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Emergency Declaration Extended to August 18

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Emergency declaration continued to support public health response

 Chart of Washington County status within Oregon Reopening Framework

The Washington County Board of Commissioners extended by 28 days, until August 18, the county's prior declaration of emergency regarding the response to the new coronavirus. The [new emergency declaration](#) continues the authorizations, support for coordination and other actions from the prior declaration adopted on June 23.

Washington County entered phase 1 reopening within [Governor Kate Brown's reopening framework](#) on June 1. The governor subsequently linked Washington County's future progress toward phase 2 reopening to that of Clackamas and Multnomah counties. Since that time, Washington County has performed poorly on several of the governor's criteria for remaining in phase 1.

"We continue to have increased cases as well as increased hospitalization," said Board of Commissioners Chair Kathryn Harrington. "Due to these community results, we are not successfully operating in Phase 1 and we are really working to focus our efforts so that we will be able to get to success in operation in Phase 1 and also be supportive of getting kids back to schools."

Health and Human Services Chief Epidemiologist Kimberly Repp underscored Harrington's observations in [an overview of the data](#) showing where Washington County stands within the statewide reopening framework. Among the governor's five criteria, only contact tracing capacity has been consistently met within Washington County or the region over the last two months. Measures such as the percent of cases not traced to another known source and COVID-19-related hospitalizations are worsening.

"If you wait until our hospitals are full, then it is too late," said Repp. "How and when this ends depends on individuals' choices."

"The [demographics of our cases](#) are changing," added Repp. "A significant majority of cases now are people in their 20s. This is not how we started. We started in our elderly and our working age, and now it has switched significantly to younger people."

[Repp's full presentation is available on the Washington County YouTube channel.](#)

Washington County is working to implement a paid media campaign focusing on younger residents with messages about protecting against the spread of COVID-19. The campaign would be coordinated regionally with Clackamas and Multnomah counties.

The board [first declared an emergency on March 4](#), just after the county's first case of COVID-19 was discovered.

The county's emergency operations center (EOC) also activated soon after the first case of new coronavirus was reported. The coordinating center serves to support public health operations and to help organize the multi-agency response to the outbreak. Hundreds of staff and representatives from several community partners have been working in the EOC since that time, using appropriate social distancing. County staff continues to collaborate with community partners and other jurisdictions to collectively slow the spread of this new disease.

[Objectives for the Washington County EOC](#) include:

- **Equity:** Ensure all EOC sections [incorporate equity considerations](#) into their actions and prioritize support to vulnerable populations and marginalized communities.
- **Public Information:** Provide timely and accurate information and guidance to the community regarding face covering requirements and other public health measures that will help reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- **Public Health Response:** Manage the expanded public health workforce responsible for case investigation, contact tracing, active monitoring, and outbreaks. Fill basic needs for people who require assistance while isolated or quarantined.
- **Governor's Orders:** Coordinate the thorough implementation of disease control measures and enforce the governor's executive orders related to COVID-19.
- **Disparate Impacts:** Develop and implement strategies to slow disease spread in settings and communities that are disproportionately impacted (communities of color, houseless, long-term care and other congregate settings, migrant farmworkers).
- **Resources:** Provide resources, including medical personal protective equipment (PPE) and other support, to eligible recipients.
- **COVID-19 Funding:** Provide support to County departments in tracking and recovering costs and navigating COVID-19 funding sources. Ensure a coordinated process for incident financial management.
- **Community Needs:** Assess the social, emotional, and economic impacts of COVID-19 on the community and develop strategies to address critical gaps (e.g., essential needs, behavioral health and recovery).
- **Recovery:** Support and coordinate County and countywide recovery efforts.

The public is reminded to follow [Governor Kate Brown's statewide orders](#) for limiting the spread of the virus and recommendations from the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#). These simple steps can save lives by to slowing the spread of COVID-19:

- Follow the [statewide requirement to wear a face covering](#) when in indoor public spaces and outdoor public spaces when physical distancing is not possible. This requirement (as of July 24) does not apply to children under 5, and to people with a medical condition or disability that prevents them from wearing a face covering.
- Wash your hands often with warm running water and soap for 20-seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand wash product.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes using your sleeve or a tissue, not your bare hand.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay home and away from the rest of your household if you're feeling sick. [Additional home guidance is here.](#)
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are frequently touched surfaces at home and at work, including your mobile devices.
- Follow the governor's [Safe and Strong Oregon](#) orders.
- Pregnant women should visit the [CDC's website](#) for the most current guidance.

- Breastfeeding women should visit [Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine](#) for the most current guidance.

Health officials also ask that the public stay informed and educated through trustworthy sources of information, such as the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), [Oregon Health Authority](#) and [Washington County Public Health Division](#).

General questions about COVID-19 can be answered by calling [2-1-1](#). Questions about your specific medical needs should be directed to your health care provider.

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