

Washington counties cannot move to the next phase of reopening for at least another two weeks

As coronavirus cases continue to increase across the state, Gov. Jay Inslee extended a pause Tuesday on reopening the economy to July 28 and warned there was a “significant chance” restrictions could be put in place again.

“People should not be surprised if more gets rolled back over the course of this pandemic, and that’s going to be impacted by how many people wear masks and how many people decide to socially distance, and that’s going to be determinative of our decisions over the next few days,” Inslee said.

On June 29, Inslee announced [a pause on reopening](#), citing rising cases.

From June 24 to July 7, there were 111.9 new coronavirus cases per 100,000 Washington residents, which is higher than the previous peak of disease activity in March.

Inslee said how people react to the virus now will impact what happens in the fall when schools reopen.

“This is a very dangerous position we are in,” Inslee said. If coronavirus cases continue to rise and the state needs to implement more restrictions, Inslee said things like indoor seating at restaurants and bars would be under consideration.

NIH gives Seattle's Benaroya Research Institute more than \$5.8 million for COVID-19 research

The [Benaroya Research Institute \(BRI\)](#) at Virginia Mason has received more than \$5.8 million from the National Institutes of Health to fund its research of the immune system response to COVID-19.

BRI is studying the severity of coronavirus infections and different immune responses to the virus. The work being funded by the grants includes:

- Examining the immune response in people hospitalized with COVID-19 to find markers that could predict a more severe infection, and in those recovering to get insights into an effective immune response;
- Looking at the site of infection in lung tissue to find ways to interrupt, slow or stop the infection;
- Studying an overactive, inflammatory immune response that occurs in some severe cases; and
- Studying two strains of the virus that are circulating in Seattle, learning how each may lead to different immune responses and disease severity.

A dozen other COVID-19 [research efforts](#) are happening at BRI, which is dedicated to studying the immune system and diseases that affect it.

“I am proud of BRI’s rapid response to researching COVID-19,” BRI President Dr. Jane Buckner said in a news release about the grant funding. “Our vision is for a healthy immune system for every individual. As part of that work, we lend our immunology expertise and tools to help uncover answers to the COVID-19 puzzle — why some people experience a more severe infection, to what underlying factors may dictate a worse infection.”

Canada, U.S. poised to extend border restrictions to Aug. 21

The U.S. and Canada are poised to extend their agreement to keep their shared border closed to nonessential travel to Aug. 21, but a final confirmation has not been given, a person familiar with the matter said Tuesday.

The agreement would likely extend the closure by another 30 days. The official was not authorized to speak publicly ahead of an announcement this week, and spoke on condition of anonymity. The restrictions were announced on March 18 and were extended in April, May and June.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said this week that a decision on the border would be announced later this week. "We're going to continue to work hard to keep Canadians safe and to keep our economies flowing, and we will have more to say later," Trudeau said.

Mexican Foreign Affairs Secretary Marcelo Ebrard said on Friday that an opening between the U.S. and Mexico "wouldn't be prudent right now," given that coronavirus cases in "the states of the southern United States, California, New Mexico, Arizona and Texas, are on the rise."

Most Canadians fear a reopening. The U.S. has more confirmed cases and deaths from COVID-19 than any country in the world while Canada has flattened the epidemic curve.

Early results are promising from coronavirus-vaccine testing in Seattle

A coronavirus vaccine being tested in Seattle triggered strong immune responses in 45 volunteers, according to [preliminary results](#) published Tuesday in the New England Journal of Medicine.

After two doses of the vaccine, volunteers' neutralizing antibody responses were higher than the average levels seen in the blood of people who had been infected with the novel coronavirus.

Volunteers were first injected [in Seattle](#) on March 16, marking the first human tests on any coronavirus vaccine. Since then, the field has exploded, with more than 20 experimental vaccines now in human trials and more than 100 in preclinical stages.

Dr. Lisa Jackson, a senior investigator at Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute in Seattle, is lead author of the new report. "I think the results are encouraging," she said. The speed with which the trials have progressed is also impressive. "Processes that usually take years or even decades are now being accomplished in a matter of months," Jackson said.

[Read the full story here.](#)

Antibody testing of UW Medicine health care workers shows low COVID-19 prevalence

Approximately 3 percent of front-line UW Medicine health care workers have COVID-19 antibodies, below the rate found in the general population, the UW Medicine [Virology Lab](#) announced Monday. These early results show that steps taken to protect health care workers are effective and that front-line workers at UW Medicine are at no greater risk than the population at large, UW Medicine said in a statement.

UW Medicine's goal in offering antibody testing to all employees has been to determine the prevalence of previous COVID-19 infection within the population of health care workers compared to the prevalence in the general public. The initial phase of testing focused on staff at Harborview Medical Center, UW Medical Center, Airlift Northwest and UW Neighborhood Clinics with direct exposure to COVID-19 patients, including those working in the Emergency Department and dedicated COVID-19 intensive and acute care units.

A second phase of testing included health care workers from regular inpatient units. UW Medicine employees who fall outside of these two groups are also being offered the test in a third phase, UW Medicine said.

"Coronavirus transmission risk can be successfully mitigated if early and frequent testing and safety measures are implemented," the statement said. "This allows for the rapid isolation of known coronavirus cases, which creates a safer environment for hospital workers and patients while lowering risk to the general public they interact with outside of work."

Inslee requests extension of National Guard mission for COVID-19 pandemic response

Gov. Jay Inslee sent a [letter](#) today to the Trump administration requesting an extension of federal authority and funding for Washington National Guard employment in support of COVID-19 pandemic emergency response operations through December 31, 2020. The letter reads, in part:

"As the number of positive COVID-19 cases continues to climb in our state, it is clear that help from the Washington National Guard remains essential through the end of the year... Currently, more than 1,000 Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen are assisting with critical missions that keep our food banks operational and our neighbors fed. They are critical to our efforts to slow the spread of the virus by supporting COVID-mapping missions, assembling test kits, and operating community-based test sites. Additionally, uniquely skilled National Guard planners are assisting my COVID-19 food security team and other state agencies to ensure that we meet the health and welfare needs of Washingtonians through our phased re-opening plan."

To date, the Washington National Guard has delivered more than 1.3 million meals or 33.5 million pounds of food to struggling families at food banks across the state, tested over 14,000 people at community-based testing sites, and built more than 150,000 test kits.

- [Read the full letter here](#)
- [May 20, 2020 letter requesting extension through end of July](#)

Counties	Phase	Specific Guidance
Benton*, Chelan*, Douglas*, Franklin*, Yakima* *Modified Phase 1	1	<p>Essential Business Guidance</p> <p>Many parts of the economy are already allowed to operate safely as essential businesses. For a list of essential businesses click here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture – issued May 28 • Additional Agricultural Guidance – issued June 2 • Automotive, Energy, Food and Agriculture, Healthcare/Public Health, In-Home Care, Maintenance, Recreation, Real Estate, and Retail Guidance – issued March 31 • Construction Guidance – issued March 25 • Commercial driver license guidelines – issued May 7 • Elective Surgeries Guidance – issued April 29 • Funeral Guidance – issued March 28 • Outdoor Guidance – issued April 27 • Real Estate and Mortgage Guidance – issued March 27 • List of approved essential workforce education programs – issued May 7 (Updated May 19) • Essential workforce education program standards – issued May 7 <p>Phase 1 Business Activity Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Guidance on Voluntary Contact Information – issued May 15 • Car Washes Requirements – issued May 7 • Construction – issued April 24 • Additional Construction Guidance – issued April 29 • Curbside Retail – issued May 8 • Higher Education – issued June 1 • Landscape Services and Outdoor Maintenance Industry – issued May 8 • Outdoor Recreation – issued May 14 (updated June 9) • Outdoor Recreation- Golf – issued May 15

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pet Walking Industry – issued May 8 • Recreational Activities* – issued June 9 • Religious and Faith Organizations – issued May 27 (Updated June 18) • Vehicle and Vessel Sales Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions – issued May 6 • Washington Talking Book and Braille Library – issued June 2 • Weddings, Funeral and Memorial Services – issued June 18 <p>*Modified Phase 1 Guidance</p>
Adams, Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grant, Jefferson, Kitsap, Klickitat, Okanogan, Pierce, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Spokane, Walla Walla, Whatcom	2	<p>Phase 2 Business Activity Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Guidance on Voluntary Contact Information – issued May 15 • Card Rooms – issued June 12 • Construction – issued May 15 • Curbside Library Services – issued June 2 • Dine-in restaurants and taverns – issued May 11 (updated May 15) • Drive-in Theaters – issued June 2 • Domestic Services – issued June 9 • Fitness – issued May 19 (Updated June 5) • Higher Education – issued June 1 • In-store retail - issued May 12 • Manufacturing operations - issued May 12 • Outdoor Recreation – issued May 14 (updated June 9) • Outdoor Recreation- Golf – issued May 15 (updated June 9) • Personal Services (including Cosmetologists, Hairstylists, Barbers, Estheticians, Master Estheticians, Manicurists, Nail Salon Workers, Electrologists, Permanent Makeup Artists, Tattoo Artists, Cosmetology Schools and Esthetics Schools) - issued May 13 • Pet Grooming – issued May 18 • Professional Photography – issued May 15 • Professional Services - issued May 13 • Real Estate – issued May 19 • Religious and Faith Organizations – issued May 27 (Updated June 18) • Sporting Activities – issued June 5 • Weddings, Funeral and Memorial Services – issued June 18
Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Grays Harbor, Island, Kittitas, Lewis, Lincoln, Mason, Pacific Pend Oreille, Skamania, Stevens, Thurston, Wahkiakum, Whitman	3	<p>Phase 3 Business Activity Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Template for Phase 3 Businesses - Issued June 5 • Religious and Faith Organizations – issued May 27 (Updated June 18) • Sporting Activities – issued June 5 • Weddings, Funeral and Memorial Services – issued June 18

New COVID-19 Proclamations:

