

7/7 UPDATES –

- This week's report does not include a Spotlight section.

This report is published every other Wednesday to provide a narrative of current COVID-19 trends, data not available elsewhere online, and a more in-depth analysis in our "Spotlight" section on a COVID-19-related topic of interest. This report references data obtained from the Washington State Department of Health's COVID-19 [Data Dashboard](#) and [Risk Assessment Dashboard](#), as well as more detailed in-house analysis of case, hospitalization, death, and other COVID-related data.

Data on case incidence, hospitalizations, percent positivity, and ICU occupancy are no longer provided in table format in this report, but can still be found on the state DOH's [Data Dashboard](#) and [Risk Assessment Dashboard](#).

Do you have a question or comment about this report, or a suggestion for what to include in a future Spotlight section? Please email us at Askcowlitzhealth@co.cowlitz.wa.us.

Current COVID-19 trends in Cowlitz County

Cases appear to have leveled off

We saw an average of 11 new confirmed and probable cases per day from specimens collected June 22-28. The decrease in weekly case counts from early April through early May appears to have leveled off. Cowlitz County's new per capita case rate is currently more than double the state average.

Hospitalization data are not available this week.

New COVID-19 deaths in Cowlitz County appear to have decreased since the end of January and are currently trending above the state per capita average.

The per capita molecular testing rate in Cowlitz County has decreased since mid-April and is about 20% lower than the state per capita rate.

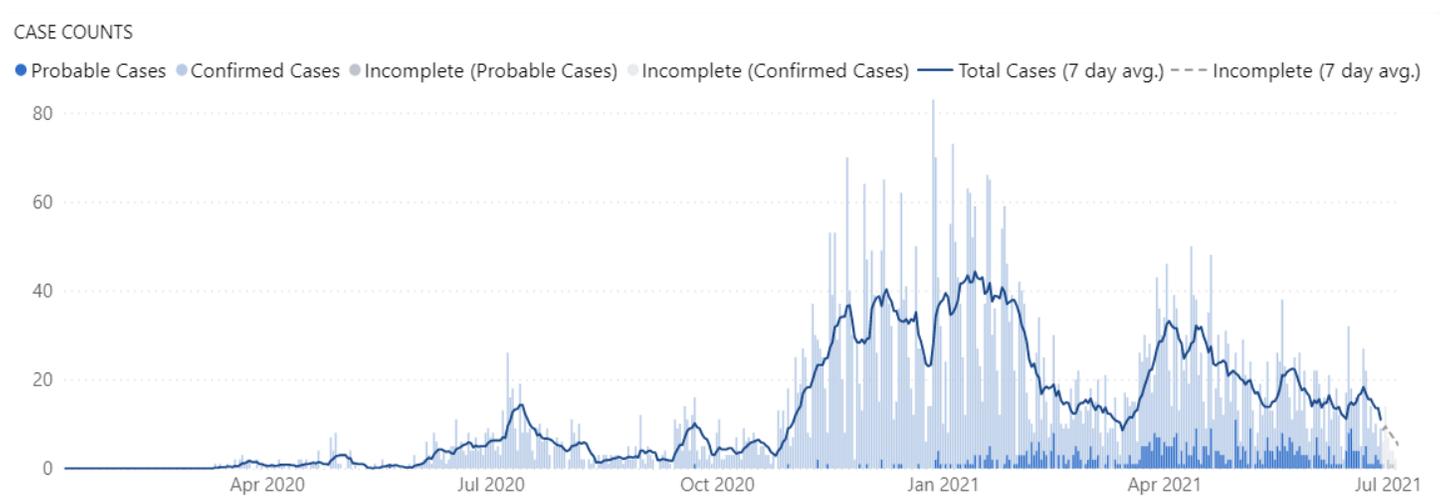
For school operations (based on CDC guidance)

We are currently at a "Substantial" level of COVID-19 community transmission, with a **one-week** case rate of 70 cases/100,000 population and a percent positivity of 6.5%.

Note that the CDC's case rate is a one week case rate, which differs from the two-week case rate used in Washington State. Cowlitz County's most recent two-week case incidence rate is 186 cases/100,000 population.

Cowlitz County COVID-19 Epidemiologic Curve

This epidemiologic curve was screenshot from the Washington State Department of Health (state DOH) [Data Dashboard](#). The most current version of this curve can be found on the “Epidemiologic Curves” tab under “Cases” and “Cowlitz County”.



Active cases

COVID-19 cases are considered “active”, or contagious, for 10 days after their symptom onset, or, for asymptomatic cases, 10 days after their test date. There are currently 121 identified active COVID-19 cases in Cowlitz County.

Deaths

The number of deaths reported by the state DOH includes both confirmed and suspect deaths. Confirmed COVID-19 deaths are those with a positive COVID-19 test (molecular or antigen) and have COVID-19 listed on the death certificate. Suspected COVID-19 deaths are those that occur within 28 days of a positive COVID-19 test but do not have COVID-19 listed on the death certificate. Suspect deaths are removed from the state’s count if COVID-19 is later ruled out as the official cause of death following a clinical review. A clinical review may instead reclassify a suspect death into a confirmed death. As a result, the number of suspect deaths in the most recent month or two may decrease if they are ruled out or reclassified to “confirmed”. All confirmed and suspect COVID-19 deaths undergo a clinical review in Cowlitz County.

	2020										2021						Total
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Suspect deaths	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Confirmed deaths	0	0	0	0	5	1	1	0	6	18	17	15	6	6	7	10	92
Total deaths	0	0	0	0	5	1	1	0	6	18	17	16	6	6	7	10	93

Additional information on COVID-19 deaths

- Over 95% of confirmed deaths had underlying conditions.
- 35% of confirmed deaths were associated with a long-term care facility.

Variants & breakthrough cases

Note that information on these topics is rapidly evolving and the data are very dynamic. This report includes the most up-to-date data available, and may change as time goes on.

Variants

- Genetic sequencing of COVID-19 viruses allows public health to identify which variants of COVID-19 are circulating.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [SARS-CoV-2 Classifications and Definitions website](#) provides information on variants being tracked in the US.
- 1.99% of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Cowlitz County (123 cases total) have been genetically sequenced.

Note that genetic sequencing can only be performed on COVID-19 cases confirmed with a molecular test. In addition, most confirmed cases are not sequenced.

- Cowlitz County Health and Human Services has identified 60 cases with a variant of concern.
 - B.1.1.7 (alpha) – 18 cases
 - B.1.427 (epsilon) – 9 cases
 - B.1.429 (epsilon) – 13 cases
 - P.1 (gamma) – 20 cases

Because only a small proportion of COVID-19 specimens are sequenced, the cases listed in this report do not capture all COVID-19 cases in Cowlitz County with each specific variant of concern.

- Among those 46 cases:
 - 5 have been hospitalized for COVID-19
 - 4 have died from COVID-19
- Ages of Cowlitz County cases with a variant of concern range from below 18 through their 90's; the average age is 47.
- The latest statewide variant report can be found [here](#).

Breakthrough cases

- A "breakthrough case" is someone who becomes infected with COVID-19 after they are fully vaccinated. A person is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving their final dose of the vaccine series. The first Cowlitz County residents to receive the COVID-19 vaccine became fully vaccinated in mid-January.
- Breakthrough cases are currently identified when vaccine status is collected during the case investigation and the state DOH confirms that a case meets the state definition. Our nurses have not been able to successfully collect vaccine information from all cases. Because of this, additional Cowlitz County breakthrough cases likely exist that we have not identified.
- Cowlitz County Health and Human Services has identified 73 cases that meet the state definition of a confirmed vaccine breakthrough case.

The state DOH is working on a system to actively identify breakthrough cases by comparing COVID-19 vaccine data with case data. Once this system is implemented, additional breakthrough cases will likely be identified.

- Among those 73 cases:
 - 48 (66%) had COVID-19 symptoms
 - 6 have been hospitalized for COVID-19
 - 3 have died from COVID-19
- Ages of COVID-19 vaccine breakthrough cases range from 20's to 90's; the average age of breakthrough cases is 61.
- These 73 breakthrough cases identified to date represent 2.2% of cases since mid-January.
- The latest statewide breakthrough report can be found [here](#).

Given the small number of variant and breakthrough cases, Cowlitz County HHS is not releasing any additional information about these cases to protect privacy.