



## MASON COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES

Building, Planning, Environmental Health, Community Health

*From the Office of The Mason County Health Officer  
Daniel Stein, M.D.*

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October 9, 2020

Dear Mason County Superintendents,

Thank you for your continued partnership and dedication to ensure the safety of Mason County. Over the past month, we have been successful in addressing the community spread of COVID-19. The rate of newly diagnosed cases per 100,000 people over a 2-week period reduced from 163 on August 4<sup>th</sup> to a low of 46 on September 13<sup>th</sup>. We have also been successful in meeting several other measures including positive test rate and hospital readiness.

Unfortunately, over the past 3 weeks, Mason County has had a significant increase in number of cases and an increase in test positivity rate. The majority of the reported new cases are related to outbreaks in the county. In our largest outbreak, we have unfortunately had at least 52 cases and 4 deaths as of October 6<sup>th</sup>. These cases are attributed to local transmission within the facilities. Mason County is currently partnering with the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) and DSHS to reduce the risk of further cases associated with these outbreaks.

There has also been a mild increase in cases that are not attributed to these outbreaks and an increase in the positivity test rate. Based on the increase in case volume, in order to comply with the guidance from the Washington DOH, I would encourage a delay in resuming in-person education until these measurements show improvements. It is appropriate to allow certain students with special needs to return, based on the safe reopening plans of the individual school districts. I plan to reassess the situation over the next couple of weeks and will expect to see a decline in these values as the outbreaks are addressed.

Sincerely,

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Daniel Stein, M.D., Mason County Health Officer