

# Whatcom County COVID-19 Data Report

Whatcom County Health Department

Updated 9/02/21 for the period of 8/22/21 - 8/28/21

## Overview

This report is currently published weekly to provide a narrative of current COVID-19 trends, data not available elsewhere online, and a more in-depth analysis of COVID-19-related topics of interest. This report references data obtained from the [Washington State Department of Health's COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#) and [Risk Assessment Dashboard](#), [DOH Sequencing and Variants Report](#), [DOH Breakthrough Surveillance Report](#), as well as the [WCHD's Data Dashboard](#) and other COVID-related data. Note that information on these topics is rapidly evolving and the data are very dynamic. This report uses the most up-to-date data available and may change over time.

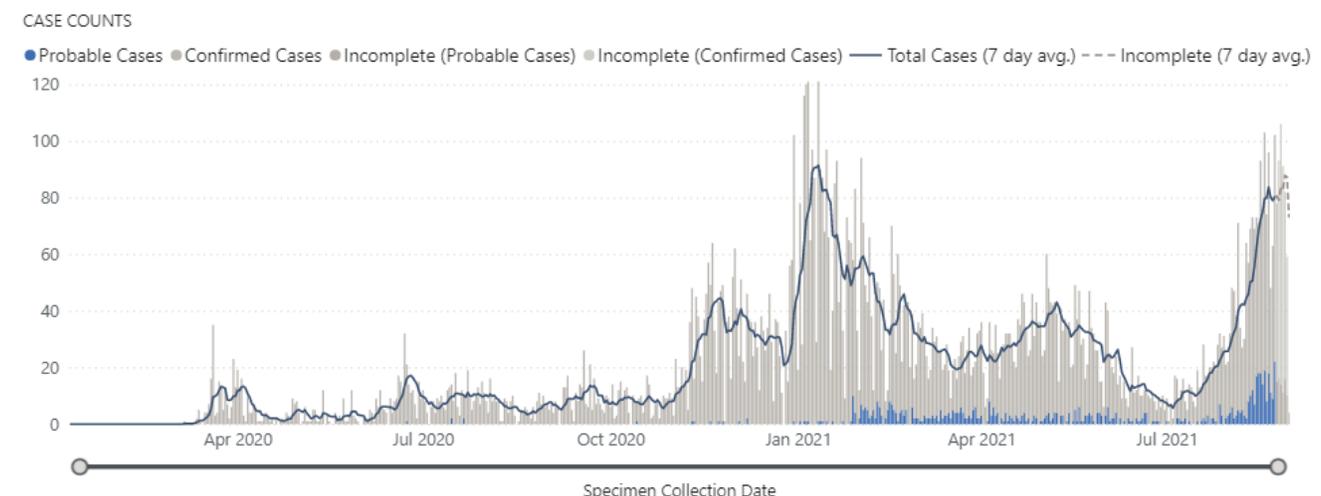
## For the period of 8/22-8/28

7-Day Case Rate / 100,000	7-Day Hospitalization Rate / 100,000
266	7

## Overview of COVID-19 Cases

Whatcom County continued to see an elevated number of daily confirmed and probable cases from specimens collected during the week August 22 – 28. The 7-day average count for confirmed and probable cases reached almost 90 per day for a weekly total of 628. There are signs across the larger counties in the region that case rates are peaking, but the rate in Whatcom County is still trending upward. The COVID-19 14-day case rate in Whatcom County remains below the state average for the 2-week period ending 8/28 and was the 14<sup>th</sup> highest rate among all counties in Washington.

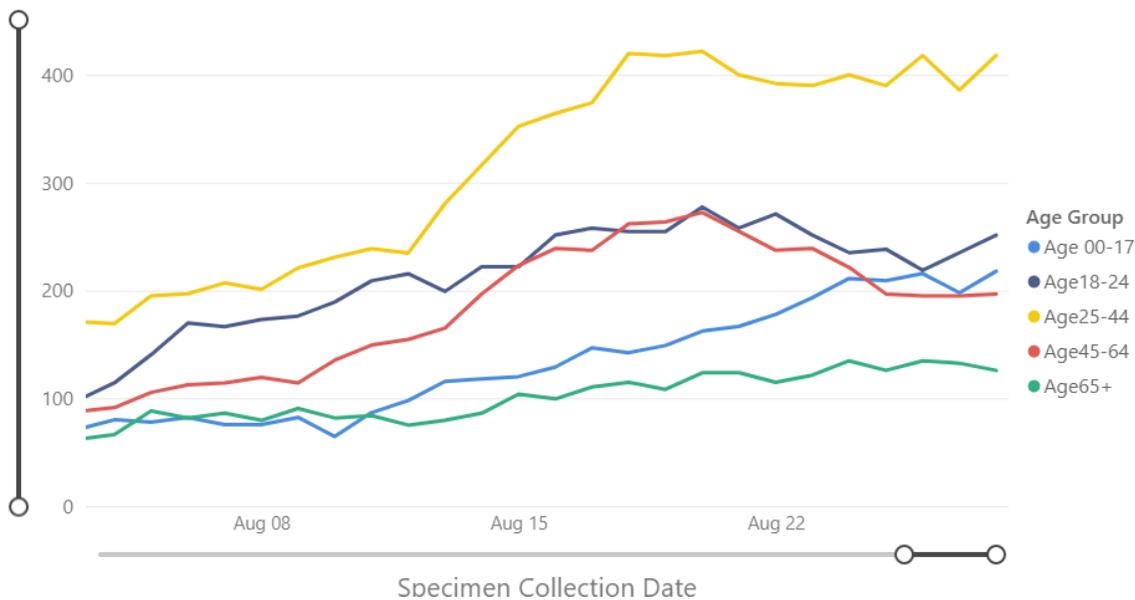
Figure 1. COVID-19 Case Counts per Day in Whatcom County (WA DOH).



## COVID-19 Cases in Age Groups & Sub-County Areas

The highest 7-day case rate per 100,000 Whatcom County residents was still observed among 25 – 44 year olds (Figure 2). The rate for this age group is substantially higher (1.6 times) than other age groups in the county. Notable increases were also seen among people under 17 years old. Among sub-county areas, increases in case rates were observed in Lynden and Ferndale while other areas are showing signs of leveling off.

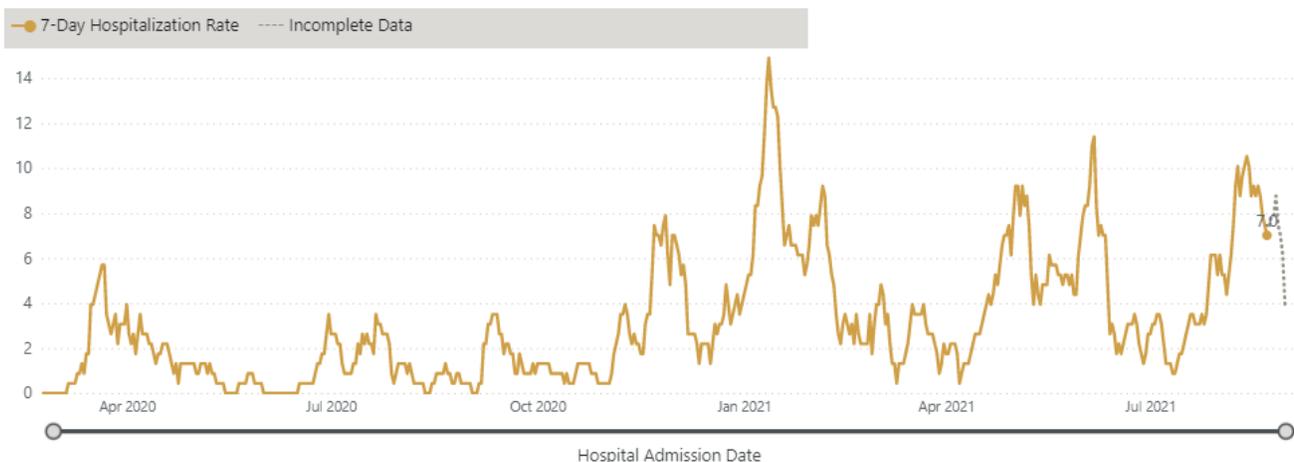
Figure 2. COVID-19 Case Rates per 100,000 by Age Group in Whatcom County.



## COVID-19 Hospitalizations

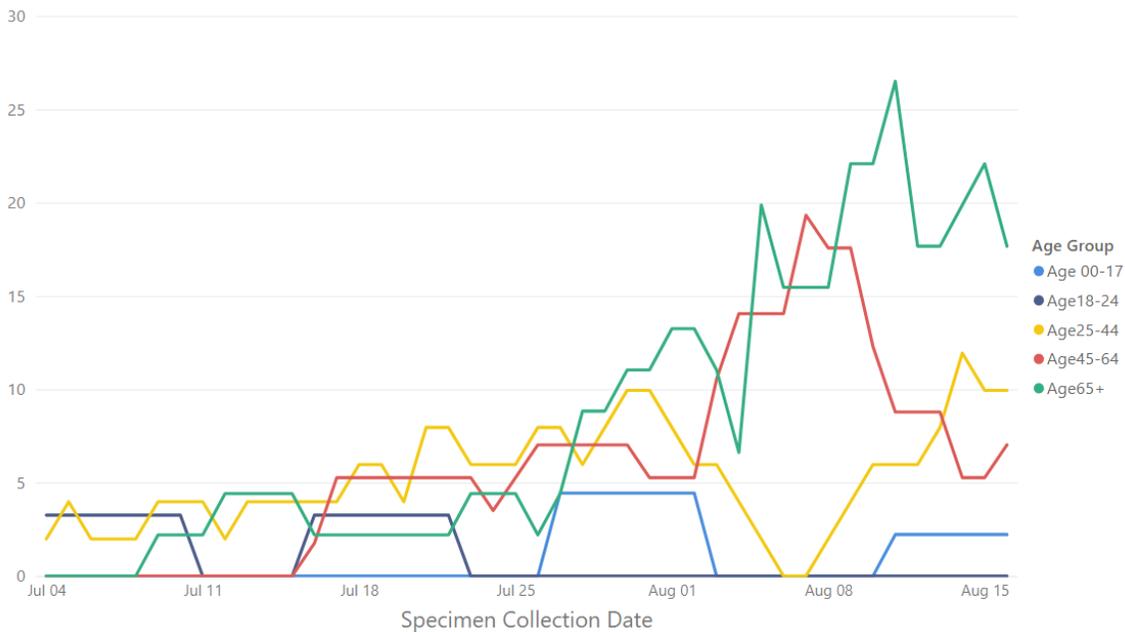
The 7-day rate for COVID-19 hospitalizations describes the number of Whatcom County residents who have tested positive (PCR test) for COVID-19 and have been hospitalized due to their COVID-19 illness. It does not include people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and are hospitalized for other reasons (ex: heart attack, injuries). This rate is useful for understanding disease severity over time. During 8/22 – 8/28, a total of 18 Whatcom residents were hospitalized due to COVID-19 illness. The COVID-19 hospitalization rate for Whatcom County residents remains below the state average and is currently 15th among Washington counties (out of 39 counties).

Figure 3. 7-Day COVID-19 Hospitalization Rate for Whatcom County. (WA DOH Dashboard)



When viewed across age groups, hospitalization rates are highest for individuals 65 years and older, however all age groups above 24 years old have seen a significant increase in hospitalizations (Figure 4).

Figure 4. COVID-19 Hospitalizations per 100,000 for Age Groups



Note: PeaceHealth reports the number of COVID-19 Positive Patients, a measure of the number of people who are hospitalized for any reason/diagnosis and who have also tested positive for COVID-19. Their care requires COVID-19 protocols to prevent infection of others in the hospital, regardless of the severity of their illness. This number is helpful in understanding changes in our hospital's COVID unit capacity, as caring for COVID-positive patients is resource-intensive.

## Variants

Genomic sequencing of COVID-19 viruses allows public health to identify which variants of COVID-19 are circulating. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [SARS-CoV-2 Classifications and Definitions website](#) provides information on variants being tracked in the US.

- In Washington, the delta variant has been detected among 98.4% of sequenced specimens between August 1 – 14.
- As of August 21, when the most recent positive specimen from a Whatcom County resident was sequenced, the delta variant was detected in approximately 98% of the sequenced specimens.
  - Note: Specimens are not randomly selected for sequencing in either Whatcom County or throughout Washington, and not all of the positive SARS-CoV-2 specimens are sequenced.

The latest statewide variant report can be found [here](#).

## Vaccinated Cases (i.e., Breakthrough cases)

A “breakthrough case” is someone who becomes infected with COVID-19 after they are fully vaccinated. A person is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving their final dose of the vaccine series. A person is considered partially vaccinated after receiving one or more doses of a COVID-19 vaccine but is not yet fully protected.

Among total cases detected in Whatcom County residents, the proportion of cases in fully vaccinated residents (breakthrough case rate) increased over the previous week; however, the case rate among unvaccinated residents remains significantly higher than the rate for vaccinated residents. (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Case Rates for Vaccinated, Partially Vaccinated, and Unvaccinated Residents in Whatcom County.

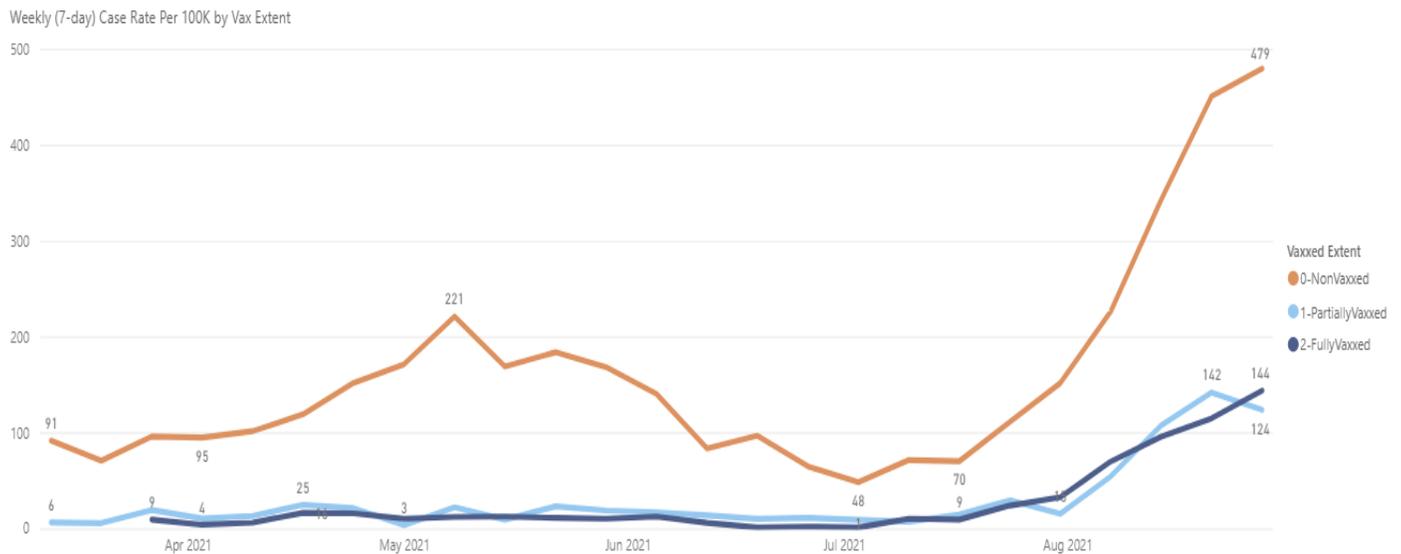


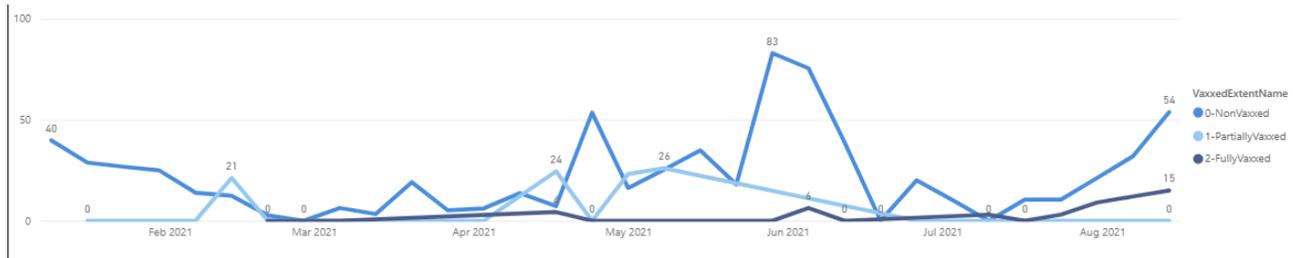
Table 1. Confirmed Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths among Vaccinated Individuals (Breakthroughs), Partially Vaccinated, and Unvaccinated individuals in Whatcom County for the period 8/22 – 8/28.

	Total	Vaccinated (Breakthrough*)	Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated
Cases	628	187	441
Covid-19 Hospitalizations	18	1	17
Covid-19 Deaths	4	2	2

\* Suspected breakthrough cases detected by Whatcom County Health Department, not yet confirmed by DOH.

The rate of COVID-19 hospitalizations among vaccinated residents has also increased since July 4. Among those age 65 and older, this increase is significant. However, the hospitalization rate among unvaccinated residents of Whatcom County for this age group remains significantly higher than the rate for vaccinated residents.

Figure 6. 7-day COVID-19 Hospitalization Rate for Vaccinated, Partially-Vaccinated, and Un-Vaccinated Residents ages 65 and older in Whatcom County.



The latest statewide breakthrough report can be found [here](#).

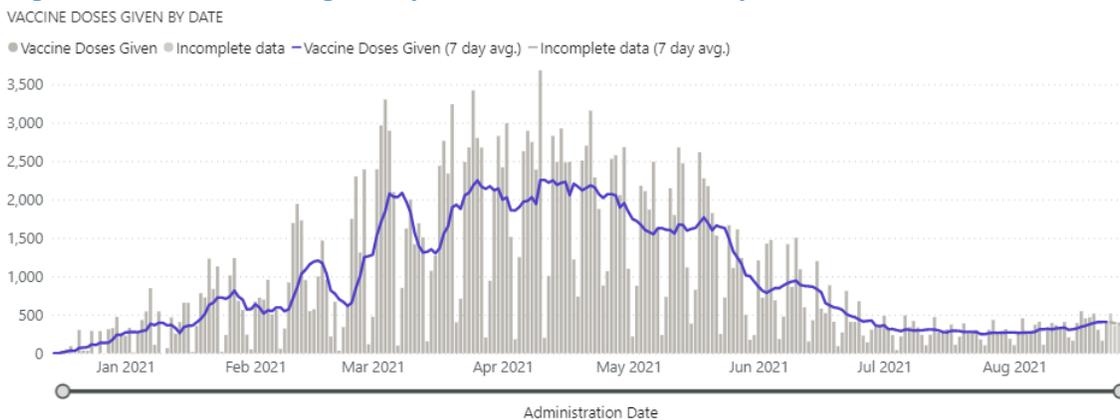
## COVID-19 Vaccinations

As of August 28, 57.9% of Whatcom County residents are fully vaccinated, and 63.6% have initiated vaccination. Of the 12 and older eligible population, 66.4% are fully vaccinated, and 72.9% have initiated vaccination. Of the eligible population, there are still 55K Whatcom County residents who have not initiated vaccination.

## Vaccines Given

As of August 28, the 7-day average for doses given was 383. This is a 6% decrease from the previous week, on August 21, when the 7-day average was 408.

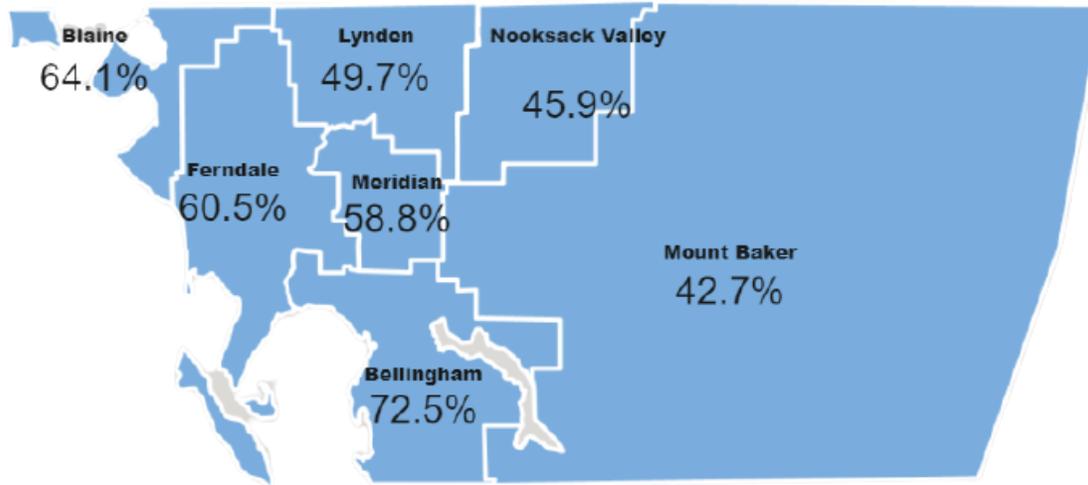
Figure 7. Vaccine Doses given by date for Whatcom County



## Vaccination in Sub-County Areas

Vaccination initiation rates continue to be the lowest in the Nooksack (45.9%) and Mt. Baker (42.7%) sub-county areas and among the Hispanic population (39.4%).

*Figure 8. Percent of Population who have initiated COVID-19 Vaccination by Sub-County Area for Whatcom County*



Whatcom County  
**HEALTH**  
Department



For more information about this report, contact [Health\\_Data@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:Health_Data@co.whatcom.wa.us). Additional data available at [www.whatcomcounty.us/coviddata](http://www.whatcomcounty.us/coviddata).