



MEDIA RELEASE

San Juan County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 9, 2021

Weekly 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 APRIL 2nd, total cases in San Juan County have increased from 141 to 154.

Note that there are 103 close contacts of positive cases currently in active quarantine.

ORCAS ISLAND

There are no new cases on Orcas Island since the last update. There are no confirmed positive cases under active monitoring on Orcas Island at this time.

LOPEZ ISLAND

There are no new cases on Lopez Island since the last update. There are no confirmed positive cases under active monitoring on Lopez Island at this time.

SAN JUAN ISLAND

There are thirteen new cases since the last report on San Juan Island. The following details are known about these new cases:

- Nine of these cases are related to a recent school athletics based outbreak, six are students and three are household contacts.
- Two of these cases are related to individuals from a single household and out-of-state travel.
- Two of these cases are household contacts of previously reported positive cases.

There are 12 positive cases under active monitoring on San Juan Island at this time.

OVERALL PICTURE:

The past two weeks have been a real challenge for the County Health & Community Services Contact Tracing Team. For nearly every person in quarantine, there were at least several more who needed to be interviewed and cleared. With more than 100 people in quarantine, the scale of the workload is enormous.

Yet, contact tracing and quarantining close contacts is the very foundation of an effective effort to contain the spread of the illness. The Contact Tracing Team wants to extend its gratitude to the many islanders who took the time to answer numerous questions, share details of their daily lives, and in some cases, quarantine themselves for the greater good of the community.

The recent surge of positive cases serves as a critical reminder:

-If we want to limit spread, we need to limit exposure. The points of transmission we're seeing are not when people are fully masked, and they're not when people are outdoors. It doesn't appear to be the school classroom setting (fingers crossed it stays that way), nor when people are playing sports and maintaining precautions. Spread happens via close unmasked contact. Some ways this can happen are sharing a meal indoors, working in close proximity while unmasked, riding in a vehicle unmasked, or socializing or gathering indoors. Limiting spread in the community means preventing these high-risk activities.

-The next week or two will reveal a lot. Was this an isolated outbreak and were we able to contain it? Or, has it already spread beyond those in quarantine? Will we see similar outbreaks on all islands as people travel for spring break, continue to relax their precautions, and transmit the disease to the island community?

-Clearly schools have the potential to be high-risk environments. The important lesson is that it is only through very disciplined adherence to masking and other safety protocols in the schools that safety can be maintained. Encouraging all staff and students to closely follow and enforce guidelines is critical.

-The new variants spread more easily. Likely the new variants are here or will be here soon. The precautions we're taking matter and are our best chance of avoiding a roll-back to full lock down.

-COVID can be a brutal and long-lasting illness, even for those who are young or healthy. While our older residents are at the highest risk for severe impacts, even what is measured as "mild" COVID can lead to extended sickness and side effects, including a much-diminished ability to engage in exercise or other activities.

-While the vaccination effort is encouraging, we're not far enough along to relax. Hopefully soon.