



Chelan-Douglas Health District

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Governor moves Chelan, Douglas counties to Phase 2

OLYMPIA, WA – Gov. Jay Inslee announced today that Chelan and Douglas counties will move to Phase 2 of the Safe Start reopening plan.

All counties that were previously in a modified Phase 1 were moved to Phase 2. They also include Benton, Franklin and Yakima counties.

The decision comes, in part, after the Chelan-Douglas Health District (CDHD) and a variety of bi-county officials and business leaders reached out this past week to the Governor's Office and state officials.

"With the partnerships and cooperative efforts in place, we have been able to keep the continued dialogue going with the Department of Health and the Governor's Office, which has resulted in our ability to move our community forward in the Safe Start reopening plan to a full Phase 2, all while keeping our citizens as safe as possible," said Kevin Overbay, Chelan-Douglas Board of Health vice chairman and Chelan County commissioner. "I look forward to fostering our relationships and building upon the work that has already been done as we continue to balance the personal and economic health of our community members and businesses in the coming months."

The governor's announcement today is a testament to the community members and partnerships that came together during the COVID-19 pandemic, said Dan Sutton, Chairman of the Chelan-Douglas Board of Health and a Douglas County commissioner.

"The move to Phase 2 illustrates what we can achieve when we work together as a community," Sutton said. "We still have a good deal of work to do, and knowing the caliber of people involved who are dedicating their time to the goal of recovery for our counties makes me confident that we will continue to succeed."

Gov. Jay Inslee last week announced several updates to Washington's Safe Start reopening plan following discussions with businesses across the state about how to allow safer operation of some activities, including libraries, youth and adult sports, movie theaters, restaurants, wedding receptions, outdoor recreation and real estate. However, Inslee's announcement also included that all 39 counties would remain on their current plans. The governor first announced a pause in the reopening plan in July.

With the move to Phase 2 for Chelan and Douglas counties, local movie theaters and libraries will be allowed to open to 25 percent occupancy, restaurants will move from 25 percent to 50 percent occupancy, and more youth and adult sports will be allowed to re-start. The full guidance is available at https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/SafeStartPhasedReopening.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

“The overall health of our community depends upon the economic well-being and stability of our region’s citizens and businesses,” said Shiloh Burgess, executive director of the Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce. “The region’s employers have demonstrated, through innovation and action, their commitment to the safety and well-being of their employees, their customers, their vendors and suppliers. The Chamber supports the Governor’s announcement today to move Chelan and Douglas counties into Phase 2 of the Safe Start plan.”

Recent COVID-19 efforts from the Chelan-Douglas Health District include the testing last week of more than 1,553 people at drive-thru testing sites in Wenatchee and East Wenatchee. Testing continues this week. Overbay said he is pleased with the progress of the health district’s COVID-19 pandemic response over the past four weeks.

“A little over a month ago, the Board of Health requested resources and incident management team assistance from the state, and that request was answered,” Overbay said. “The response from our community members has been tremendous. With that response, coupled with the efforts of our health district staff, our health providers, our epidemiologists and our IMT, we have been able to see a vast decrease since August in our per thousand infection rate as well as identify community prevalence.”

The test in the coming weeks will come in balancing the new opportunities that are opening up for businesses with the ongoing challenges of continuing to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our community, said Nate Weed, interim administrator for the CDHD.

“Let’s celebrate this new opportunity for our businesses and community while also remembering that COVID-19 is still here. Safety measures such as masking up and maintaining social distances are just as important as ever,” Weed said. “I think the community will recognize the balance that we must all play in moving forward – and join us in that effort.”

For more information, visit www.cdhd.wa.gov/covid-19 and follow CDHD on [Facebook](#) & [Twitter](#).

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