

Cowlitz County COVID-19 school data Updated 02/16/21

2/16 UPDATES

- **Test data** - We continue to investigate with WA DOH the completeness of testing data for December and January.
- **Cowlitz County now in Phase 2** – Cowlitz County entered Phase 2 of the Governor’s [Roadmap to Recovery](#) plan on Sunday, February 14th. This affects youth sports. More information can be found on the [What’s open?](#) webpage as well as the [COVID-19 Reopening Guidance for Businesses and Workers](#) webpage, under [Sporting Activities](#) and [Sporting Activities FAQ](#).

The Washington State Department of Health’s [Tools to Prepare for Provision of In-Person Learning](#) provides guidance to communities when making decisions about in-person learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. It includes objective metrics and also provides room for schools to implement the guidelines in a way that best serves their students and communities. School administrators make the final decision in how to provide instruction to their students. This report provides an assessment of COVID-19 activity and related indicators in our community to support administrators’ decision-making. In addition, Cowlitz County Health & Human Services’ (CCHHS) leadership meets weekly with school district administrators to discuss COVID-19 activity as it relates to school reopening.

Do you have a question or comment? Please email us at Askcowlitzhealth@co.cowlitz.wa.us.

COVID-19 in Cowlitz County

Case counts below pre-holiday levels and continue trending down; hospitalizations & deaths have leveled off

We saw an average of 13 new cases per day from specimens collected Feb 4 - 10. Weekly case counts are now below figures from the weeks before Thanksgiving and Christmas, and are trending down. The school metric is also decreasing and is now in the **MODERATE** range. We will be able to more definitely assess how COVID-19 is spreading in our community, as well as how the drive-thru clinic at the Fairgrounds impacted our case and testing numbers, once we are certain that our testing data are fully reported.

COVID-19 hospital admissions among Cowlitz residents increased sharply from late October through late November and have leveled off since then. Regional ICU occupancy has increased from the previous [Roadmap to Recovery Report](#) but remains well **BELOW THRESHOLD**.

Cowlitz County’s COVID-19 deaths increased sharply from late October through early December and have leveled off since then. Our per-capita deaths were higher than Washington State from specimens collected from early November through mid-December but are now on par with the state average.

For whom should our community provide in person learning?

We are now at a **MODERATE** level of COVID-19 activity for the first time since mid-November. The WA DOH [Tools](#) document recommends considering case incidence and test positivity, as well as trends in cases and hospitalizations, when making decisions about in-person learning. More information can be found on page 8 of DOH’s [Tools](#) document. Specific indicators related to this question are provided on the next page.

Is there adequate access to testing in the community health system for ill students and staff?

YES Students and staff can access COVID-19 testing through their healthcare provider, the Family Health Center, or Walgreens or Rite Aid pharmacies. Visit CCHHS’ [COVID-19 Testing](#) website for more information.

Is there adequate capacity in our local health department to investigate confirmed COVID-19 cases, quarantine their close contacts, and assess whether transmission is occurring in the school?

YES CCHHS supports schools in case of an outbreak, including case and outbreak investigation and contact tracing.

Can local public health monitor the level of community spread to determine when a change in education modality is needed?

YES We publish this report weekly to provide relevant data to school districts and the community.

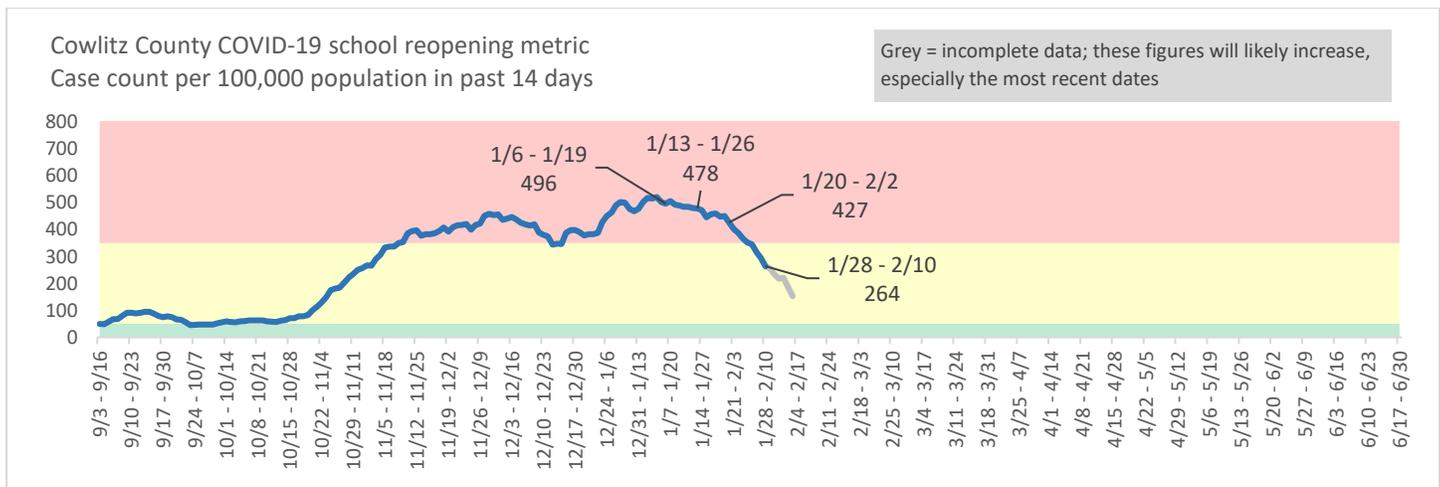
For whom should our community provide in person learning?

| Indicator | Most recent time frame with complete data | Current status | Trend over time |
|--|---|---|--|
| Cases in Cowlitz County | 1/28 – 2/10 | 264 cases per 100,000 population in past 14 days | Sharp increase starting late October, steady from Thanksgiving to Christmas, current case rate is below pre-holiday levels and continues to decrease |
| Percent of Cowlitz County tests that are positive <small>(see updates on first page for more details)</small> | 1/19 – 1/25 | 17.1% | Sharp increase from late October to mid-November, most likely steady since Thanksgiving |
| Cowlitz County residents admitted to the hospital for COVID-19* | 1/3 – 1/16 | 17 COVID-19 hospital admissions | Sharp increase from late October through late November, leveled off since mid-November |
| ICU occupancy in Southwest Washington** | 1/31 – 2/6 | BELOW THRESHOLD 71% of ICU beds occupied | Increase from previous report |

*This includes all Cowlitz residents hospitalized with COVID-19, regardless of what county they are hospitalized in. Hospitalizations are generally excluded if they are for a reason other than COVID-19.

**This indicator is now pulled from the latest DOH [Roadmap to Recovery Report](#). Southwest Washington includes Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Skamania, and Wahkiakum counties.

School reopening time trend



Indicator definitions

Percent positivity rate

This indicator is the number of positive test results received, divided by the total number of tests performed, each week. It is based on the specimen collection date. Note that these data include multiple negative test results for one individual, other than those performed on the same day, while all positive test results after an individual's first positive result are excluded.

Data source: Test data obtained from the WA DOH [COVID-19 risk assessment dashboard](#), under "Testing Capacity". Data are typically accessed on the date of this report. Population denominator obtained from Washington State Office of Financial Management [Population Estimates for 2020](#).

School reopening

This indicator can be used to understand how COVID-19 activity in Cowlitz County compares to the metrics outlined in the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI) and DOH's Decision Tree for reopening schools. It is a population rate as opposed to a count. The numerator is the total number of cases over a two-week time period, based on the specimen collection date. The denominator is the April 1, 2020 Cowlitz County population estimate provided by the Washington State Office of Financial Management. Our last step is multiplying this figure by 100,000 to give us a rate per 100,000. Because of reporting lags, the last 6 days of data are considered incomplete. The reported figure is for the two-week time period ending on the 6th day prior to this report date. DOH COVID-19 activity level groups are color-coded for reference.

The calculation is:

$$\frac{\text{Number of cases from specimens collected during most recent complete two-week time period}}{110,500 \text{ population}} \times 100,000 = \text{Current school metric}$$

More information on how we analyze and report our data can be found on page 4 of [this report](#).

Data sources: CCHHS case log, including cases reported to CCHHS as of 8:30am on the "Updated" date on the first page of this report. Population denominator obtained from Washington State Office of Financial Management [Population Estimates for 2020](#).