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Inslee extends face covering requirement for businesses statewide and halts county advancements

Benton, Franklin and Yakima will move to a modified Phase 1



WA Governor's Office

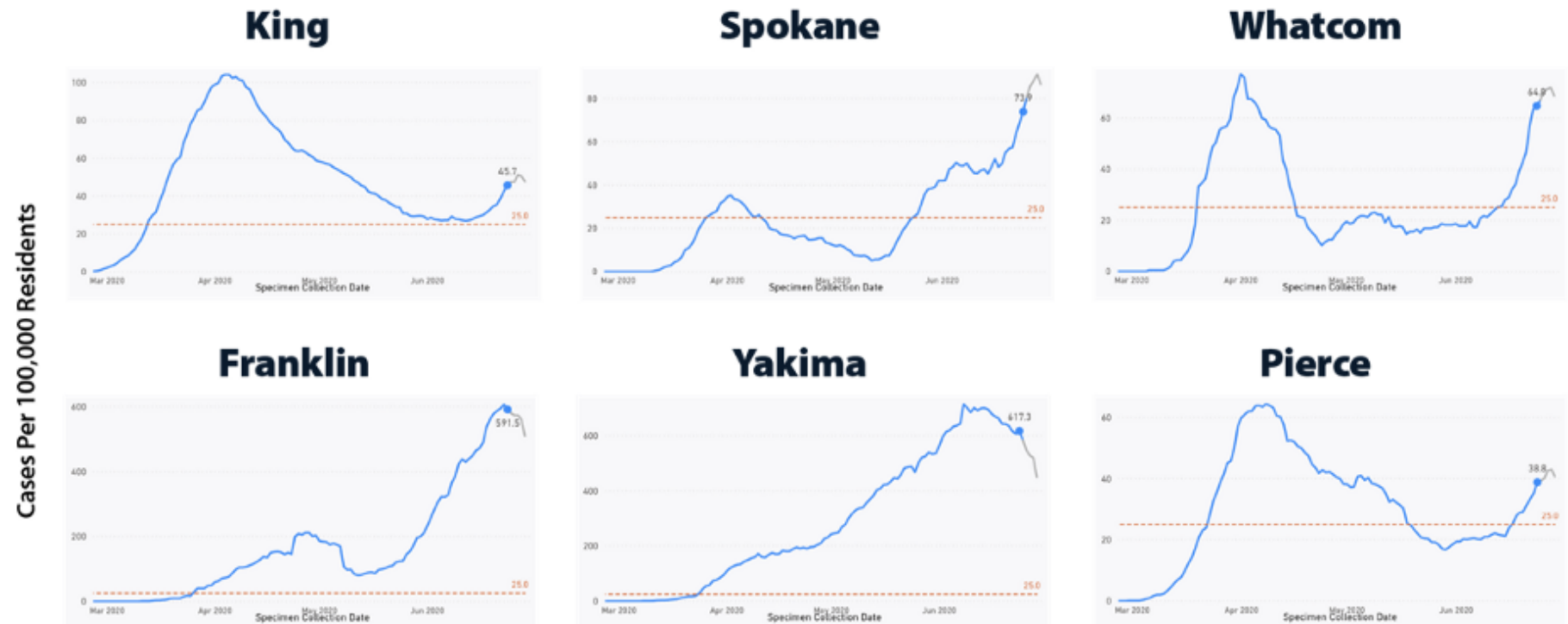
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Jul 2 · 3 min read

Gov. Jay Inslee and Sec. of Health John Wiesman today announced a statewide requirement for businesses to require face coverings of all employees and customers.

Under this proclamation, businesses may not serve any customer, services or goods, if they do not comply with the state-wide face covering order.

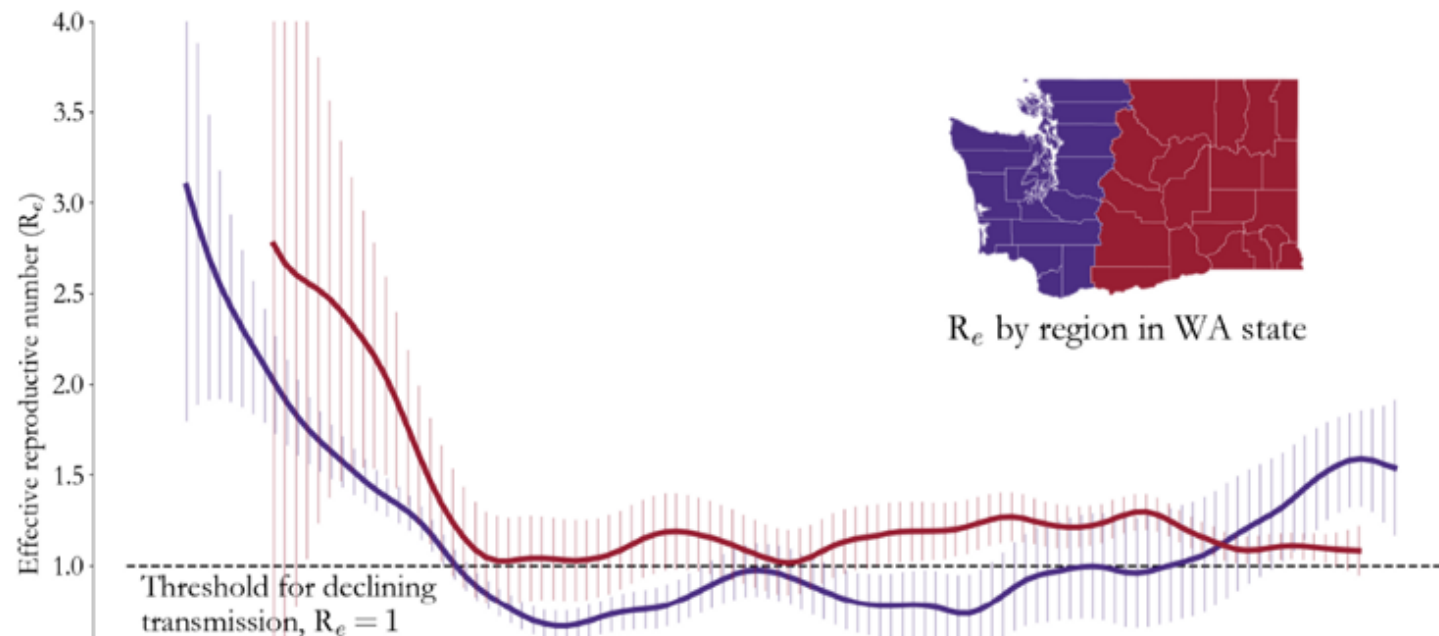
Cases Are Increasing Statewide

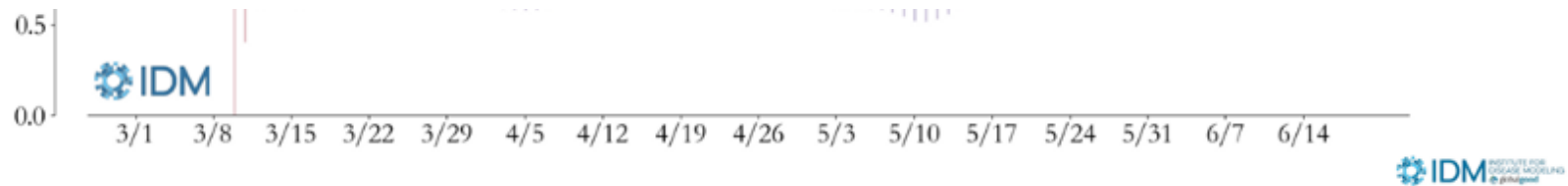


The extension comes in response to growing case counts in counties across the state, and after last week's proclamation mandating the same requirement of businesses in Yakima County.

“We’re doing this because of a spike in cases of COVID-19 all over the state,” Inslee said. “The better we can protect ourselves from the virus, the better we can avoid repeating some of the painful measures we had to take in the spring to shutdown the economy.”

Effective Reproductive Number





*“The trends we are seeing in our communities and across the country are concerning and should make all of us stand to attention,” **Wiesman said.** “We must redouble our efforts to keep our physical distance, wear our face coverings and limit the number of people we see each week.”*

Wearing facial coverings, along with adhering to physical distancing, is one of the most effective ways of stopping the spread of COVID-19.

Recent surveys show that more Washingtonians are wearing face coverings every day. In less than a month in Yakima, the percentage of people wearing masks went from one-third to two-thirds of the population. Trends like this will help in slowing the spread and allow for the eventual reopening of economies.

Modified Phase 1

However, as counties progress through the different phases, some residents of counties in an earlier phase travel to neighboring counties for services.

This travel puts residents at a higher risk of bringing COVID-19 out of their communities.

To contain the potential spread of the virus from these movements, the Department of Health will be working with local officials to move the three remaining counties in Phase 1 — Benton, Franklin and Yakima — into a modified Phase 1.

By allowing a small amount of additional activity to occur in these counties, such as personal services, the Department of Health hopes to reduce the number of infections occurring across county lines. This activity will be closely monitored and under stringent safety precautions as people stay in their counties and support local businesses.

Halt on county advancement and removal of bars from Phase 3

While the Department of Health is moving the three counties into a modified Phase 1, the governor is ordering a statewide pause on advancing counties from their current phases under Safe Start.

Additionally, bars will no longer be able to serve from the bar or have people congregate at the bar in Phase 3. Bars will still be able to provide table service.

“I would love to tell you when this emergency will be over, but emergencies, by nature, work by their own rules, not ours,” Inslee said. “Until there are widely available treatments to suppress the spread and the effects of COVID-19, this fight continues,” Inslee said. “I know Washingtonians are up for the task.”



Covid 19 Masks

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