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# **LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER VERIFICATION OF VACCINATION ORDER**

Whereas state law, RCW 70.05.070(2) - (3), requires and empowers the Local Health Officer to take such action as is necessary to maintain health and to control and prevent the spread of any contagious or infectious diseases within the jurisdiction, and;

Whereas state regulation, WAC 246-100-036, requires the Local Health Officer, when necessary, to institute disease control measures as he, she, or they deem necessary based on his, her, or their professional judgment, current standards of practice, and the best available medical and scientific information;

Whereas SARS-CoV-2 spreads from person to person primarily through inhalation of air carrying very small droplets and aerosol particles that contain infectious virus, and;

Whereas the risk of transmission is greatest within three to six feet of an infectious source, but can also occur more than six feet away, and;

Whereas COVID-19 infections can be spread from persons who are symptom-free and before symptoms appear, and;

Whereas in King County SARS-CoV-2 transmission is increasing largely due the spread of the more contagious Delta variant, the discontinuation of the Heathy Washington Roadmap to Recovery community level CoV-19 restrictions, and a corresponding increase in activities and opportunities for SARS-CoV-2 transmission from person to person;

Whereas the Delta variant of SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes CoV-19 infection is significantly more contagious than previous SARS-CoV-2 viruses and has been associated with a greater risk for hospitalization;

Whereas fully-vaccinated people have a very high level of protection against serious illness due to CoV-19, and are at lower risk for transmitting the infection to others;

Whereas currently some 68% of King County residents are fully vaccinated against CoV-19. However, approximately 720,000 King County residents are *not* fully-vaccinated, including some 290,000 people who *are* eligible for vaccination, 120,000 residents who have started but not yet completed their vaccination series, approximately 308,000 children less than 12 years of age who are not currently eligible, and tens of thousands of persons with underlying immunocompromise. All these groups are at increased risk for CoV-19 due to the Delta variant compared with previously circulating SARS-COV-2 lineages;

Whereas in King County CoV-19 vaccine completion rates vary by age, race, ethnicity, and geography. The completion rate is significantly lower in younger age groups (66% in 12-19 years old, 65% in 20-29 years old; 74% in 30-39 years old populations);

Whereas the risk of being exposed is higher for everyone – vaccinated and unvaccinated – and more infections will occur, primarily among unvaccinated people, when CoV-19 spreads at a high rate primarily among the unvaccinated, and;

Whereas reducing the number of infected adults in the community will also decrease the risk for children not yet eligible for vaccination;

Whereas the risk of CoV-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths is greatest among unvaccinated persons, and vaccination affords excellent protection against serious CoV-19 infections. In the last 30 days in King County, unvaccinated individuals were 41 times more likely to be hospitalized, and 42 times more likely to die of COVID-19 than vaccinated individuals;

Whereas our regional healthcare system is experiencing serious challenges managing the patient loads from increased hospitalizations and intensive care unit admissions related to the current Delta surge. Local hospitals are seeing more COVID-19 patients now than at any other time during the pandemic;

Whereas there is concern that COVID-19 transmission, hospitalization and deaths will increase during the fall and winter months of 2021;

Whereas reducing the spread of COVID-19 in the community through multiple strategies will result in reduced cases, hospitalizations, and deaths;

Whereas when unvaccinated people gather indoors, they are particularly at risk both of getting CoV19 themselves as well as spreading it to others. The risk of exposure is especially higher in crowded indoor spaces with unvaccinated people, poor ventilation, and activities that can increase the amount of virus in the air such as singing, shouting and aerobic exercise, or when removing masks for prolonged periods of time to eat or drink;

Whereas the University of Washington's Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation estimates that a vaccine verification system would prevent a substantial number of COVID-19 infections, hospitalizations, and deaths in King County over the next 6 months;

Based upon all the above, as the Local Health Officer, I hereby find that at this time, the verification of vaccination upon entry for individuals attending social, recreational, entertainment events and establishments, is reasonable and necessary in King County to reduce the risk for CoV-19 transmission.

**EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**, as Local Health Officer I hereby **ORDER** as follows:

## **VERIFICATION OF VACCINATION ORDER**

For all **patrons and customers 12-years of age and older**, verification that they are **fully vaccinated is required** prior to entry to the following public events and establishments:

- ***Outdoor recreational and entertainment events with 500 or more people***, such as collegiate sports, professional sports, and concerts.  
Effective Date: October 25, 2021
- ***Indoor restaurants, bars, and taverns with seating capacity of 12 and more AND entertainment and recreational establishments***, such as entertainment and performing arts venues, night clubs, music and concert venues, movie theaters, museums, collegiate and professional sports stadiums and arenas, exhibition halls, and convention centers.  
Effective Date: October 25, 2021
- ***Indoor restaurants, bars, and taverns with seating capacity of less than 12.*** Effective Date: December 6, 2021

For purposes of this **ORDER**, “fully vaccinated” means that a person has received all the required doses of an FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccine (two doses of the Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines, or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine) or a WHO-authorized COVID-19 vaccine series, and 14 days have passed since the final dose.

Verification of vaccination may be established by any of the following methods of documentation:

- CDC COVID-19 Vaccine Record Card, or photo of CDC Vaccine Record Card
- QR Code, digital or printed certificate from MyIRmobile.com (WA Department of Health partner website, My Immunization Records)
- Vaccine administration record from a vaccine provider, including an individual’s doctor, pharmacy, or other official immunization record from within or outside the U.S., including a photo or photocopy
- Specific mobile applications that verify vaccination status will be allowed if approved by the WA Department of Health or Public Health – Seattle & King County

Additional identification, such as a driver’s license or ID, is **not** required.

As an alternative to providing vaccine verification, prior to entry individuals **must** provide digital or printed **documentation** from a testing agent, including a laboratory, health care provider, or pharmacy of:

- A negative FDA-approved **PCR test** administered within the **previous 72 hours**, or
- A negative FDA-approved **rapid test** administered by a testing provider on site **at the event site**

Medical and religious vaccine exemptions are **not** accepted in place of vaccine verification or documentation of a negative COVID test.

This **ORDER** does **not** apply to:

- Children **under 12-years of age**
- *Outdoor* or *indoor* youth sporting events for elementary, middle school, and high school age participants, and the spectators at these events
- *Outdoor* dining
- Take-out from restaurants, taverns, and bars
- *Indoor* dining in buildings that primarily serve non-dining purposes such as in airports, mall food courts, and school cafeterias
- Funerals
- Weddings, except those occurring in any of the above public *indoor establishments*. However, proof of vaccination or documentation of a negative CoV-19 test is strongly **recommended**.
- Faith-based gatherings, except those occurring in any of the above public *indoor establishments*. However, proof of vaccination or documentation of a negative CoV-19 test is strongly **recommended**.
- Vote centers sanctioned by King County Elections, held at any location.

As the Local Health Officer, I strongly **recommend** that employers and event organizers require vaccination for the workers and volunteers at the events and establishments covered by this **ORDER**. Guidance and resources are available from the Washington Department of Labor & Industries, Washington State Coronavirus Response, and U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and available here:

- <https://lni.wa.gov/agency/outreach/coronavirus-covid-19-vaccines-and-paid-sick-leavecommon-questions>
- <https://www.coronavirus.wa.gov/>
- <https://www.eeoc.gov/wysk/what-you-should-know-about-covid-19-and-ada-rehabilitationact-and-other-eeo-laws>.

# ANTI-DISCRIMINATION REQUIREMENT

Discrimination will not be tolerated in the implementation of this **ORDER**.

Employers, their employees, and volunteers, **must** implement this **ORDER** equitably and may **not**:

- Scrutinize proof of vaccination more closely based on an individual's race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, or
- Refuse to accept valid proof of vaccination that is authorized by this **ORDER**, such as WHO approved vaccination from countries outside of the U.S. or photographs of CDC vaccination cards.

Employers, employees, and volunteers should provide reasonable accommodation for those with disabilities who attest to having completed their vaccination series but are unable to provide proof of vaccination due to a disability.

King County government and Public Health – Seattle & King County are dedicated to providing all residents and visitors with fair and equal access to services, opportunities, and protection, and reflecting consideration for cultural differences and disabilities.

**As the Local Health Officer, I strongly recommend and urge all people and businesses in King County to voluntarily comply with this ORDER and its anti-discrimination requirements.**

This **ORDER** will remain in effect for 6-months and reevaluated at that time, or sooner based on the status and impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak in King County.

Signed and ordered this 16<sup>th</sup> day of September 2021, in Seattle, Washington, by



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Dr. Jeff Duchin  
Local Health Officer  
Public Health – Seattle & King County