business.

Vaccine availability

There is no FDA approved COVID-19 vaccine at this time. Once a safe and effective vaccine is approved, the vaccine will be distributed to critical populations in phases, as supply becomes available. A date for widely available vaccine is still unknown at this time. While we do not yet have an available COVID-19 vaccine, we can all take action to get our flu vaccines! As we move into [flu season](#), we can all help save healthcare resources for the COVID-19 response in our communities by doing our part to prevent illness and hospitalizations caused by flu.

Embrace available resources

- The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) has been awarded \$1 million in CARES Act funding to support housing stability for youth who exited the Extended Foster Care Program at age 21 between March 1, 2020 and Dec. 31, 2020. [Apply for a stipend before November 13, 2020.](#)
- The Eviction Rent Assistance Program (ERAP) intends to prevent evictions that would contribute to the spread of the virus by paying past due, current due and future rent. The ERAP is targeting limited resources to those with the greatest needs while working to distribute funds equitably. To request assistance, please complete the [online application](#) or call before December 31, 2020 (Whidbey Residents – (360) 678-8284; Camano Residents – (360) 629-5257 ext. 1009). If you are struggling with Homelessness, call the Housing Support Center at (360) 678-8284.
- Recent closures and mandates for social distancing can have an impact on you and your family. If you are feeling anxious, scared, or are in need of resources related to mental health, please call the Island County Helpline at 360.678.2346 (M-F 10am – 6pm) or complete the online [referral form](#).
- As the economic impacts of COVID-19 continue, more families are taking advantage of free meals provided by school districts. While all students may be provided free meals through the end of December, families are strongly encouraged to complete a School Meal Application now. This application determines a student's eligibility for free and reduced-price meals. Read more [here](#).
- The WA State Department of Commerce is collaborating with organizations to provide support through the [Small Business Resiliency Assistance](#) program. Support is available for small businesses and nonprofits in a variety of ways, including recovery and re-opening planning, employee retention, [and translation services](#).

If you have questions or concerns about COVID-19 in Island County, start by visiting our [website](#) or our [Facebook](#) page. The Island County call center may be reached at **360.678.2301**; Monday through Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm.