

# Whatcom County COVID-19 Data Report

Whatcom County Health Department

Updated 11/18/21 for the period of 11/7/21 - 11/13/21

## 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

- Daily case counts in Whatcom County remain level since the previous reporting week.
- The case rate among 5 – 17 year olds is trending downward, but remains above the county average and higher than other age groups. Case counts among 5 – 17 year-olds are decreasing in the Lynden and Nooksack Valley areas.
- The case rate for unvaccinated residents in Whatcom County is still 3-4x the case rate for vaccinated residents across all age groups (12+ years).
- The 7-day COVID-19 hospitalization rate for Whatcom residents is relatively unchanged from the previous reporting week.
- COVID-19 hospitalizations are most frequent among residents 65+ years.

## For the period of 11/7-11/13

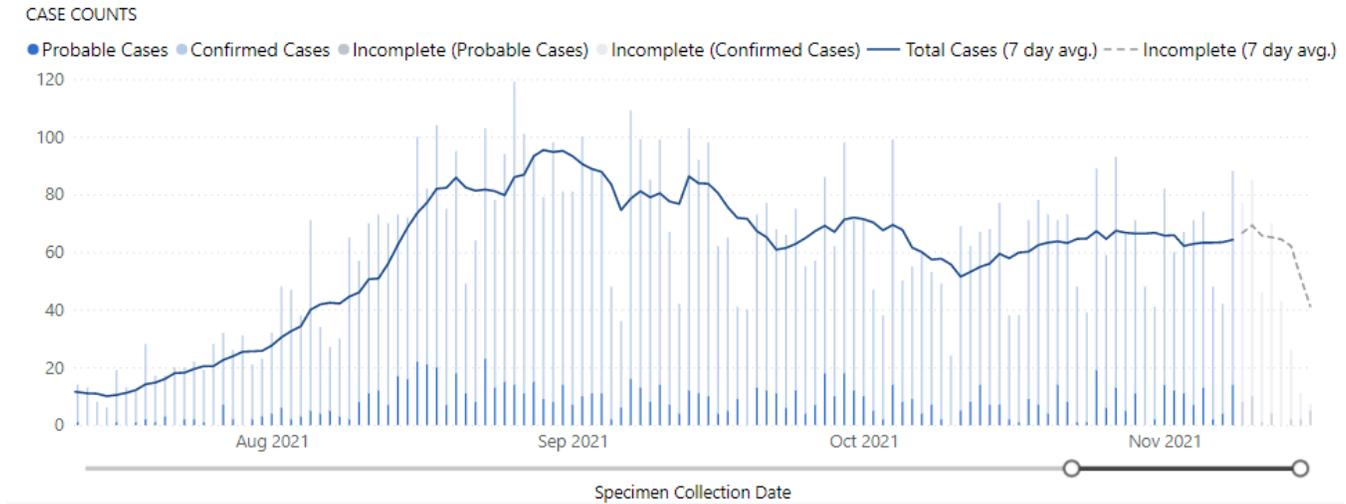
7-Day Case Rate / 100,000	7-Day Hospitalization Rate / 100,000
195	10.6

## Overview of COVID-19 Cases

Whatcom County saw a total of 439 confirmed and probable cases from specimens collected during the reporting week 11/7 – 11/13. The 7-day case rate in Whatcom County for this reporting week is 195 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. The percentage of cases accounted for by school-age children increased and is now 26% of all confirmed cases in Whatcom County.

According to data published on the Washington State DOH Dashboard confirmed through 11/8, the 7-day case rate for Whatcom County remains above the state average (162 per 100,000).

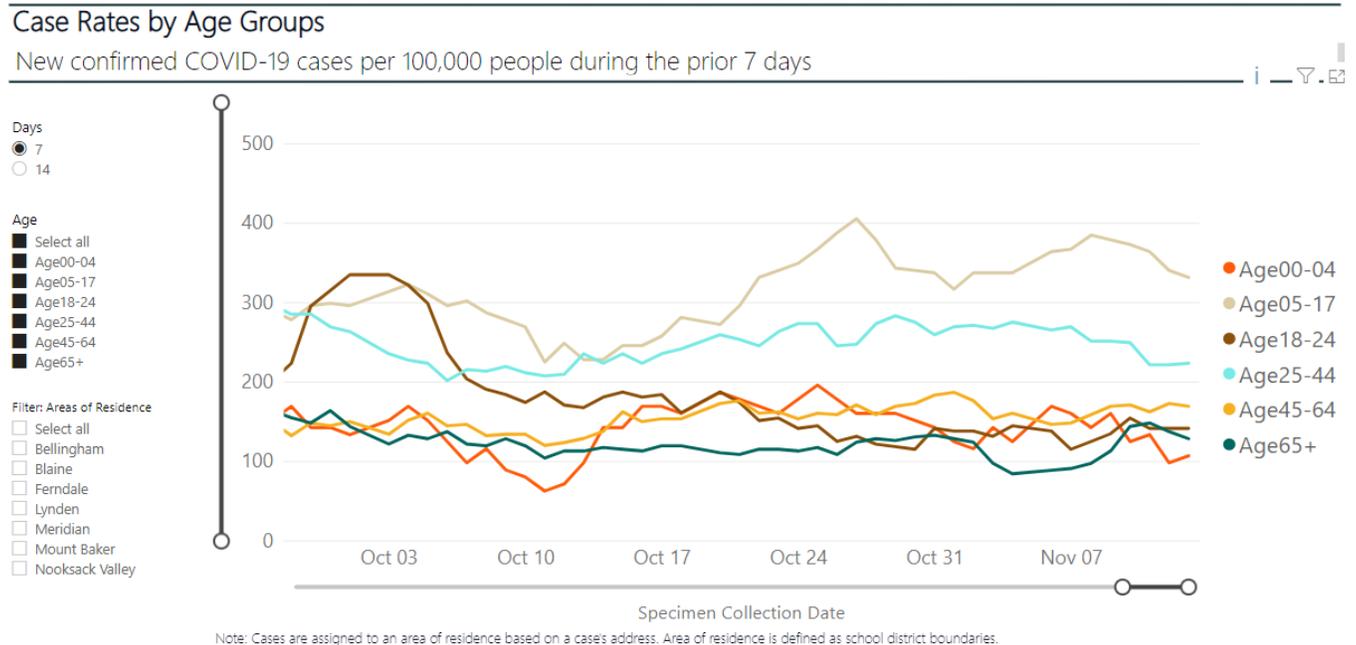
Figure 1: Daily COVID-19 case counts and 7-day average for Whatcom County (Source: DOH)



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

The 7-day case rate among school-age children (5 – 17 years) crested and fell during the most recent reporting week to 331 per 100,000. The rate for this age group is trending downward but remains almost 2-fold higher than the combined average of the other age groups in the county (171 per 100,000). A decline in confirmed cases was reported among adults 25 – 44 years. The case rates for other age groups remain on a level trend with little change from the previous reporting week.

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 range of 7-day case rates spans from 129 per 100,000 in the Bellingham area to 367 per 100,000 in the Lynden area (Figure 3). The relatively high case rate in the Nooksack Valley area decreased to 253 per 100,000 during the most recent reporting week. The Lynden area, by contrast, continues to see a relatively high number of cases. The 7-day case rates in the other regions remain at a level below 250 per 100,000 for the recent reporting week.

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

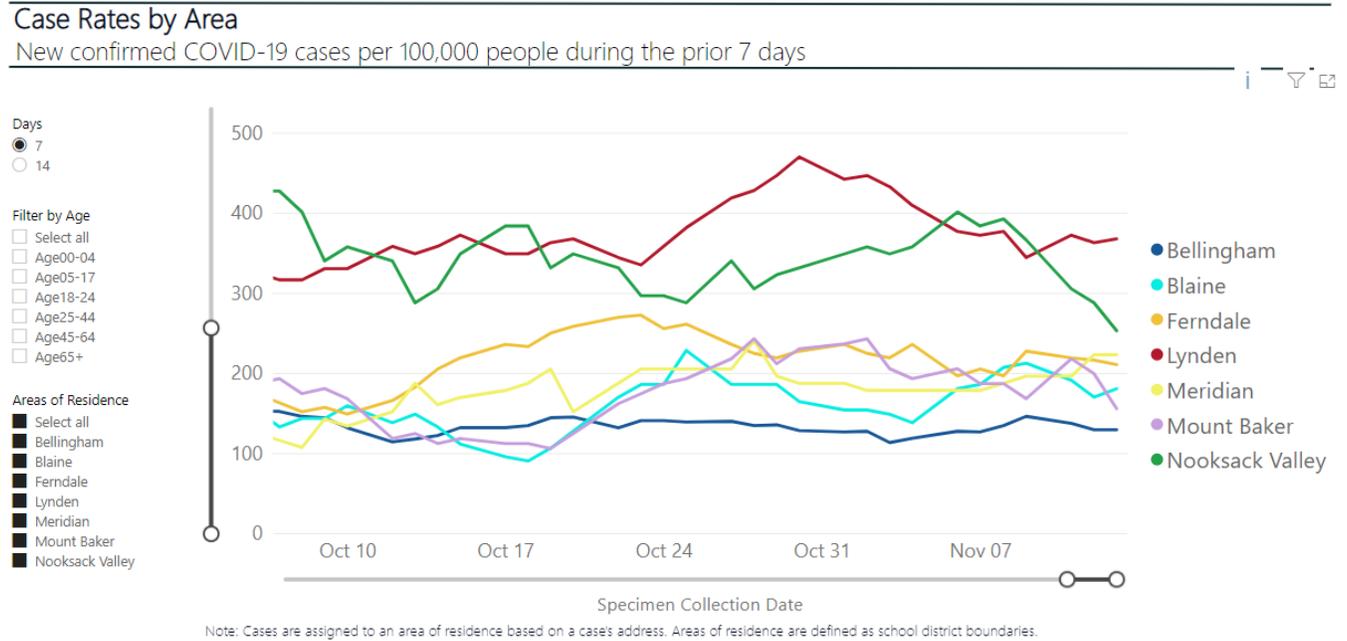


Figure 4: 7-day COVID-19 case rates per 100,000 in sub-county areas for 5 – 17-year olds

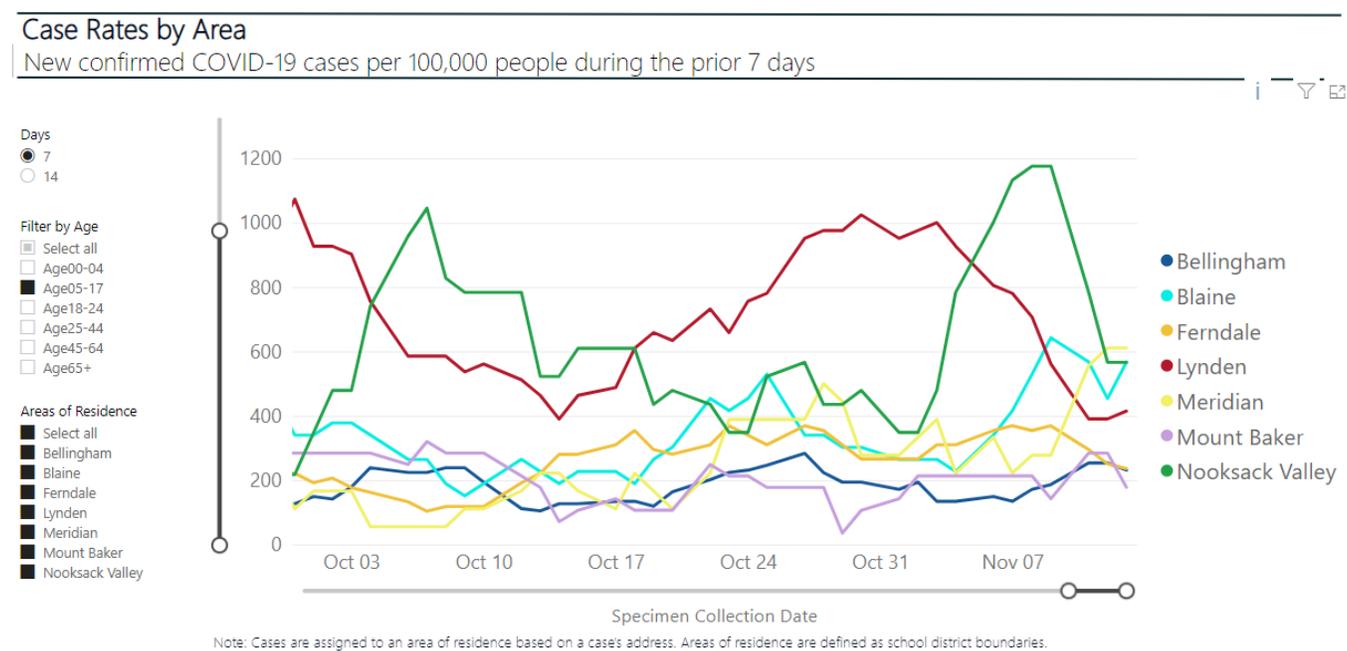


Figure 4 shows the 7-day case rates per 100,000 for 5 – 17-year-olds across the different regions of Whatcom County. The high case rates in both the Lynden and Nooksack Valley areas declined significantly by the end of the recent reporting week. Moderate increases were observed in the 7-day

case rates for the Meridian and Blaine areas. The case rates among 5 – 17 year-olds for the remaining areas of Bellingham, Ferndale, and Mount Baker have reported case rates below the county average for this age group.

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 three to four times greater than the equivalent rate among fully vaccinated residents (excluding those under 5 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 10 provides findings by smaller age groups for the period of 10/13 – 11/9. Case rates per 100,000 among Washington residents across all age groups (12 and older) are five times higher in unvaccinated residents.

*Table 1: Confirmed cases by vaccination status in Whatcom County for 11/7 – 11/13*

	Week Total	Vaccinated	Unvaccinated or Partially Vaccinated
COVID-19 Cases	439	148	291

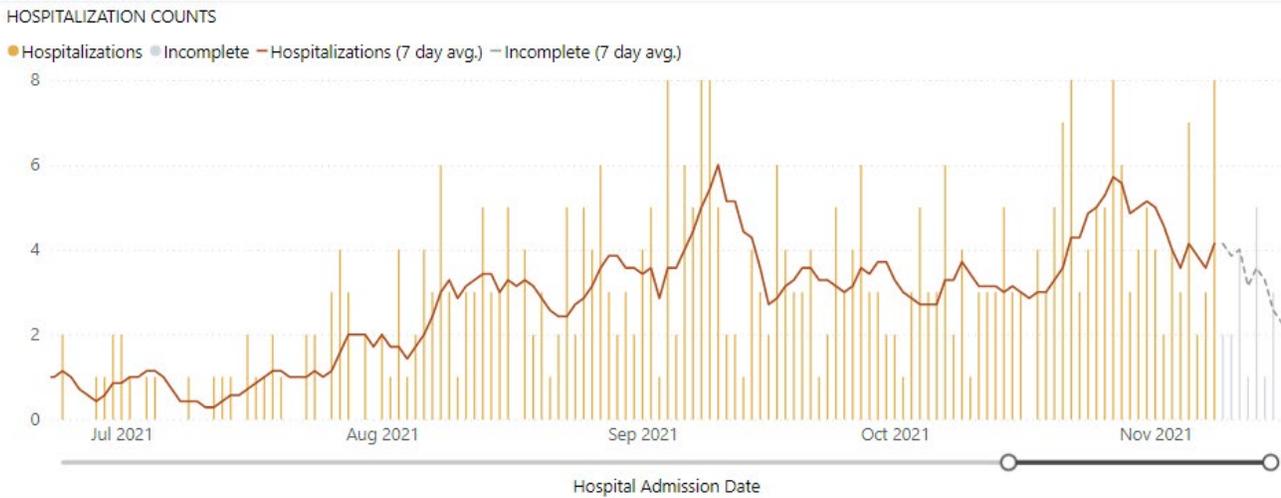
**COVID-19 Hospitalizations**

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 10.6 per 100,000 residents as of 11/13. There were 25 new hospitalizations among Whatcom County residents due to COVID-19 illness during the seven days ending on 11/13. This is a similar total to the previous week (25). 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 among older residents 65 years and above climbed to a high level again. According to the DOH Dashboard with data confirmed through 11/8, the estimated COVID-19 hospitalization rate for Whatcom County is above the state average of 8.9 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 11/1 (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 in Figure 6. The higher rate of hospitalizations among those 65 years and above indicates that most of the new hospitalizations were among older residents.

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



According to the November 17 [DOH report](#) on COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths by Vaccination Status, data collected from 10/06 to 11/2 suggests vaccinated individuals continue to be at much lower risk for hospitalization due to COVID-19 than the unvaccinated population. Hospitalization rates among the youngest age cohort eligible for vaccination (12 – 34 years) are 14 times higher in the unvaccinated population than in the fully vaccinated population. The difference in rates increases to 18 times higher for unvaccinated 35 – 64 year olds. For the oldest cohort 65 years and above, the rate of COVID-19 hospitalization is nine times higher in the unvaccinated population than in the vaccinated population.

*Table 2: COVID-19 hospitalizations in Whatcom County by vaccination status from 11/7 – 11/13*

	Week Total	Vaccinated	Unvaccinated or Partially Vaccinated
COVID-19 Hospitalizations	25	5	20

## COVID-19 Deaths

Whatcom County saw four deaths due to COVID-19 during the week ending on 11/13 (Table 3):

- one vaccinated female, 90-99 years
- two unvaccinated males, 60-69 years
- one unvaccinated male, 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 25 and the overall count for COVID-19 deaths is 172.

According to the November 17 [DOH report](#) on COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths by Vaccination Status, data collected from 9/22 to 10/19 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 11/7 – 11/13*

COVID-19 Deaths	Total	Vaccinated	Unvaccinated or Partially Vaccinated
Week of 11/7 – 11/13	4	1	3

## COVID-19 Vaccinations

The percent coverage for COVID-19 vaccinations among the population is displayed in Table 4. Of the eligible population (5+ years), there are 63,000 Whatcom County residents who have not initiated vaccination. The eligible population of 5+ years in Whatcom County includes an additional 17,807 individuals compared to the population 12+.

As of Nov. 13, the number of pediatric vaccinations received in Whatcom County is 1,184, accounting for 6.8% of the eligible population in the 5 – 10 year-old age group.

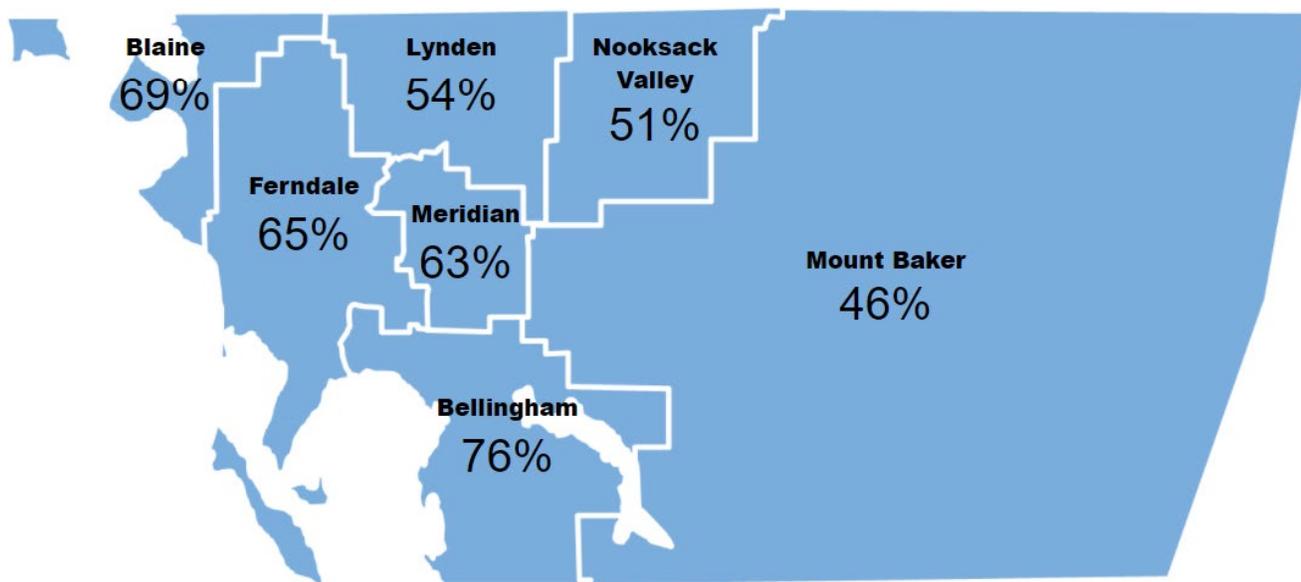
*Table 4. Percent of population who are initiating vaccination and fully vaccinated in Whatcom County.*

	Initiating (%)	Fully Vaccinated (%)
Total Population	68.2	62.2
Population 5+	71.7	65.4
Population 12+	77.6	71.6

### Vaccination in Sub-County Areas

As of 11/13, vaccination rates continue to be the lowest in the Nooksack (51%) and Mt. Baker (46%) sub-county areas and among our Hispanic population (45%).

*Figure 7. 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).