



COVID-19

For the latest COVID-19 health guidance, statistics and resources, visit [Coronavirus.wa.gov](https://coronavirus.wa.gov).



Service to be restored to near pre-pandemic levels on some state ferry routes

Thursday, August 20, 2020 - 11:28

Ian Sterling, communications, 206-714-1556

WSF media hotline, 206-402-8070

Changes set to begin August 22

EDMONDS – Starting Saturday, Aug. 22, Washington State Ferries will restore two-boat weekend service on the Edmonds/Kingston and Mukilteo/Clinton routes. Both runs have been operating without one of their normal two vessels each Saturday and Sunday since June 20, due to a lack of crewmembers needed to meet U.S. Coast Guard safety requirements.

Since late March, more than 100 high-risk WSF vessel and terminal employees have been unavailable due to the pandemic. In addition, new hires were unable to undergo mandatory face-to-face training until June.

“Over the past month, we welcomed 16 new crewmembers and 10 terminal attendants and actively worked with existing employees to increase staffing availability,” said WSF Director of Operations Greg Faust. “We’re now at a point that we can incrementally increase service and are working to restore sailings on additional routes in the weeks ahead.”

WSF plans to restore a two-boat schedule seven days a week on the Seattle/Bainbridge route starting Sunday, Aug. 30. Service increases on other routes will follow as ridership demands and crewing availability allow.

COVID-19 Response Service Plan

Crew availability is one of four pillars in WSF’s COVID-19 Response Service Plan (pdf 200 kb) dictating the system’s current schedules. The others are ridership, vessel availability and funding. Any changes in service must be based on all four metrics, and each are considered before any modifications are made on any route.

Latest ridership numbers

Current system ridership is nearly 60% of what it was this time in 2019 with the number of vehicles carried a little higher at nearly three-quarters of 2019 vehicle ridership. Walk-on passengers are hovering around one-quarter of last year’s numbers.

Pandemic precautions

Because of the coronavirus, customers who board a state ferry in a vehicle are strongly encouraged to remain in the vehicle throughout the sailing if possible. A face covering is required in compliance with the state’s health order (pdf 315 kb)– inside or outside – if riders are unable to physically distance from others. To maintain physical distancing standards, if necessary, WSF will enforce reduced occupancy on sailings for walk-on passengers.

Customers can sign up for email alerts and follow WSF on social media for notification on any future restorations in service. Riders are also encouraged to check WSF’s terminal conditions and COVID-19 travel updates.

WSF, a division of the WSDOT, is the largest ferry system in the U.S. and safely and efficiently carries nearly 24 million people a year through some of the most majestic scenery in the world. For breaking news and the latest information, follow WSF on Twitter and Facebook.

Traveler Information

- Mountain Passes
- Local Construction
- Travel Alerts
- Weather

Stay Connected

- Blogger
- Flickr
- RSS
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Facebook

Get Our Mobile App

- Our Android and iPhone apps include statewide traffic cameras, travel alerts, mountain pass reports, ferry schedules and alerts, northbound Canadian border wait times and more.