



STATE OF WASHINGTON

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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May 15, 2020

Troy Henderson, Director  
Whitman County Public Health  
310 N Main Street  
Colfax, Washington 99111

Dear Director Henderson:

I am in receipt of Whitman County's COVID-19 variance application requesting approval to fully implement Phase II of Governor Inslee's Phased Approach to Reopening Washington Plan. I have found your application to be complete and your public health, health care, and community resources to be appropriate for the variance consideration.

**Whitman County's Phase II variance application is hereby approved with the following conditions:**

1. An individual Phase II business sector (e.g., manufacturing, new construction, retail, restaurants, etc.) may reopen only AFTER the state publishes its guidelines for the specific sector. The state is quickly working to finalize these and will publish each of them as each is finalized. After it does, an individual business is only allowed to reopen after it can implement those guidelines. The guidelines can be accessed at <https://coronavirus.wa.gov/what-you-need-know/safe-start>.
2. Your department must notify the Washington State Department of Health 24/7 on-call communicable disease duty officer at (206) 418-5500 of any COVID-19 outbreak within your jurisdiction and must do so within six (6) hours of your notification.
3. You are required to monitor the pandemic in your community for signs of community transmission or any concerning acceleration. If you find such condition(s), you must promptly notify the Washington State Department of Health 24/7 on-call communicable disease duty officer at (206) 418-5500 and request a consult with the state's infectious disease epidemiologist or health officer.
4. You may not proceed to Phase III of Governor Inslee's Phased Approach to Reopening Washington Plan without further authorization to do so from me. In no case will authorization to move to the next phase be given without at least a three (3) week monitoring period.

Subject to the conditions in this variance, the activities and business services listed in Phase II of Governor Inslee's Phased Approach to Reopening Washington Plan are now permitted in Whitman County and exempt from the Stay Home – Stay Health Proclamation's prohibitions. These activities and business services are:

- Recreation: Outdoor recreation involving 5 or fewer people outside your household (camping, beaches, etc.)
- Gatherings: Gather with no more than 5 people outside your household per week
- Travel: Essential travel and limited non-essential travel for Phase I & II permissible activities
- Businesses/employers:
  - Remaining manufacturing
  - Additional construction phases
  - In-home/domestic services (nannies, housecleaning, etc.)
  - Retail (in-store purchases allowed with restrictions)
  - Real estate
  - Professional services/office-based businesses (telework remains strongly encouraged)
  - Hair and nail salons/barbers
  - Pet grooming
  - Restaurants/taverns <50% capacity and table size no larger than 5 (no bar-area seating)

People in high-risk populations are strongly encouraged to limit their participation in these Phase II activities and business services. High-risk populations are currently defined by the CDC as:

- Persons 65 years of age and older;
- People of all ages with underlying medical conditions (particularly not well controlled), including:
  - People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma,
  - People who have serious heart conditions,
  - People who are immunocompromised,
  - People with severe obesity,
  - People with diabetes,
  - People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis, and
  - People with liver disease; and
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility.

I may revoke this variance if circumstances change within your jurisdiction, such as a significant community transmission, no or minimal access to COVID-19 testing, inadequate surge capacity in the hospital, inadequate PPE supplies, inadequate case and contact investigations, inadequate isolation or quarantine facilities, or other conditions warranting significant concern. My intent would be to discuss my concerns with you prior to taking such action. However, if I find urgent concerns, I reserve the right to immediately revoke the variance. The Governor also retains the right to re-impose restrictions upon your jurisdiction under his authority.

The Washington State Department of Health stands ready to provide any technical assistance you may need in your implementation. We appreciate your work and commitment to your community.

Respectfully,



John Wiesman, DrPH, MPH  
Secretary of Health