



MEDIA RELEASE

San Juan County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 15, 2021

Case Update

Note: Current positive case numbers are available online at the [County Case Data Dashboard](#). 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 Friday JAN 8th, total cases in San Juan County have increased from 88 to 96. Seven of the new cases are on San Juan Island, one is on Orcas Island.

Note that approximately 42 individuals who are close contacts of positive cases are currently in active quarantine.

ORCAS ISLAND

The single new case is connected to a previous case for which transmission source has been tied to off-island travel. One positive case is 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 seven new cases on San Juan Island the following information is known:

- Two of the new cases are close household contacts of a previous case. The transmission source is tied to the hosting of an off-island visitor.
- Three of the remaining new cases are related to off-island travel.
- The transmission sources of the final two cases are still under investigation.

OVERALL PICTURE:

Clearly the islands (and San Juan in particular) continue to see large numbers of new cases (though relatively speaking, our case rates are still low by many measures). Nearly all these cases have been directly tied to off-island travel. A few have been connected to the hosting of off-island visitors. This is exactly what we knew would happen during and after the holidays. Hopefully we'll see a decline in cases starting next week – but given the spikes we are seeing elsewhere; this surge may not go away anytime soon.

As always, a major concern is overwhelming our healthcare infrastructure. In the region of Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan, and Island Counties the percentage of hospital beds devoted to COVID patients has increased by 61%. This is a dramatic and worrying trend.

On the vaccine front, [please take a look at this recent Q&A](#).

For those looking for information on the Governor's new two phase reopening plan, [please review this Hot Topic](#). Note that on JAN 15th the WA DOH determined that the North Region (including San Juan County) would remain in Phase 1 for at least another week. The surge in COVID hospitalizations mentioned above is currently the reason for remaining in Phase 1.