

3/08 UPDATES

- No new updates today.

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.

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](#)

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

COVID-19 in Cowlitz County

Case counts back down to fall levels; cases, hospitalizations, and deaths have all leveled off

We saw an average of 13 new confirmed cases per day from specimens collected Feb 24 – Mar. 2. Weekly case counts are currently back down to fall levels have leveled off. The school metric has also leveled off in the **MODERATE** range.

We continue to investigate with WA DOH the completeness of testing data since the beginning of December. 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 mid-November and have leveled off since then. Regional ICU occupancy is similar to last week and 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 and have been here for four (4) weekly school reports. 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. In addition, Kelso School District is participating in the Governor's [in-school testing program](#), which will [begin operating mid-March](#).

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.

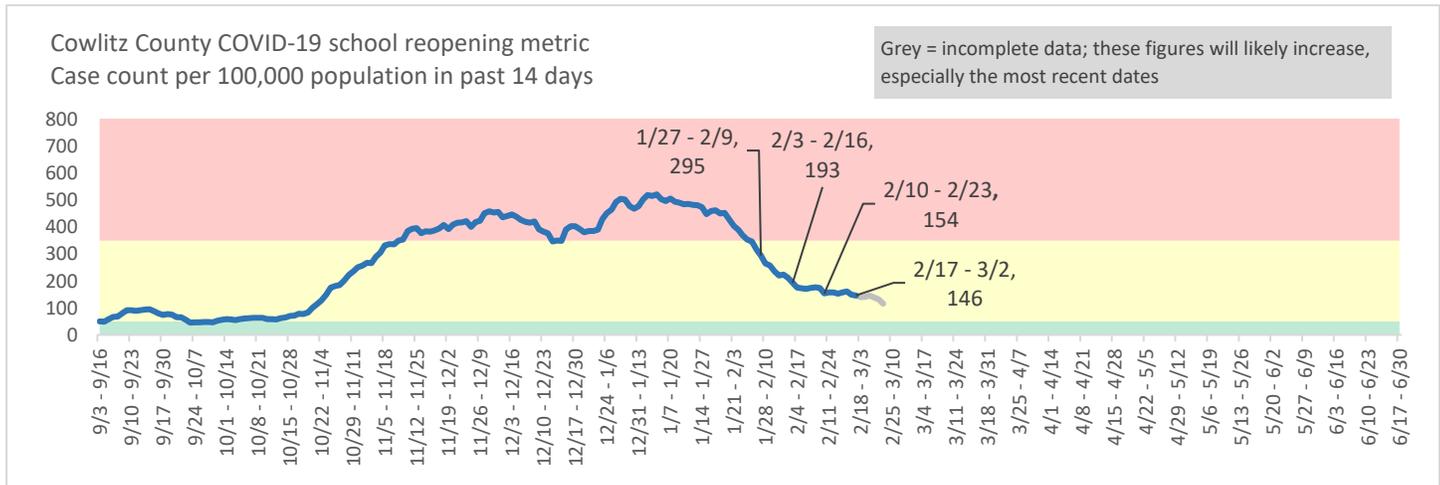
For whom should our community provide in person learning?

Indicator	Most recent time frame with complete data	Current status	Trend over time
Cases in Cowlitz County	2/17– 3/2	146 cases per 100,000 population in past 14 days	Sharp increase starting late October, steady from Thanksgiving through the end of January. Current case count is back down to late October levels and has leveled off
Percent of Cowlitz County tests that are positive <small>(see updates on first page for more details)</small>	2/9 – 2/15	12.7%	Sharp increase from late October to mid-November, most likely steady since Thanksgiving
Cowlitz County residents admitted to the hospital for COVID-19*	1/24 – 2/6	20 COVID-19 hospital admissions	Sharp increase from late October through late November, leveled off since mid-November
ICU occupancy in Southwest Washington**	2/21 – 2/27	BELOW THRESHOLD 66% of ICU beds occupied	Similar to 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 typically pulled from the latest DOH [Roadmap to Recovery Report](#). Southwest Washington includes Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Skamania, and Wahkiakum counties. Roadmap to Recovery metrics were not released by WA DOH for 2/26, so our regional figure this week was calculated by Clark County Public Health on behalf of Cowlitz County Health & Human Services.

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](#).