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Phase 2 Variance for Snohomish County Officially Submitted

Final variance request sent by Executive Somers to the Secretary of Health

SNOHOMISH COUNTY, Wash., June 1, 2020 – Following Board of Health and Snohomish County Council votes last Friday, and revisions to the application to respond to updated guidance, the variance to move to Phase 2 of the state’s Safe Start plan was submitted today by Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers. The [final application can be viewed online](#).

“We are now in a position to get more people safely back to work and our economy restarted because of our collective work preparing for Phase 2,” Somers said. “We are grateful for our partnership with the Governor and the pathway he has provided for us to apply for the Safe Start reopening plan. We have assembled a data driven Phase 2 application that will protect the health of our community while opening up our economy. We will continue to urge the residents of Snohomish County to maintain social distancing measures, wear face coverings, and otherwise support the sensible pandemic measures that have gotten us to this point.”

Now that the plan has been submitted, the Secretary of Health will review the variance package. Additional information may be requested, or a phone call may be requested to further discuss the application. Applications may be approved as submitted, approved with modifications, or denied.

“There has been an incredible amount of effort put into this application, and by businesses and community members to get us to this point,” said Stephanie Wright, Chair of the Board of Health and Vice Chair of the County Council. “However, this is just one step in a long journey. We’re counting on everyone continuing that effort to keep the spread of COVID-19 down.”

Governor Jay Inslee on Friday announced new criteria for counties seeking to move to Phase 2. One significant change in Snohomish County’s favor was increasing the target incidence of case counts from 10 to 25 new cases per 100,000 in a 14-day period. From May 12-26, the case rate per 100,000 was 18.4 for Snohomish County.

“After reviewing the new guidance and our updated response, I remain confident that we have the plans and processes in place to meet the targets provided,” said Dr. Chris Spitters, Health Officer for the Snohomish Health District.”

The community is reminded that until approved by the Secretary of Health, Snohomish County remains in Phase 1. Residents and businesses should continue following principles laid out in the Stay Home, Stay Healthy orders while beginning to familiarize themselves with what moving to Phase 2 will look like.

“Our businesses and workers are ready and willing to safely open up and move into Phase 2,” said Snohomish County Council Chair Nate Nehring. “Our economic recovery will demand much of everyone, and I appreciate that much hard work lies ahead as we navigate the path forward.”

Allowing more businesses and activities to reopen does not mean that it will be business as usual. There are guidelines that employers will need to follow through all of the phases. More detailed information is [outlined in the Safe Start Plan](#). Businesses must also wait until they have industry-specific health and safety guidance before reopening within the proper phase. The governor’s office [maintains a list of guidance for industries](#).

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