



Snohomish County

County Council

Nate Nehring, Chair
Stephanie Wright, Vice-Chair
Sam Low
Megan Dunn
Jared Mead

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Snohomish County votes to move into Phase 2 of Reopening

Today during a special meeting the Snohomish County Council passed a resolution authorizing submission of an application and request for a variance from the Washington State Department of Health to proceed to Phase 2 of the state's Reopening Washington Plan.

"I am proud of this bipartisan effort to move Snohomish County into Phase 2 of reopening," said Council Chair Nehring. "This vote shows that there is widespread support in Snohomish County for safely reopening. Moving to Phase 2 will provide much-needed economic relief for our businesses, workers, and families as we continue to prioritize the health and safety of our residents."

"It is imperative that our small businesses are afforded the opportunity to open back up and serve their communities. These business owners are ready to get back to work while keeping their neighbors and community safe," said Councilmember Sam Low. "Both can be done at the same time."

Ahead of the Council's meeting, the Snohomish County Board of Health also voted to move forward with the application process. With this resolution the Council has also directed the Health District Staff to review all applicable rules/instructions/criteria for submission of a variance request to determine if Snohomish County qualifies for a variance. The package, with a letter from the Executive, will be submitted by the Snohomish Health District to the Washington Secretary of Health for consideration.

"This request is based on the best available advice from our Health Officer, the latest data, and the strength of our public health system. It's imperative that workers have protections in place to safely return to work and that small businesses are able to safely open their doors. We share a common goal of ensuring our most vulnerable are

protected and that we make any determinations with all residents in mind," added Councilmember Megan Dunn.

"I am proud of the way the people of Snohomish County have taken care of each other and practiced social distancing throughout the response to this pandemic. I am confident our communities have the tools and information they need to safely transition into the next phase of our recovery. We are ready for this," said Councilmember Jared Mead.

"The steps we've taken to flatten the curve have saved lives," said Council Vice-Chair Stephanie Wright. "With increased testing, a reduction in new cases, and the hospital capacity to absorb new patients, we are now ready for the measured approach of Phase 2. Our businesses and communities are preparing to follow the crucial safety guidelines for reopening and are eager to get people back to work."