



— WASHINGTON GOVERNOR —

JAY INSLEE

POLICY BRIEF

April 2020

SAFE RETURN TO PUBLIC LIFE IN WASHINGTON STATE

The COVID-19 pandemic has required leaders around the world to take extraordinary measures to protect people and ensure medical providers have what they need to adequately care for those who become ill. Gov. Jay Inslee declared a State of Emergency on February 29 and rolled out a series of measures that ultimately led to the statewide Stay Home, Stay Healthy order on March 23. The order prohibited all non-essential businesses and travel as well as all social, recreational and religious gatherings.

While the state continues its aggressive effort to stop the spread of COVID-19, Inslee has worked with elected officials, public health experts, employers and workers, philanthropic organizations and others about how to prepare communities and employers for a safe return to public life.

Collaborate with Community Leaders from Around the State

In the coming days and weeks, the governor will appoint three leadership groups consisting of key community figures to advise the governor on:

- › Public health and our health care system.
- › Economic recovery and safe return to work.
- › Social supports to the most vulnerable and those affected by COVID-19.

The governor's office will actively engage with and seek input from all levels of government and other members of communities.



Governor Inslee announces the Stay Home, Stay Healthy order to Washingtonians on March 23, 2020.

The return to public life will occur in measured steps, guided by science, and informed by our public health needs, ability to mitigate impacts, and the response of our communities.

We will be transparent about the data we are using, and will use that data to make decisions about loosening or tightening restrictions on the Stay Home, Stay Healthy order.

1

Protect the Health and Safety of Washingtonians

Guided by data and science, we must continue to suppress the virus, protect our most vulnerable and treat those who are sick. We must ensure that COVID-19 infections and deaths are decreasing and that we have sufficient testing and contact identification in place before taking steps toward loosening restrictions.

2

Facilitate a Safe Start and Transition to Economic Recovery

A healthy workforce is needed for a healthy economy. When it is safe, we will take measured steps to get people back to doing what they do best in a way that protects themselves and their communities' health.

3

Support All People and Communities

We will use an equity lens for recovery efforts to enhance people's physical, emotional and financial well-being, with particular attention to those who have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, including communities of color, individuals experiencing homelessness, individuals with disabilities, as well as those experiencing unemployment, poverty, and food insecurity.

Recovery in Washington state will be gradual, data-driven, and health-focused.

The safe, healthy path back to normal requires:

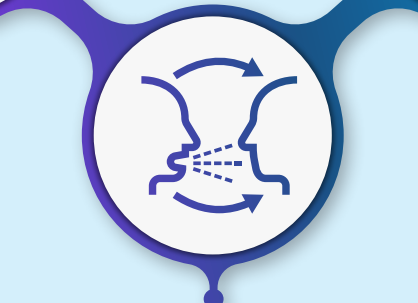
more testing



PPE for everyone who needs it



a vaccine

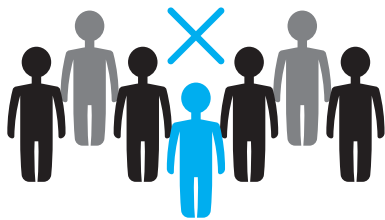


contact identification capabilities

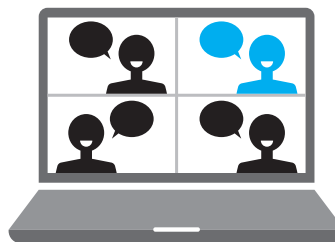


adequate capacity in our health care system

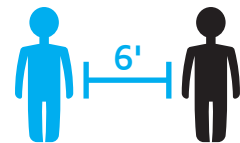
Until then, preventing another outbreak is our priority.



Most large gatherings will remain prohibited.



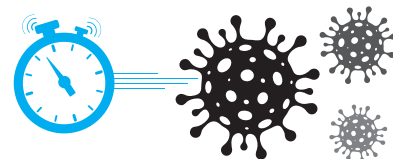
Teleworking and distance learning will continue.



Physical distancing will continue.



Some industries will open faster than others – we'll provide guidance.



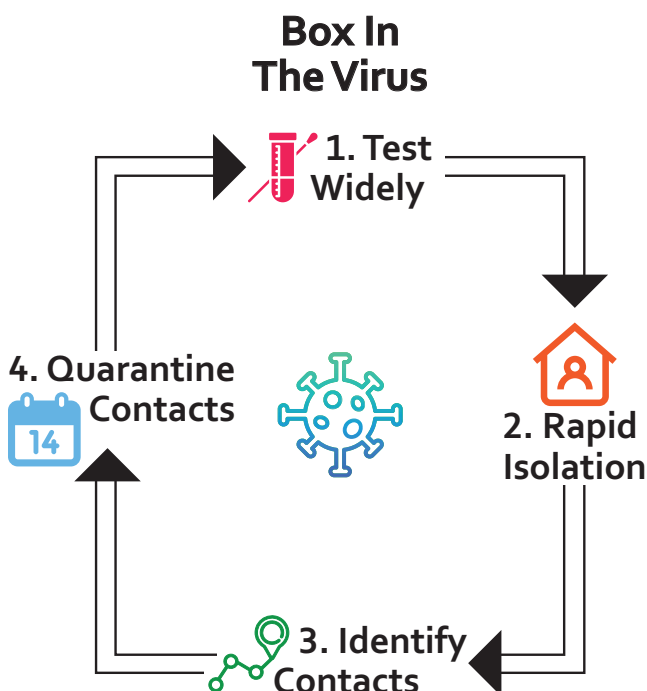
If another outbreak occurs, restrictions could go back into place.

1 Protect the Health and Safety of Washingtonians

Our ability to protect the health of Washingtonians depends on our ability to test everyone with symptoms, identify who they've had contact with, ensure we can treat them and — ultimately — secure a vaccine. This work is especially important as we try to protect and treat our most at-risk populations.

Test, Identify, Treat

- **Provide wide-scale, rapid testing capabilities across the state:** Have testing supplies and capacity available so we can rapidly test everyone with COVID-19 symptoms and identify people who are infected. Continue work to obtain supplies for COVID-19 tests.
- **Identify those who have been exposed:** Quickly identify and reach out to the close contacts of those infected with COVID-19 so they can take care of themselves and protect others. Ramp up the workforce to help identify and communicate with COVID-19-exposed individuals in a culturally responsive way.
- **Isolate and quarantine:** Ensure that people who have been exposed have a safe place to recover while being treated and don't put others at risk.
- **Treat those who have COVID-19:** Our strong health care system must continue to care for those who have contracted the virus and provide needed treatment for their recovery.



Protect the Most Vulnerable

- **Protect high-risk populations:** Have sufficient testing, infection control and physical distancing for the most high-risk people, including residents of congregate living facilities, homeless shelters or encampments, and high-risk groups using public transit and other public services.
- **Prevent the spread:** Provide personal protective equipment, screening and testing for health care workers and maintain limited visitor policies and visitor health screens in hospitals, long-term care facilities and other locations with high-risk populations.
- **Ensure access to protective supplies for the public:** Make sure there are ample supplies of prevention materials, such as COVID-19 testing, masks or cloth face coverings, protective and cleaning supplies, and hand sanitizer for all needing it.
- **Treat equitably and compassionately:** Everyone who contracts COVID-19, including those from the most marginalized communities, must be treated with care and compassion, regardless of their situation, health status or ability to pay for treatment.

Equip Our Health System for Success

- **Support a resilient health care system:** Maintain a strong workforce and surge capacity capable of meeting the needs of a second wave of infections. Restart elective surgeries, if there is sufficient surge capacity and PPE.
- **Use data and information:** Collect data across our communities to monitor and model the COVID-19 situation in real time to make recovery decisions. Develop health technology capabilities to enhance connections between public health and health care.
- **Prepare for treatments and vaccination:** Be prepared to distribute proven treatments to help curb the onset and severity of COVID-19. Prepare for the distribution of a vaccine when it becomes available.

2 Facilitate a Safe Start and Transition to Economic Recovery

Economic recovery requires a safe start and healthy workforce. Workplaces will continue to look and operate differently. Continued physical distancing, teleworking and other measures will continue to be necessary to keep workers and customers safe.

Getting People Back to Work

- **Implement a phased-in approach:** Businesses should prepare for interventions to be rolled back slowly and deliberately; develop a phased-in approach for when certain industries and venues will reopen based on their ability to address health risks. Develop specific science-based guidance around the phases of return to public life for employers, employees, customers, and the general public.
- **Maintain smart physical distancing and other public health requirements:** Businesses and public spaces will need to maintain physical distancing, prevent touching of surfaces, construct barriers, and make modifications, as necessary, to keep employees, customers and the public safe.
- **Implement requirements for employers and workers:** Keep the workforce healthy and allow businesses to reopen and stay open by: frequent handwashing and worksite cleaning; screening and clear plans if an employee becomes ill, including contact identification/notification to other workers in close proximity; worker training; adequate supplies available for worker protection; and continuing teleworking policies, wherever possible. Continue to make special accommodations for high-risk workers.

Preparing for a “Safe Start”

- **Leverage lessons learned from businesses adhering to new safety standards:** Replicate best practices from industries that have adjusted to new safety standards and apply them to other industries for a safe start, as appropriate.
- **Listen and learn:** Understand levels of preparedness for industry transition and assess what businesses, industries and communities need to have a safe start.

- **Assist small businesses with preparedness for new safety standards:** Prepare restaurants, main street businesses, and manufacturers that are critical to local economies and paying living wages to be able to meet the new safety standards as soon as it is appropriate for a safe start.
- **Assess and support the recovery of regional economies with attention to both urban centers and rural communities:** Develop and use a data-based approach to determine support needed by sector and region, including infrastructure needs to assist with recovery.

Getting to Economic Recovery

- **Accelerate investments and innovation:** Leverage strong partnerships to coordinate efforts across state and local governments, collaborate among industries, and leverage the private sector and philanthropic communities to assist with economic recovery and invest in innovation and critical infrastructure.
- **Make informed decisions:** Use data and analytics to:
 - 1) Develop tools for assessing economic impact.
 - 2) Inform how stimulus and recovery dollars are directed to ensure equitable access for under-served communities.
 - 3) Develop a comprehensive economic analysis tool by region and sector to inform budget and policy decisions.
- **Make it easier for workers to navigate the new economy:** Create pathways for workers to find new jobs through training and upskilling, and offer worker supports for identified areas of critical need.
- **Build job creation capacity through entrepreneurship and small business development:** Empower small businesses with tools they need to transition back to work, restore trade activity and promote supply chain resiliency.

3 Support All People and Communities

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected nearly every aspect of our daily lives. Each person in our state will need some kind of help to get through this. We'll work together to make sure people have the support they need to get back on their feet.

Increase Social and Emotional Supports

- › **Build capacity for behavioral health services:** Recognize the increased need for substance use, mental and behavioral health services and build new innovative approaches to delivering care, including telehealth expansions.
- › **Offer supports for stress and anxiety:** Develop resources for those who have experienced stress, depression or anxiety as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.
- › **Ensure equitable access to social and emotional resources:** Provide access and enhanced or directed supports to communities that have experienced disproportionate impacts due to the COVID-19 crisis.
- › **Counteract social isolation:** Encourage virtual gatherings and socially-distanced reconconnections. Encourage outdoor recreation that naturally encourages physical distancing and has behavioral health benefits.

Provide Food and Housing Security

- › **Ensure individuals, families, and high-risk populations have access to ample, nutritious foods:** Secure food for people who no longer have the financial means to provide food for themselves.
- › **Increase food supplies to all areas of the state:** Build a stronger sustainable food supply chain to fulfill the nutritional needs of Washingtonians, including through local farms and industry.
- › **Help individuals and families experiencing homelessness find access to safe housing:** Assist the growing population who have lost their homes to find safe, temporary and permanent housing. Provide supports to people so they can stay in their existing homes.

- › **Offer social, health, and employment supports to those without food and housing security:** Provide services and financial assistance for people to get back into the workforce, while also ensuring access to adequate food supplies, essential services and affordable permanent housing.

Offer Education and Child Care Supports

- › **Innovate on academic learning:** Provide school districts, teachers, and students with additional tools they need to improve distance learning capabilities and maintain academic and social-emotional supports for students. Provide post-secondary students with resources to be able continue their education.
- › **Prevent additional educational disparities caused by COVID-19:** Develop and provide resources to close the educational opportunity gap for students of color, English language learners, students with individualized education plans, students in the child welfare or juvenile justice systems, students who are homeless, and those who have not had the same preschool or distance learning opportunities. This includes increasing access to broadband.
- › **Promote access to child care for unemployed parents returning to work:** Remove or reduce child care costs for parents seeking employment opportunities.