

5/4 UPDATES

- See “For Roadmap to Recovery phase determination” section below for the Governor’s update to the reopening plan.

This report provides COVID-19 data for Cowlitz County related to K-12 school operations and the Governor’s [Healthy Washington – Roadmap to Recovery plan](#).

School operations are informed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC’s) [Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Prevention](#) guidance and the Washington State Department of Health’s (state DOH’s) [K-12 Schools 2020-2021 Guidance](#).

The CDC and state DOH provide recommendations school administrators can use when making decisions about how and when to offer in-person learning. These are recommendations, not requirements. We support the recommendations put forth by the CDC and state DOH, and recognize that each district is making decisions that balance the needs of students and faculty with protecting their overall health and safety. School administrators are ultimately responsible for making decisions about education settings and modes. We will continue to be a reliable source for COVID-19 information and data that schools can rely on to make informed decisions about operations.

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

Current COVID-19 status in Cowlitz County

Cases have leveled off or are decreasing since early April; new hospitalizations are increasing and currently highest in 50-64-year-old adults; new deaths appear to have declined

We saw an average of 23 new confirmed and probable cases per day from specimens collected April 19-25. Weekly case counts have leveled off or may be decreasing since early April. New case counts are falling in most areas of the county except for Woodland, which has been increasing since early April. Adults aged 65 and older continue to have the lowest per capita new case rate of any age group. Cowlitz County’s weekly new per capita case rate has decreased and is now on par with the state average.

New COVID-19 hospital admissions among Cowlitz residents began to increase in mid-March. The per-capita new hospitalization rate for Cowlitz County 50-64-year-olds now exceeds the rate for residents aged 65 and older. Overall, Cowlitz County’s two-week new per capita hospital admission rate is currently more than double the state average.

Because counts are so small, trends in new COVID-19 deaths among Cowlitz residents have been challenging to assess. Overall, new deaths appear to have decreased since the end of January and are currently on par with the state per capita average.

For school operations

We are currently at a “High” level of COVID-19 community transmission.

- Our case incidence rate currently aligns with “High” levels of transmission; this has recently leveled off or is decreasing.
- Our percent positivity currently aligns with “High” levels of transmission and is most likely increasing.

For Roadmap to Recovery phase determination

Today, the Governor [announced a two-week pause](#) in movement in the Healthy Washington: Roadmap to Recovery reopening plan. With this announcement, **Cowlitz County will remain in Phase 2**. Counties will be re-evaluated at the end of two weeks.

Cowlitz County COVID-19 indicators

Case incidence and percent positivity are used to inform the state DOH’s [K-12 Schools 2020-2021 Guidance](#), while case incidence, hospital admissions, and statewide ICU occupancy are used in the Governor’s [Healthy Washington – Roadmap to Recovery plan](#).

These data are generally accessed Tuesday morning of each week. More current data may be available online.

	Most recent time frame with complete data	Current status	Recent trend over time	Where to find the most current data for this indicator
Two-week case incidence*	4/12– 4/25	317 cases per 100,000 population in past 14 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharp increase from mid-March to early April • Leveled off or decreasing since early April 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visit the state DOH’s Roadmap to Recovery Metrics webpage. 2. Scroll down to “COVID-19 Risk Assessment Dashboard” 3. Click on the “COVID-19 Disease Activity” tab 4. Select “Cowlitz County” from the dropdown “Select a County” menu 5. The default view is a 14-day rate.
Percent of tests that are positive	4/9 – 4/15	14.4%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing since mid-March 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visit the state DOH’s Roadmap to Recovery Metrics webpage. 2. Scroll down to “COVID-19 Risk Assessment Dashboard” 3. Click on the “Testing Capacity” tab 4. Select the “Percent of positive molecular tests” key metric 5. Select “Cowlitz County” from the dropdown “Select a County” menu
Cowlitz County residents admitted to the hospital for COVID-19 during the past week**	4/16– 4/22	10.0 hospital admissions per 100,000 population in the past 7 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing again since mid-March. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visit the state DOH’s Roadmap to Recovery Metrics webpage. 2. Scroll down to “COVID-19 Risk Assessment Dashboard” 3. Click on the “COVID-19 Disease Activity” tab 4. Under “Select a key metric”, click on “New hospitalizations per 100K people” 5. Select “Cowlitz County” from the dropdown “Select a County” menu.
Statewide ICU occupancy	4/21 – 4/27	82%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returning to January 2021 levels but still below threshold 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visit the state DOH’s COVID-19 Data Dashboard. 2. Click on the “Healthcare System Readiness” tab. 3. Click on “WA HEALTH ICU Occupancy”

*The CDC case incidence figure is expressed in a 7-day time frame while the state DOH uses a 14-day time frame. Divide this figure by 2 to convert to the CDC figure.

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

Note

We have transitioned to using state DOH figures in this report. More details are available in the [3/15/21 Cowlitz County COVID-19 school data report](#).