

# Whatcom County COVID-19 Data Report

Whatcom County Health Department

Updated 11/04/21 for the period of 10/24/21 – 10/30/21

## 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](#), [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 always changing. This report uses the most up-to-date data available, and measures may change over time.

### Key findings

- COVID-19 case counts remain level among Whatcom County residents for the reporting week ending 10/30.
- School-age children continue to make up 26% of the total cases for the current reporting week. The case rate among 5 – 17-year-olds remains higher than other age groups but shows signs of a downward trend.
- The 7-day weekly case rate among unvaccinated residents in Whatcom County is four times greater than the equivalent rate among fully vaccinated residents.
- Hospitalizations due to COVID-19 remain high among Whatcom County residents, and are most frequent among unvaccinated individuals and among those 65 years and older.

## For the period of 10/24-10/30

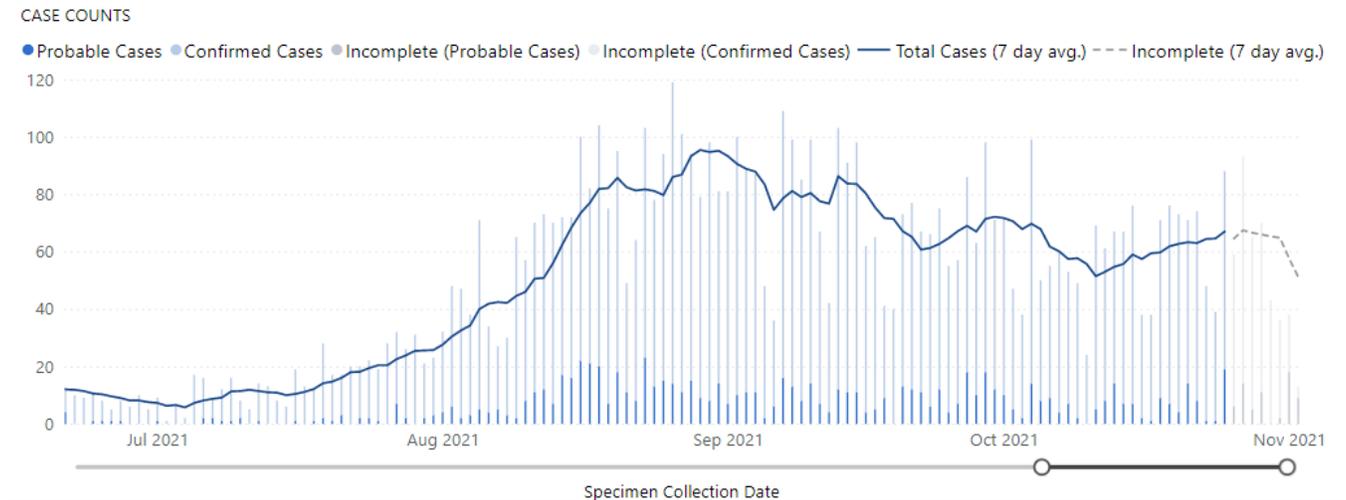
7-Day Case Rate / 100,000	7-Day Hospitalization Rate / 100,000
200	14.0

## Overview of COVID-19 Cases

Whatcom County saw a total of 466 confirmed and probable cases from specimens collected during the reporting week 10/24 – 10/30. The 7-day case rate in Whatcom County for this reporting week is 200 cases per 100,000 residents. The number of cases remains similar to the previous reporting week and this translates to continued high rates of transmission. Cases among school-age children continue to make up 26% of all confirmed cases in Whatcom County. According to data published on

the Washington State DOH Dashboard through 10/25, the 14-day case rate for Whatcom County (389 per 100,000) is even with the state average.

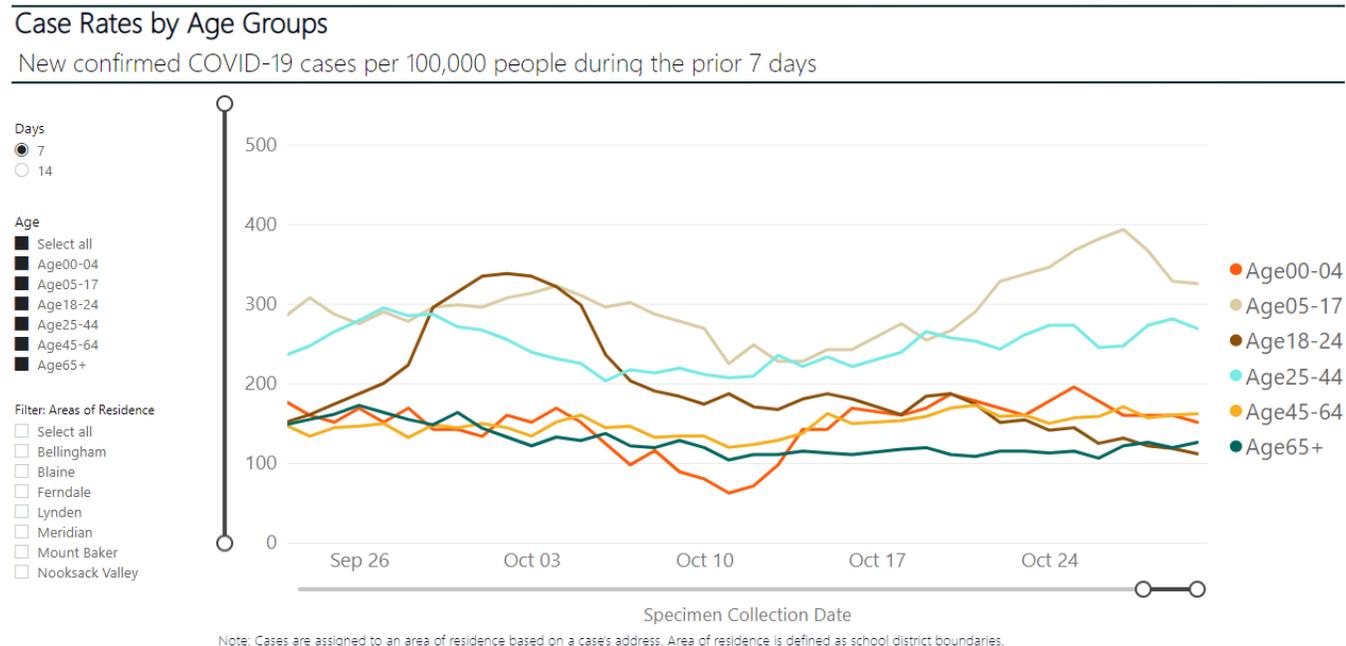
Figure 1: Daily COVID-19 case counts and 7-day average for Whatcom County (Source: DOH)



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

The case rate among school-age children, 5 – 17 years (325 per 100,000) decreased after cresting earlier in the reporting week. The rate for this age group remains higher than other age groups in the county (Figure 2). The case rates for other age groups remain on a level trend with little change from the previous reporting week. The case rate for young adults, 18 – 24 years, further declined to reach its lowest level since the beginning of August.

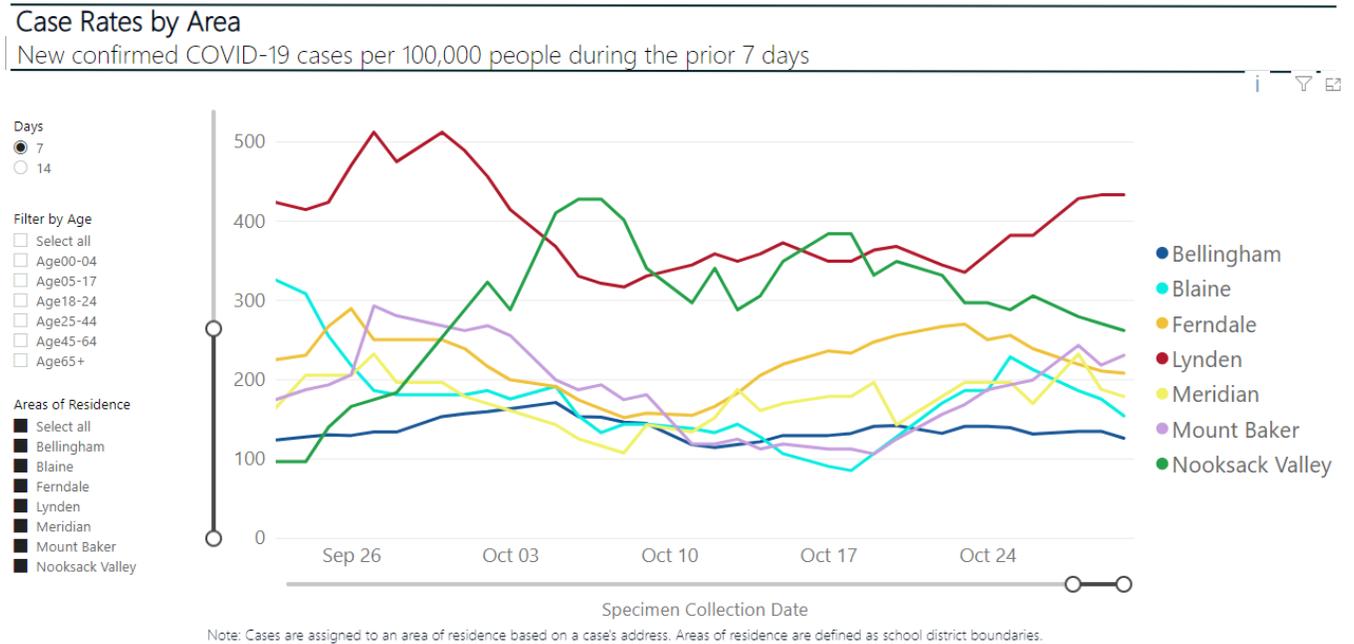
Figure 2: 7-day COVID-19 case rates per 100,000 by age groups in Whatcom County



## COVID-19 Cases in Areas

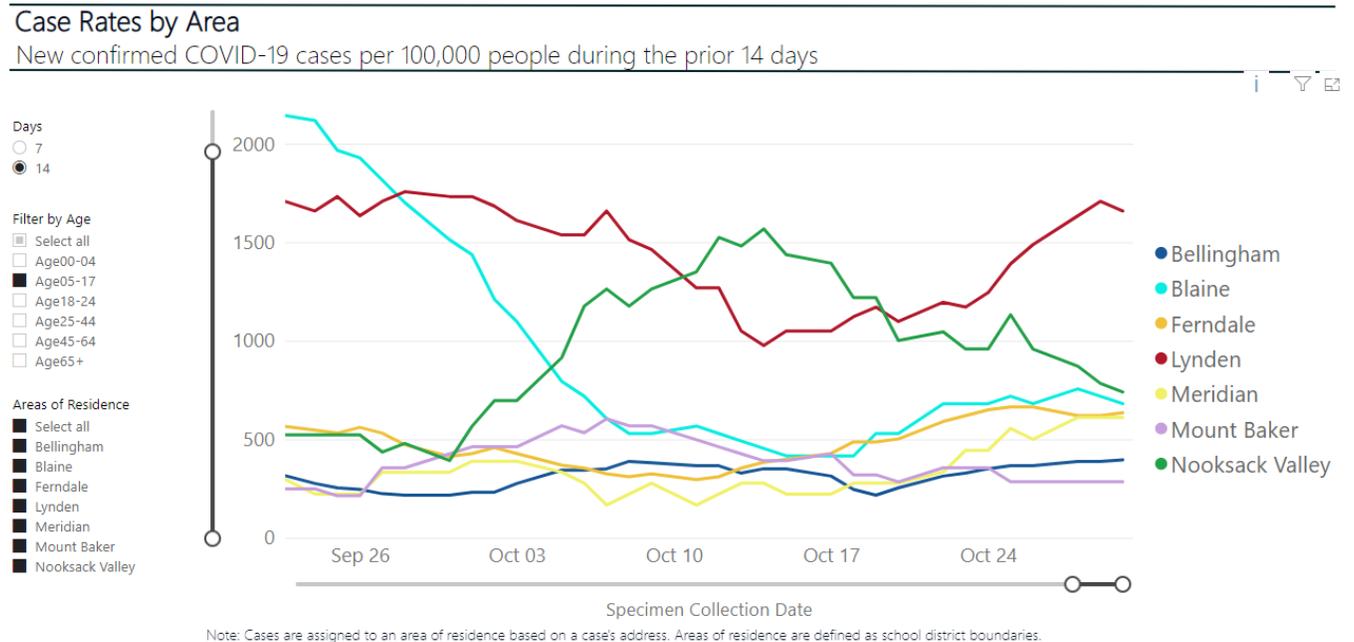
Among the sub-county areas, the case rate in Lynden remains higher than in other areas and is trending upward (Figure 3). The case rates in the Ferndale and Nooksack Valley regions declined over the reporting week. Cases in the Mount Baker area are on an upward trend and above the county average. The range of case rates for the reporting week ending 10/30 are spread from 126 per 100k in Bellingham to 432 per 100k in Lynden.

Figure 3: 7-day COVID-19 case rates per 100,000 by sub-county area in Whatcom County



The figure below shows the case rates per 100,000 for 5 – 17-year-olds across the different regions of Whatcom County (Figure 4). Note the 14-day rate is shown to identify trends more easily and

Figure 4: 14-day COVID-19 case rates per 100,000 in sub-county areas for 5 – 17-year olds



reduce the variation in each line due to smaller case numbers. The case rate for this age group remains high in Lynden and climbed back to a level reported in September for the area. The case rates for Blaine and Ferndale remain elevated, and the case rate for Meridian is also showing an increasing trend. The case rate for this age group in Nooksack Valley is trending downward but remains higher than many other areas in the county.

Across the county, confirmed cases continue to be much more common among unvaccinated residents (Table 1). The 7-day weekly case rate among unvaccinated residents in Whatcom County is four times greater than the equivalent rate among fully vaccinated residents (excluding those under 12 years of age who are not eligible to get a COVID-19 vaccine).

The most recent [DOH Report](#) on COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths by Vaccination Status from November 3 provides findings by smaller age groups for the period of 9/29 – 10/26. Case rates per 100,000 among Washington residents 12 – 64 year olds are five times higher in unvaccinated residents. Unvaccinated residents 65 years and above have a case rate four times than their vaccinated counterparts.

*Table 1: Confirmed cases by vaccination status in Whatcom County for 10/24 – 10/30*

	Week Total	Vaccinated	Unvaccinated or Partially Vaccinated
COVID-19 Cases	466	141	325

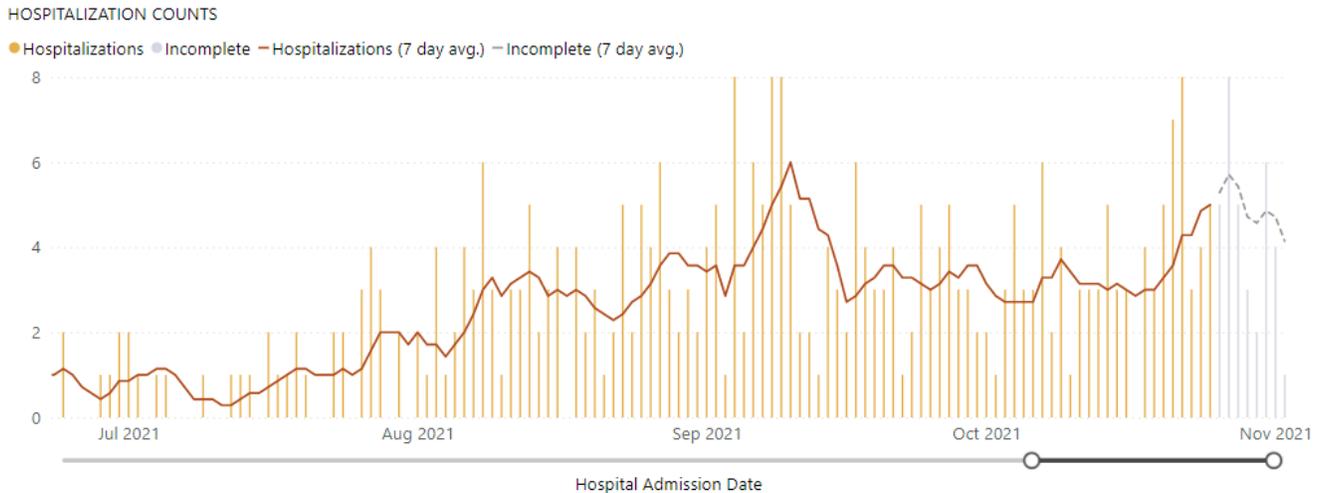
## COVID-19 Hospitalizations

A “COVID-19 hospitalization” is a Washington resident identified using case investigation data in the Washington Disease Reporting System (WDRS) or linkage with Rapid Health Information Network (RHINO) records as hospitalized with confirmed or probable COVID-19. The 7-day rate for COVID-19 hospitalizations in this report describes the number of COVID-19 hospitalizations among Whatcom County residents in a seven-day period divided by the county population.

The 7-day COVID-19 hospitalization rate for Whatcom County is approximately 14 per 100,000 residents as of 10/30. The number of hospitalizations continues to stay at a higher level than that seen during the surge in January and February. A total of 35 Whatcom residents were hospitalized due to COVID-19 illness during the seven days ending on 10/30. Consistent with the breakdown of confirmed cases in the county, more unvaccinated residents continue to need hospitalization for COVID-19 symptoms than vaccinated residents (Table 2). The number of hospitalizations is also concentrated among older residents 65 years and above. This trend of COVID-19 hospitalizations among 65 years and older is described by vaccination status below. According to the DOH Dashboard, the estimated COVID-19 hospitalization rate for Whatcom County is above the state average of 9.5 hospitalizations per 100,000 population.

COVID-19 hospitalization data available on the DOH Dashboard is shown in Figure 5. Caution should be taken when interpreting hospitalization rates within the most recent eight days because of the incompleteness of the data (noted with a dashed line).

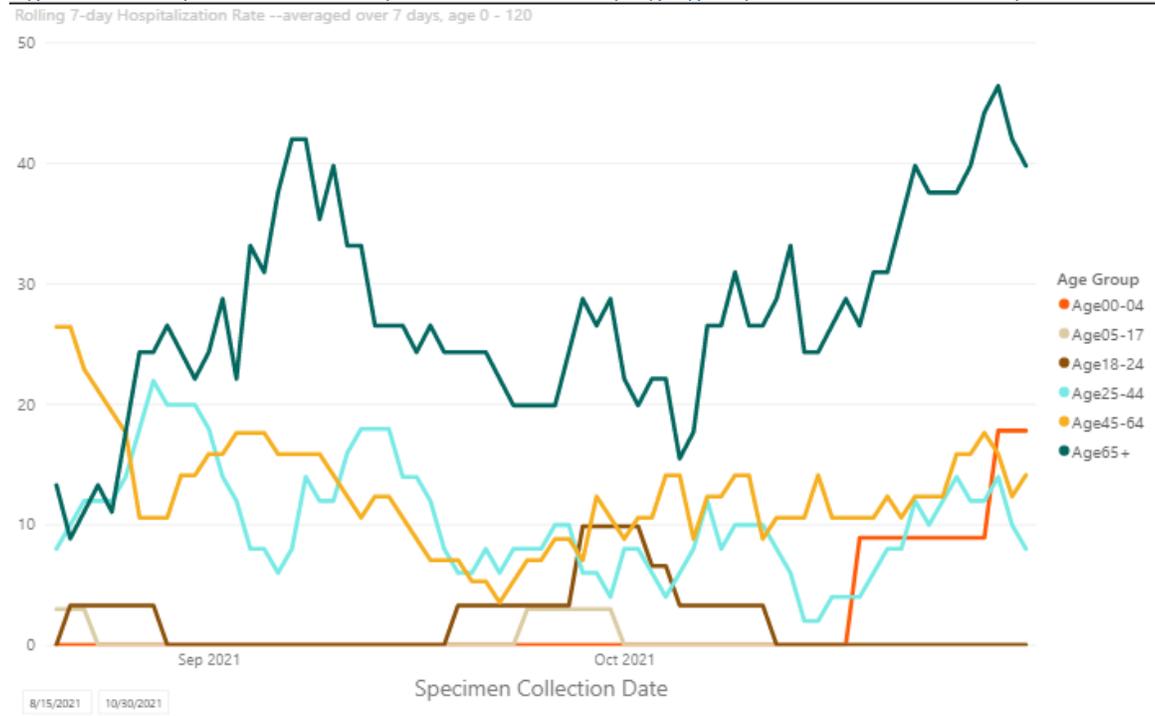
Figure 5: COVID-19 hospitalization counts for Whatcom County residents with confirmed data through 10/26 (Source: DOH)



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.

A breakdown of the 7-day COVID-19 hospitalization rate per 100,000 residents by age group and specimen collection date in Whatcom County is shown below (Figure 6). The county continues to see

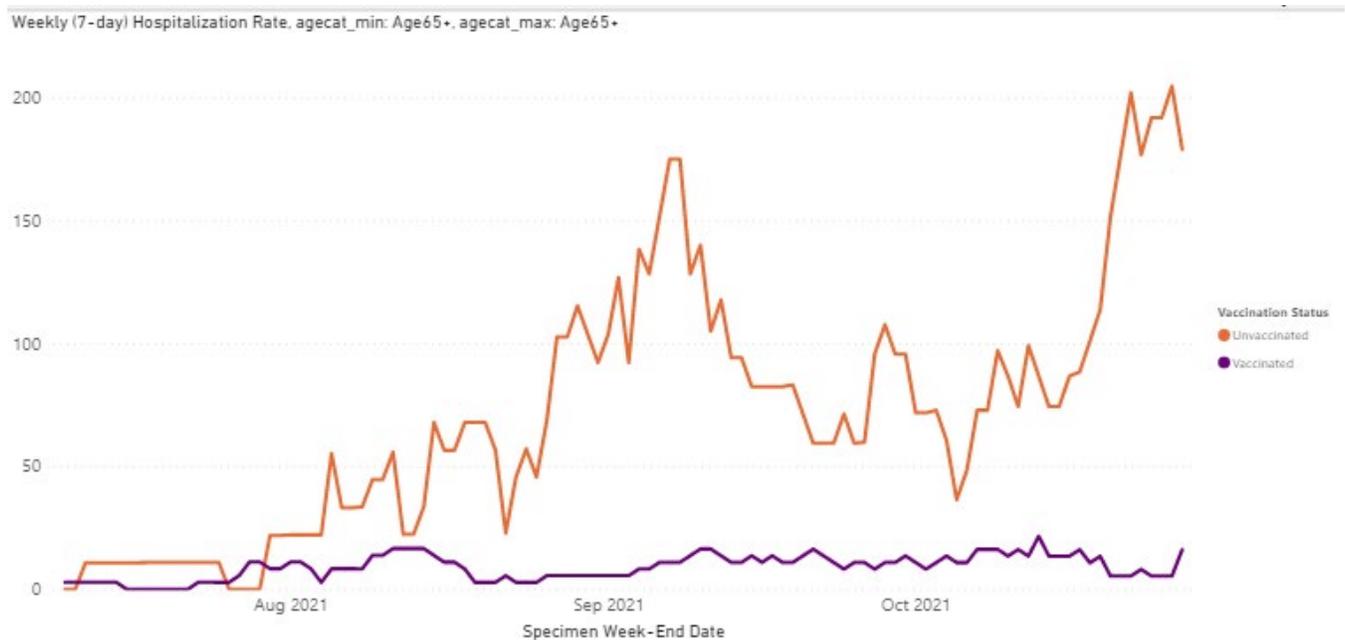
Figure 6: 7-day COVID-19 hospitalization rates by age group for Whatcom County



a higher rate of hospitalizations due to COVID-19 symptoms among residents who are 65 and older than for other age groups.

When hospitalization rates among 65+ year olds are broken down by vaccination status, there is a large difference between unvaccinated and vaccinated individuals in Whatcom County. COVID-19 hospitalization rates among 65+ year old residents are 11 times higher in the unvaccinated population than in the vaccinated population (Figure 7). This finding is consistent with findings across the state from the November 3 [DOH report](#) on COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths by Vaccination Status. For those 65 years and older across Washington State, the hospitalization rate was nine times higher among unvaccinated residents.

Figure 7: 7-day COVID-19 hospitalization rates for adults 65 and older by vaccination status for Whatcom County



Note: Vaccinated individuals include individuals with one or more COVID-19 vaccination doses.

Table 2: COVID-19 hospitalizations in Whatcom County by vaccination status from 10/24 – 10/30

	Week Total	Vaccinated	Unvaccinated or Partially Vaccinated
COVID-19 Hospitalizations	35	7	28

## COVID-19 Deaths

Whatcom County had five deaths due to COVID-19 during the week ending on 10/30 (Table 3):

- one unvaccinated male, 60-69 years
- one unvaccinated female, 70-79 years
- one vaccinated male, 60-69 years
- two vaccinated males, 70-79 years

These numbers are preliminary; WCHD may not yet have been notified of other deaths for this reporting week. The cumulative count for COVID-19 deaths for vaccinated Whatcom County residents is 22.

According to the November 3 [DOH report](#) on COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths by Vaccination Status, data collected from 9/8 to 10/5 suggests that for individuals 65 and older, unvaccinated individuals are nine times more likely to die of COVID-19 than vaccinated individuals.

*Table 3: COVID-19 deaths among Whatcom County residents by vaccination status for 10/24 – 10/30*

COVID-19 Deaths	Total	Vaccinated	Unvaccinated or Partially Vaccinated
Week 10/24 – 10/30	5	3	2

## COVID-19 Vaccinations

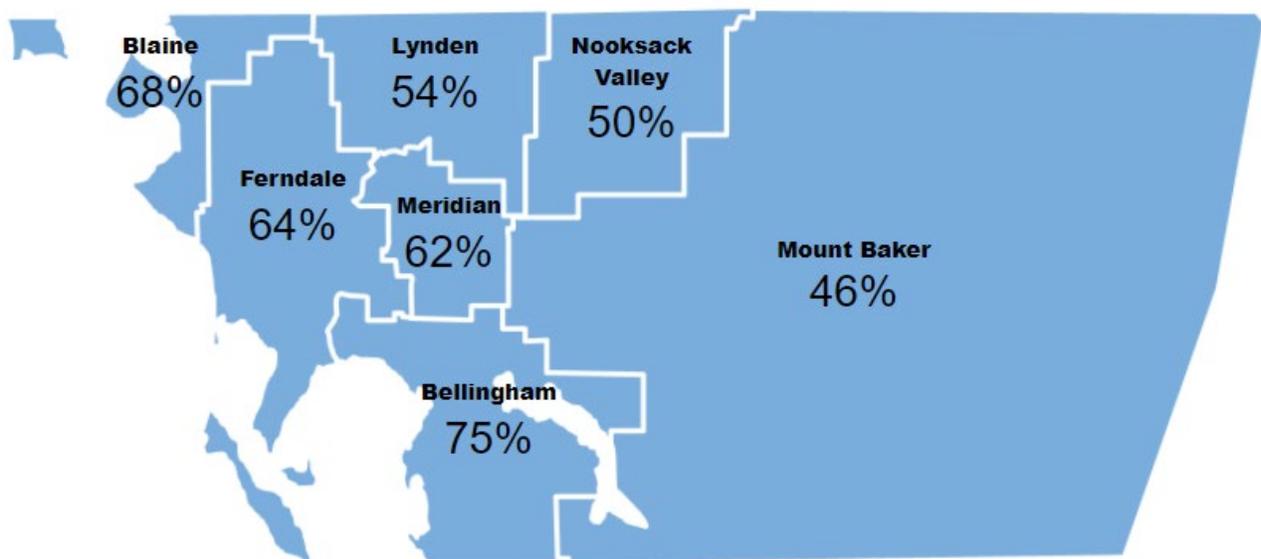
As of 11/2, 61.9% of Whatcom County residents are fully vaccinated, and 67% have initiated vaccination. Of the 12 and older eligible population, 70.9% are fully vaccinated, and 76.8% have initiated vaccination. Of the eligible population, there are still 46,000 Whatcom County residents who have not initiated vaccination.

Following the authorization of COVID-19 vaccinations for younger children 5 – 10 years old, it is important to note that the eligible population is anticipated to increase, and the percent of vaccination coverage will likely fall initially. As more children initiate vaccination, the percentages will climb accordingly.

## Vaccination in Sub-County Areas

As of 11/2, vaccination rates continue to be the lowest in the Nooksack (50%) and Mt. Baker (46%) sub-county areas and among our Hispanic population (44%).

Figure 8. Percent of population who have initiated COVID-19 vaccination by sub-county area for Whatcom County



Whatcom County  
**HEALTH**  
Department



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