



MEDIA RELEASE

San Juan County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 8, 2020

Case Update

Note: Current positive case numbers are available online at the [County Case Count Page](#). As indicated on that page, these numbers are only updated after case confirmation is complete, usually daily. It is possible that other information sources in community may be quicker to report on new cases, but ensuring privacy and accuracy is critical for this official information source.

Since the [last update](#) on Thursday DEC 31st, total cases in San Juan County have increased from 79 to 88. Eight of the new cases are on San Juan Island, and one is on Orcas Island.

Note that approximately 28 individuals who are close contacts of positive cases are currently in active quarantine.

ORCAS ISLAND

The new case on Orcas Island is due to off-island travel. This is the only positive case being actively monitored on Orcas Island at this time.

LOPEZ ISLAND

There are no new cases and no positive cases being actively monitored on Lopez Island at this time.

SAN JUAN ISLAND

Of the eight new cases on San Juan Island the following information is known:

- There are three separate household groupings of two cases each on San Juan Island. Four of these cases have been tied to off-island travel, and the other two are suspected but not confirmed to have originated from an off-island visitor.
- The remaining two cases are not connected to each other or any previous case. The transmission source for these cases is off-island travel.

Note: Though the majority of these cases are related to holiday or recreational travel, not all off-island travel is due to holiday or recreational travel. Work, medical appointments, family emergencies, and other situations can all require off-island travel.

There are seven positive cases being actively monitored on San Juan Island at this time. Note that the timing of testing, test results, and symptom onset could mean that a newly reported positive case could be outside of their isolation period. This is why there are more new cases (9) than there are actively monitored positive cases (8).

OVERALL PICTURE:

BAD NEWS: It is clear that increased holiday travel has resulted in increased cases. This is in no way surprising and is being seen across WA and the United States. What this means is that cases will continue to increase for the next week or two as a result of that travel, and perhaps longer depending on the number additional cases that result from this dramatic uptick.

GOOD NEWS: The nine new cases in San Juan County have resulted in relatively few close contacts, nearly all of whom are immediate household contacts of the positive individuals. This is because those who have traveled have made a very conscious effort to self-quarantine upon return to the islands, even if they were not experiencing any symptoms. While avoiding travel is always best, if you choose to travel, please don't go to work, socialize, send you children to childcare, or otherwise make decisions that could jeopardize the health of the community upon return home.

In addition to testing news, vaccines are clearly the primary topic of COVID discussion at this time. For a complete update on COVID vaccine distribution efforts in the islands, [please take a look at this recent Hot Topic FAQ](#).