



ISLAND COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

STATEMENT REGARDING COVID-19 Island County, February 18, 2021

First case of U.K COVID-19 strain found in Island County

Washington State Department of Health has confirmed with us today that the first case of B.1.1.7. COVID-19 variant, otherwise known as the U.K. variant, has been found in Island County.

While finding the B.1.1.7 variant is concerning, Island County Public Health Officials knew it was only a matter of time before evidence was found within their community. Natural evolution of COVID-19 virus has generated viral variants that differ in their genetic sequence from the strain first detected in December 2019.

The B.1.1.7 variant has been identified in 19 positive cases of COVID-19 in Washington State, to date, including today's case in Island County.

Experts at the national and state level suggest that there are no additional public health actions beyond what is done for any COVID-19 case.

At this time, the CDC has not expressed concern that this strain would significantly impact immunity offered by the current COVID-19 vaccines.

However, this variant is shown to be more transmissible, meaning it's easier to spread from one person to others, so please keep you and your community safe by continuing to follow these guidelines:

- Wear a mask, even with people you see regularly and in your smallest social circles.
- Keep gatherings outside whenever possible.
- Avoid any social gatherings indoors, but if participating, wearing a mask and ensuring windows and doors are open to maximize ventilation.
- Wear a mask while in the car with other people, including with family who do not live in your household.
- Wash hands often, not touching your face, and carrying hand sanitizer for use when water and soap are not available.
- Stay home if you are sick or if you have been exposed to COVID-19; and,
- Get tested for COVID-19 if you have symptoms or were exposed to someone who tested positive.

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.