

Re-opening Frequently Asked Questions



Starting June 30, the State of Washington is removing most COVID-19 restrictions. This means that most businesses and organizations may choose to operate as they did before the COVID-19 pandemic with no capacity limits or physical distancing requirements. Any organization or business may also choose to maintain capacity limits or physical distancing to protect those who are not fully protected by vaccines. Mask guidance will follow the [state health order](#).

COVID-19 is still present in our communities. The best protection is to get a COVID-19 vaccine. It's free, safe and effective. Visit our website for community vaccination sites (updated frequently): www.kingcounty.gov/vaccine.

This information is based on Washington Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) rules as of 6/25/21 – and is subject to change.

1. Which restrictions lift at the end of June?

There are no restrictions on the number of people who can be in businesses and other public spaces such as restaurants, grocery stores, shops, theaters, and museums. And social distancing requirements are no longer in place. However, individual businesses can choose to maintain these restrictions.

2. Do I still have to wear a mask in public?

It will be useful to keep a mask with you when you leave home.

- People who are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated must continue to wear face coverings when they enter indoor public spaces, according to [state guidance](#).
- People who have been fully vaccinated may choose not to wear a mask in most public settings.
- Businesses are allowed to request or require their customers and employees to wear masks.
- Everyone *must* continue to wear a mask in hospitals and other health care settings, correctional facilities, homeless shelters, schools and childcare settings, and on public transportation. Long-term care facilities continue to operate under separate [guidance](#).

3. Can we continue to require masks for people who enter our business or organization?

Yes, any business or organization can require people to wear masks but must make reasonable accommodations for those with disabilities, as described in the [State Health Order on Face Coverings](#). Masks protect children, people with medical conditions and those who are unvaccinated. They also provide an extra layer of protection for people who are vaccinated.

4. What other steps can I take to keep my business or workplace safe for everyone?

To protect employees, customers and visitors, certain protective measures remain important, even if they are not required. COVID-19 is still with us and the virus spreads through the air.

- Workers and customers who have not been vaccinated must wear a mask.
- Create an environment where masks are welcome (if not required).
- Improve indoor air ventilation and filtration (guidance available at [Improving Indoor Air](#)).
- [Encourage employees to get vaccinated](#) and tested as needed. Consider providing onsite vaccinations for employees.
- Continue to encourage outdoor gatherings when possible.

As always, hand washing is a good way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.

5. Can I allow people who are not wearing a mask to enter my business or workplace?

According to DOH, businesses and organizations have options regarding mask-wearing in their facilities. They can:

- assume that unmasked people are fully vaccinated
- choose to ask unmasked customers and visitors for proof of vaccination, but this is not required
- ask everyone to wear masks regardless of vaccination status

Businesses and organizations with indoor public spaces should post signs indicating their policy and reminding unvaccinated people to continue wearing masks.

6. Can I require customers or employees show proof of vaccination?

Yes, but you must make reasonable accommodations for those with disabilities or who can't be vaccinated. If employers plan to allow fully vaccinated employees to work without masks, employees must show proof of vaccination, according to [guidance from the Washington Department of Labor & Industries](#).

Acceptable types of documentation include:

- CDC vaccination card
- photo of the vaccination card
- documentation from a health care provider
- a signed statement from the worker or customer

View additional [guidance on face coverings for businesses](#) from the Department of Health.

7. I own a restaurant. Do any special restrictions apply to my business?

No. The requirements for restaurants are the same as those for other retail establishments.

8. Do any special restrictions apply to religious organizations?

No. The requirements for religious organizations are the same as those for other businesses and organizations. Visit our [Faith-Based Organizations page](#) for more details on how to reopen safely.

9. Do any restrictions apply to large events like concerts and sports events?

Indoor events with more than 10,000 people will be limited to 75 percent capacity. If proof of full vaccination has been required for admission, then there are no capacity restrictions. There will be no physical distancing requirements, and attendees must follow current masking requirements.

10. What about movies, museums, and other cultural events? Do restrictions still apply?

Capacity and social distancing requirements have been eliminated in these settings for customers/visitors, but anyone who has not been vaccinated must continue to wear a mask.

11. Can businesses, organizations, and large venues have vaccinated and unvaccinated areas?

All organizations are allowed to implement vaccinated and unvaccinated sections in their facilities. For [large indoor events](#) with 10,000 or more participants, having vaccinated sections will not allow events to go above the 75% capacity restriction. (For example, you cannot limit capacity at 75% for unvaccinated sections and allow 100% capacity in vaccinated sections.)

If an organization wants to create vaccinated and unvaccinated sections, they should require social distancing and wearing masks in the unvaccinated sections, to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

12. What sanitizing guidelines should businesses and organizations continue implementing?

[CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfecting](#) continue to be important for reducing the risk of spreading COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. Cleaning of high touch surfaces, encouraging frequent hand-washing for employees, providing hand sanitizer to customers, and maintaining plexiglass or other barriers to block droplets from sneezes and coughs will continue to reduce illness among customers and employees. Refer to Washington Department of Labor & Industries [COVID-19 Prevention in the Workplace requirements and guidance](#) for instructions on reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace.

Do you have a question that's not listed here?

For answers to additional questions, please see the Washington state Department of Health [FAQ on re-opening](#) and [FAQ on face coverings](#).