



Clallam County Department of Health and Human Services

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PRESS RELEASE - For Immediate Release
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To Fight Climbing Rates of COVID-19 Infection and Hospitalization, All Are Urged to Mask Up in Indoor Spaces

Universal masking helps protect those who are unvaccinated and offers an extra layer of protection even for those who are fully vaccinated.

CLALLAM & JEFFERSON COUNTIES – COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations are rising dramatically in Clallam and Jefferson Counties, driven largely by the rise of variant infections and unvaccinated individuals gathering unmasked indoors. Clallam County just documented the first 15 cases of the Delta Variant on the Olympic Peninsula.

In light of these concerning trends, Drs. Allison Berry and Tom Locke have joined their fellow local health officers throughout the region in issuing the following statement Monday morning:

The health officers of King, Pierce, Snohomish, Kitsap, Clallam, Jefferson, San Juan, and Grays Harbor counties have joined together to pass on their best public health advice to protect you, your family, and our communities. We recommend all residents wear facial coverings when in indoor public settings where the vaccination status of those around you is unknown. This step will help reduce the risk of COVID-19 to the public, including customers and workers, help stem the increase in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in many parts of the state and decrease the spread of the highly contagious Delta variant.

Vaccinations are our best defense against COVID-19 and are safe, effective, and readily available for everyone age 12 and over. Please get yours immediately if you are not already vaccinated.

This is of particular importance in settings like grocery or retail stores, churches, government buildings, theaters and family entertainment centers to help ensure easy verification that all unvaccinated people are masked in those settings and as an extra precautionary measure for all. One alternative for those businesses that do not want to require masks indoors would be to verify the vaccine status of all those entering and require masking of those who are unvaccinated. The signed statement [is available here](#), as well as [a separate document](#) addressing questions.

“We only have a few tools in our fight against COVID-19: vaccines, masks and lockdowns,” reports Dr. Allison Berry, Health Officer for Clallam and Jefferson Counties. “Vaccines are incredibly effective but we do not have enough of our community vaccinated yet to rely on them alone. We need to mask up now, so we can prevent lockdowns, keep our hospitals running, and make sure our schools open fully and safely in the fall.”