



## COVID-19 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

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### Bi-Weekly Bulletin

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**Subject:** Island County COVID-19 Response

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#### Review of Current News and Updates

**Numbers and Website.** At the time of this writing, Island County has 166 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 8 deaths. Thirty-six cases are associated with Camano Island and 130 are associated with Whidbey Island.

Our numbers continue to hold steady and we have added very few cases over the last four days. This is great news!

Our Island County COVID-19 page now features a breakdown of data by geographic location, as well as chart displaying daily new cases over time (epidemiological curve). We have already gotten good feedback around the new website elements. That being said, we are trying to reorganize a bit and recognize that we can continue to work on accessibility of both data and guidance on our website.

**State Response Plan.** Our operations section has started working on how to prepare for the potential surge capacity needed to meet what we currently know of the state's proposed response team plan. This capacity would be needed for increased testing, case investigation, and contact tracing. We are still awaiting final details but we have received word that staff would need to be in place and trained by the middle of May, with a planned deployment date of June 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Testing.** WhidbeyHealth expanded testing last week but has reported that they are not seeing an increase in the number of people seeking testing. Testing in Skagit County and the Snohomish Health District have also reportedly slowed down.

There has been lots of state news coverage regarding testing: 12,000 test kits were recalled due to contamination and the University of Washington Virology Lab announced on Friday that they will start processing antibody tests. Antibody testing

could provide a better picture of the number of people who have been exposed to the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus (the cause of COVID-19). These tests are designed and validated for broad-based surveillance and research. They can give us information needed to help guide the response by assisting in vaccine and treatment development. They are not currently designed for individual diagnostic use, nor reliable for this purpose.

**Economic Relief.** Island County Department of Emergency Management (DEM) continues to work on collecting economic relief information and keeping pace with this evolving landscape. They are looking into a couple of options on how to provide more direct customer service to those seeking help navigating the various local, state, and federal forms of assistance.

**PPE and Logistics.** DEM received supply shipments for all three tiers last week and will be placing another order this week. The state is requesting more information on current inventory and whether the requesting entity has confirmed positive cases. Our logistics staff is working with facilities to meet these requirements. DEM received 1,000 test kits last week – these were not part of the recall mentioned above.

**Behavioral Health.** In Island County, and in other counties in our region, there is concern over increased emergency visits due to substance use. COVID-19 poses special challenges for those with substance use disorders (SUDs), those in recovery, or those who habitually use alcohol or other substances to cope with stress. Our communications team is working with Island County Human Services to push out messaging this week and direct people to both local and virtual resources that can be supportive.

**Stakeholder Outreach.** The team will be holding tele-conferences with behavioral health providers, the local healthcare coalition, school administrators, and the Washington Low-Income Housing Alliance. We have also been completing outreach with grocery stores to help strategize around compliance with the updated WA State Dept. of Health guidance for grocery stores.

### **Up and Coming.**

- Communication and safety planning for the potential reopening of some county departments to the public in May.
- Continued preparation for mass testing and other aspects of the state's response plan.
- Continued collaboration with the Economic Development Council and Chambers on how best to support individuals and businesses in our community.