

# SKAGIT COUNTY COVID-19 UPDATE

## April 4, 2020: The Importance of Stay Home, Stay Healthy

Last night, Governor Inslee extended the “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order through May 4, 2020. We know it is hard to imagine living in this “new normal” for another month, but social distancing is the best tool we have to stop the spread of COVID-19, protect our community, and save lives.

You may be asking: **Why is social distancing so important?** Why can't I go out if I'm feeling well and healthy? Why do we have to keep all non-essential businesses closed to the public?

Every time we go out, we risk exposing ourselves and our family to COVID-19. **The virus can be present anywhere, even if a case hasn't been confirmed in a particular area, family, or business.** That's why we need you to stay home unless you have an essential need. Staying home limits your risk of exposure and the potential that you could expose someone else.

**But what if I'm not sick?** How can I expose someone else if I'm not experiencing symptoms? COVID-19 is contagious for 48 hours or more before someone begins to show symptoms; some people may not ever have symptoms, but can still carry (and spread) the virus.

**You can spread the virus to others even if you are not sick.** The person you infect could be a nurse who is picking up groceries or a paramedic picking up a prescription. We must stay home to protect ourselves and our community.

**So why not just test everyone?** Shouldn't people who don't have the virus or who have already recovered from COVID-19 be able to go back to their daily lives?

In an ideal world, we would test everyone regularly to see who has COVID-19, who does not, and who has antibodies. Unfortunately, Washington State does **not have enough testing supplies available to do so.** For every positive test result Public Health reports on its website, there are likely nine positive people out in the community that have not been tested.

**This is why it is so important that we all follow the Stay Home, Stay Healthy order.**

- You must stay home unless you are pursuing an essential activity. If you must travel – for food, medical care, essential work, or to care for a family member– stay six feet away from others.
- You cannot gather with anyone other than your immediate household members, even outdoors.
- All non-essential businesses must remain closed.

**Every trip you make is another chance you take.** You could be exposing others or yourself to this serious illness.

It is up to all of us to keep the community safe.

For more information, visit [www.skagitcounty.net/coronavirus](http://www.skagitcounty.net/coronavirus).

