

HOT TOPIC #52: June 25, 2021

COVID-19 updates from San Juan County around subjects on the minds of islanders

The Latest on Masking

As of June 27th, the San Juan County Health Officer Order requiring all customers (regardless of vaccination status) to wear masks inside businesses will end. Now is a good time to take a look at what masking requirements will look like going forward. This is new territory for us all, so we hope this will help make the road ahead a little clearer.

THE BASICS:

As of Sunday June 27th, fully vaccinated (2 or more weeks after final shot) customers in San Juan County businesses will no longer be required to mask up. Note that individual businesses may choose to continue to enforce their own restrictions.

As of the 27th, there will be no remaining San Juan County Health Officer orders in effect. All ongoing requirements will be from the State of Washington or the Federal Government.

As per WA State Secretary of Health requirements, all unvaccinated individuals are required to mask up inside businesses and other public spaces (there are some exceptions for children under 5 and those with some health conditions). [Full details are here](#). There are a few exceptions noted in the guidance – including while eating/drinking. Note that businesses are not required to actively investigate customer vaccine status.

Masks are not required outdoors, other than for unvaccinated individuals who are unable to maintain six feet of social distance.

There are distinct rules for businesses and their employees that are set by Washington State Labor & Industries. [Full details are here](#). The main requirements are that unvaccinated employees are required to mask up and businesses are required to document vaccination status of their staff. Businesses should carefully review the WA L&I guidance for full details.

Note that we're at a time of transition. The situation will be evolving in the weeks and months to come.

SOME COMMON QUESTIONS:

Will the Governor be lifting all restrictions on June 30th? What are the details?

It is expected that a number of the Governor's restrictions will be lifted at the end of June, but details have yet to be confirmed. The assumption is that most limits on business or event capacity will be removed, but that unvaccinated individuals will continue to be required to mask up in public spaces.

Are there locations where WA State mask requirements will remain unchanged?

Everyone (regardless of vaccination status) will need to continue to mask up at schools, healthcare facilities, camps, and on public transit.

How do I prove my vaccination status?

There may be situations where you may be asked to prove your vaccination status in order to unmask, i.e. at work or at an event. You can prove this by showing your vaccine record card (or a photo of it) or a certificate of vaccination.

What if I lost my vaccine record card?

Don't worry! It happens! Wherever you got your vaccine, the provider reported the vaccine information to the Washington State Immunization Information System (WAIS). This is your official immunization record and has your entire vaccine history. You can access this information online or through your phone!

Washington's Department of Health has created a pathway to access this information called MyIR ("my immunization record"). You can sign up for free by visiting www.MyIRMobile.com. Please note that verification to access these records is not immediate and only available in the English language currently. For help accessing MyIR or any other vaccination record questions you can call the state DOH COVID-19 Hotline at 833-VAX-HELP or email waisrecords@doh.wa.gov.

I haven't received my vaccine yet, can I unmask too?

Nope, not yet! The Secretary of Health still has a mask order in place for people who are unvaccinated. If you are in public, you are still required to wear a mask and socially distance yourself from others. This protects other unvaccinated people, children under 12, and others with conditions that prevent them from being vaccinated.

A large part of enforcing this in businesses and other public places will be on the honor system. We ask that those who are unvaccinated comply with the mask mandate in order to keep all our citizens and visitors safe this summer. If you aren't vaccinated and want to be, [check out our website](#) for resources to other island providers in order to make an appointment.

I'm a business owner and I would like to enforce masking for unvaccinated people. Are there signs available?

Washington DOH has made some signs for this purpose. [Here's one option.](#) [And here's another.](#) If you want to see all the resources DOH has put together, [you can click this link.](#)

OVERALL PICTURE:

Our vaccination rates are worth a cheer! We are indebted to the amazing work of the Health & Community Services Department and the many, many volunteers who helped us get to this point. And a huge thank you to all the vaccinated islanders who have helped make this community safer.

We are shifting our strategy away from hosting mass clinics to supporting the local providers on each of the islands. The decreased demand among islanders is now at a level where local providers can meet the demand during regular clinic and pharmacy encounters.

We are optimistically anticipating Moderna to be approved for 12-17 year olds this summer. Moderna is a much easier vaccine to work with logistically, and many local providers have Moderna available or are approved to receive it.

Thank you all, and happy summer!

SOURCE LINKS:

<https://lni.wa.gov/forms-publications/F414-179-000.pdf>

<https://medium.com/wadepthealth/washington-is-getting-ready-for-reopening-238f332bcd5f>