



## ISLAND COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

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### PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

### STATEMENT REGARDING COVID-19

Island County, August 19, 2021

## Island County expands masking and vaccine requirements

In his August 18th, 2021, press conference Governor Inslee announced a vaccination requirement for employees working in K-12, most childcare and early learning, and higher education, as well as an expansion of the statewide mask mandate to all individuals, regardless of vaccination status. State employees and private healthcare workers are already under this vaccination requirement.

The vaccination requirement for all education staff will be a condition of their employment. A no-test-out option will not be accepted. Only exceptions will be made for religious beliefs or medical reasons. This requirement is due to the rapidly increasing numbers of positive COVID and Delta cases, including those hospitalized with the virus.

Included in the press conference yesterday, the Governor also has expanded the mask mandate to include vaccinated individuals in indoor settings and will apply to most public places across the state effective Monday, August 23, 2021. This will include restaurants, grocery stores, malls, and public-facing offices.

Exceptions will be in office spaces not easily accessible to the public where individuals are vaccinated, and when working alone indoors or in a vehicle with no public face-to-face interaction. Small, private indoor gatherings where all attendees are vaccinated are also exempt.

The Department of Health strongly recommends individuals also wear masks in crowded outdoor settings, such as outdoor concerts, fairs and farmers markets but is not required.

You can find more detailed information regarding these changes on our website:

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/Health/pages/COVID-19.aspx>

If you need help finding a place to get your COVID-19 vaccine, the state's [Vaccine Locator](#) website is a great resource. Those who need further help can call the COVID-19 Information Hotline at 1-800-525-0127, then press #. Language assistance is available.

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.