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Topic: Re-opening of Washington State

It's on everyone's mind; when do we return to our regular lives? So much has happened since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. When can life go back to normal?

In Washington State, the governor and the legislature are working together in the best interests of the citizens to create public health and safety guidelines. Our elected officials are trying to minimize COVID-19 cases from spreading and trying to minimize the number of COVID-19 deaths.

What is "Safe Start Washington"?

In collaboration with the Washington State Department of Health, Governor Inslee established a data-and-science-driven, four-step approach to reopening Washington, modifying physical distancing measures and minimizing the health impacts of COVID-19.

Local public health officials and the Washington State Department of Health will monitor data to assess our state's readiness for safely reopening and preventing further spread of infection and death from COVID-19.

At the end of this document is the official one-page summary chart of the 4 phases of the Safe Start reopening.

<https://www.governor.wa.gov/news-media/chart-washingtons-phased-approach>

Overview of the 4 Phases

Washington will be reopening businesses and modifying physical distancing in the following stages.

High-risk populations (older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions): from Phase 1 to Phase 4 continue to Stay Home, Stay Healthy. At Phase 4 resume public interactions with physical distancing.

Recreation: Phase 1 some outdoor recreation, then to fewer than 5 people outside the household, to 5-50 people in outdoor recreational sports, to rec facilities at less than 50% capacity, to resume all recreational activity.

Gatherings: No gatherings except drive-in spiritual service with one household per vehicle, Phase 2 is fewer than 5 people outside the household, then to maximum of 50 people gathering, to gathering more than 50 people allowed.

Travel: Phase 1 is essential travel only, Phase 2 is limited non-essential travel within proximity of home, to resume non-essential travel for Phases 3 and 4.

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Business/Employers: increasing number of businesses reopen with social distancing. See below for more detail. The last and fourth phase includes resuming staffing of worksites with continued practice of physical distancing and good hygiene.

When Do We Go to the Next Phase?

Phase 1 of reopening Washington began on May 5, 2020. After discussions with other law-makers, the Governor will issue an order for the state to move into future phases. The state will stay in every phase for a minimum of three weeks. During that time, the Department of Health, lawmakers and the Governor will re-evaluate indicators and determine if the state should remain in the current phase, advance to the next phase, or return to the previous phase. This phased approach may be adjusted as the pandemic evolves.

Before final reopening of Washington and modifying physical distancing measures, COVID-19 disease burden must be low and decreasing as measured by:

- Number and trend of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths in Washington State
- Modeling data (including Institute for Disease Modeling on Puget Sound area rates of COVID-19 spread, University of Washington Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation modeling, and Youyang Gu modeling)
- Mobility trends in Washington State, including WSDOT traffic data and Google Mobility Data

In addition to a low and decreasing disease burden, readiness will be measured and achieved in four key areas to proceed forward from each phase.

- healthcare system readiness,
- testing capacity and availability,
- case and contact investigations, and
- ability to protect high-risk populations.

https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/SafeStartWA_4May20_1pm.pdf

How Do We Know If We Are Winning Against COVID-19?

Important COVID-19 facts are being tracked. Every Wednesday, changes in these important numbers are reported to Washingtonians. At the website below, graphs show current and historical numbers of

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C-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths, the number of tests performed per day, the number of investigators trained and working, and other important facts. Four dials represent the degree of progress or regression in our battle against COVID-19. Summaries and details are available showing how we are doing regarding C-19 activity, testing capacity and availability, case and contact investigations, risk to vulnerable populations, and health care system readiness.

<https://coronavirus.wa.gov/what-you-need-know/covid-19-risk-assessment-dashboard>

County Variance Requests

The Department of Health recognizes that there are currently some small counties with a population of less than 75,000 that have not identified a resident with COVID-19 for the past three weeks. These counties have the opportunity to apply for a variance to move to Phase II of this plan before the rest of the state.

https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/SafeStartWA_4May20_1pm.pdf

As of May 12, 2020 there are 8 counties that have been approved to move to Phase 2 of the Safe Start; Columbia, Garfield, Lincoln, Ferry, Pend Oreille, Skamania, Stevens and Wahkiakum.

<https://coronavirus.wa.gov/what-you-need-know/covid-19-county-variance-application-process>

Business Activity during Stay Home, Stay Healthy Closure

On March 23rd, 2020 Governor Inslee designated a list of “Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers” to help state, local, tribal, and industry partners as they work to protect communities, while ensuring continuity of functions critical to public health and safety, as well as economic and national security.

Workers in the following sectors continued to work with physical distancing measures where possible; healthcare/public health, law enforcement, public safety, first responders, public works, food and agriculture, energy, water and wastewater, transportation and logistics, communications and information technology, community-based government operations, critical manufacturing, hazardous materials, financial services, chemical, defense industrial base.

<https://www.governor.wa.gov/issues/issues/covid-19-resources/covid-19-reopening-guidance-businesses-and-workers>

Phase 1 Business Activity, started Tuesday, May 5th, 2020

The governor’s office provided industry-specific guidance and safety criteria for businesses listed in each phase of the plan. Phase 1 businesses that can open with approved essential programs (in addition to the essential critical infrastructure workers mentioned above) are car washes, commercial drivers, construction, curbside retail, e-commerce, workforce education, landscaping, pet walking, spiritual drive-in services, and vehicle sales.

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Business activities are not authorized to open until a business is able to meet all safety criteria.

Guidance documents are available online at <https://www.governor.wa.gov/issues/issues/covid-19-resources/covid-19-reopening-guidance-businesses-and-workers>

Phase 2 Business Activity

Business that may reopen after meeting all safety criteria are remaining manufacturing, new construction, domestic services, retail in-store purchases allowed with restrictions, real estate, professional/office-based businesses with telework strongly encouraged, hair/nail/barbers, housecleaning, restaurants with less than 50% capacity and table size no larger than 5. Restaurant and tavern reopening requirements are posted online.

<https://www.governor.wa.gov/issues/issues/covid-19-resources/covid-19-reopening-guidance-businesses-and-workers>

Phase 3 Business Activity

Restaurants with less than 75% capacity/table size no larger than 10, bars at less than 25% capacity, indoor gyms and movie theaters at less than 50% capacity, government with telework strongly encouraged, libraries, museums, all other business activities except for nightclubs and events with more than 50 people.

Phase 4 Business Activity

Nightclubs, concert venues, and large sporting events. The last and fourth phase includes resuming staffing of worksites with continued practice of physical distancing and good hygiene.

<https://www.governor.wa.gov/news-media/chart-washingtons-phased-approach>

Further information

A well-organized, user-friendly and trustworthy source of COVID-19 related information for Washingtonians. Easy-to-read, colored tabs on the topics:

- Travelers & commuters
- Health care
- You & your family
- Business & workers
- Childcare/K-12/higher education
- Government emergency actions



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<https://coronavirus.wa.gov/>

If employers have questions about the Safe Start plan, contact [our state's Business Response Center](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/2562f1caf5814c46a6bf163762263aa5).
<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/2562f1caf5814c46a6bf163762263aa5>

Additional workplace safety guidance is available at <https://coronavirus.wa.gov/business-workers>

For more information about what is open and what is close, and which personal, recreational and spiritual activities are allowed. <https://coronavirus.wa.gov/what-you-need-know/whats-open-and-closed>

What can I do?

As of May 11th, 2020, according to the Washington Department of Health there have been 865 deaths in Washington State from COVID-19. No one wants more people to die from COVID-19. Our citizens can prevent deaths and serious illness by taking these simple, common sense actions:

- wash hands thoroughly,
- wear a cloth or mask over nose and mouth when outside the home, and
- keep at least 6 feet away from anyone who lives outside your household

We can keep ourselves and others protected and safe from viruses. The more hand washing, face covering and physical distancing we all do, the sooner we will have a state and a country that's safe from the deadly COVID-19 illness.

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| WASHINGTON'S PHASED APPROACH Reopening Business and Modifying Physical Distancing Measures | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| | 1 Phase 1 | 2 Phase 2 | 3 Phase 3 | 4 Phase 4 |
| High-Risk Populations⁰⁰ | Continue to Stay Home, Stay Healthy | Continue to Stay Home, Stay Healthy | Continue to Stay Home, Stay Healthy | Resume public interactions, with physical distancing |
| Recreation | Same outdoor recreation (hunting, fishing, golf, boating, hiking) | All outdoor recreation involving fewer than 5 people outside your household (camping, beaches, etc.) | - Outdoor group rec. sports activities (5-50 people) - Recreational facilities at <50% capacity (public pools, etc.) | Resume all recreational activity |
| Gatherings (social, spiritual) | - None - Drive in spiritual services with one household per vehicle | Gather with no more than 5 people outside your household per week | Allow gatherings with no more than 50 people | Allow gatherings with >50 people |
| Travel | Only essential travel | Limited non-essential travel within proximity of your home | Resume non-essential travel | Continue non-essential travel |
| Business/Employers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essential businesses open Existing construction that meet agreed upon criteria Landscaping Automobile sales Retail (curb-side pick-up orders only) Car washes Pet walkers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remaining manufacturing New construction In-home/domestic services (nannies, housecleaning, etc.) Retail (in-store purchases allowed with restrictions) Real estate Professional services/office-based businesses (telework remains strongly encouraged) Hair and nail salons/Barbers Housecleaning Restaurants <50% capacity table size no larger than 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restaurants <75% capacity/ table size no larger than 10 Bars at <25% capacity Indoor gyms at <50% capacity Movie theaters at <50% capacity Government (telework remains strongly encouraged) Libraries Museums All other business activities not yet listed except for nightclubs and events with greater than 50 people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nightclubs Concert venues Large sporting events Resume unrestricted staffing of workplaces, but continue to practice physical distancing and good hygiene |

⁰⁰Age and health status, and family size are among factors that increase the risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19. People with chronic conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, and lung disease, are also at higher risk. People with weakened immune systems, such as those with cancer, are also at higher risk. People who are pregnant are also at higher risk. People who are older and live in long-term care facilities are also at higher risk. People who are older and live in long-term care facilities are also at higher risk.

Events are changing rapidly so to confirm details, call 360.305.3600 between 1:00 – 5:00 pm. Library staff will work hard to give you current and valid information. (updated 5/13/2020)