



News Release

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Contact: [Frank Ameduri](#), Communications, 360-522-3750

Department of Health releases new COVID-19 data tied to occupation, industry

OLYMPIA – The largest number of COVID-19 cases in Washington state is associated with health care workers and people who provide healthcare support, according to data in a [new report](#) from the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) Safety & Health Assessment & Research for Prevention (SHARP) program.

The report details total COVID-19 cases, by occupation and industry, through May 27. The information about occupation, industry and employer was collected during interviews with people who tested positive for COVID-19.

The highest number of infections is among workers in health care and social assistance. The manufacturing industry has the second highest number of cases. This includes traditional manufacturing businesses as well as food processing facilities.

It's important to note that while the risk for contracting COVID-19 may be higher for people depending on their industry or occupation, **this report reflects where people work, not where or how they were infected.** It can be difficult to determine with certainty where and how people get infected. In addition, healthcare workers have been a priority testing group since the start of the pandemic potentially resulting in increased detection of COVID-19 in this group.

Many of the people who provided occupation and industry information when interviewed by public health after testing positive for COVID-19 also provided information about race and ethnicity. Looking at data on race and ethnicity by industry and occupation can help identify workers at higher risk of contracting this illness and help focus our prevention efforts. For example, 12 percent of Hispanic and Latinx workers are employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, while 21 percent of COVID-19 cases among these workers are in that industry.

— More —

Additional studies are needed to better understand the risks of certain occupations for COVID-19. This report will be updated regularly online.

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