



# Yakima Health District

## Media Release

**For immediate release:** November 24, 2021

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### **COVID-19 Outbreak in the Yakima County Jail**

**Yakima, WA-** On November 19, 2021, the Yakima Health District was notified of several staff and inmates who tested positive at the Yakima County Jail. An investigation was conducted to identify all close contacts to the individuals, including inmates and staff. Additionally, further testing was conducted.

The Yakima Health District continues to be in communication with the Yakima County Jail. As of November 23, there have been four confirmed COVID-19 cases from staff and 47 confirmed COVID-19 cases from inmates due to this outbreak.

The Yakima Health District has recommended that the Yakima County Jail implement the following:

- Co-hort individuals that have tested positive and are currently in isolation
- Co-hort individuals who have been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19
- Test inmates regularly
- Continuously monitor staff and inmates for symptoms of COVID-19
- Increase testing for staff

### **Importance of Following Public Health Recommendations**

Outbreaks, such as this one, serve as a reminder to the community about the importance of reducing community transmission to decrease the chances of COVID-19 being introduced in congregate settings. As Yakima County continues to experience high levels of community transmission, it is crucial that all community members follow public health recommendations to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the community:

1. Get vaccinated for COVID-19 as soon as possible.
2. Wear a mask when in public indoor settings.
3. Wear a mask when in crowded outdoor settings.
4. Wash hands frequently and sanitize surfaces frequently.
5. Practice social distancing.
6. Limit gatherings with those outside of your household or, if possible, gather virtually.
7. If an individual from a household gets infected with COVID-19, it is critical that the individual isolates at home away from all other household members.

### **Quote**

“COVID-19 outbreaks are preventable, and we must continue to do our part to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community. We need to decrease the chance of introducing the virus in places where large numbers of people are in a small space, such as jails and long-term care facilities. Public health recommendations, such as getting vaccinated, wearing a mask and social distancing are crucial to remain safe. We encourage community members to take advantage of the vaccine opportunities in our county.



# Yakima Health District

We want to remain cautious this winter season to ensure we do not see another surge in cases, hospitalizations, and deaths.” -Dr. Neil Barg, Health Officer, Yakima Health District

## **Additional Information**

[www.YakimaTesting.org](http://www.YakimaTesting.org)

[www.YakimaVaccines.org](http://www.YakimaVaccines.org)

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