

Death Category Report:

WA State Department of Health

14 July, 2020

Overall COVID-19 Deaths

As of 14 July, 2020 there have been 1,458 deaths among Washington residents who have had a positive RT-PCR COVID-19 test. This includes 65 deaths for which COVID-19 was ruled out as a cause or contributing factor; nine of these deaths were due to homicide, suicide, or accident, and 56 were natural deaths unrelated to COVID-19.

The WA DOH COVID-19 response team continues to enhance COVID-19 reporting. This report further categorizes all 1,458 deaths as confirmed, suspected, pending, or non-COVID deaths. This classification is created using the cause of death information from the death certificate, COVID-19 testing results, case/contract investigation information, follow-up with medical certifiers, and information from local public health jurisdictions. Determining whether COVID-19 either caused or contributed to a person's death can be very complex and may take weeks to verify depending on the complexity of the case. As we go through the regular DOH process for finalizing death counts, we will make all warranted adjustments to these data, and numbers are likely to change over time.

Confirmed deaths

- Confirmed deaths are deaths occurring among those who have a positive COVID-19 test and whose death certificate includes COVID as a cause or contributing factor. To date, 1,301 of the 1,458 (89%) deaths are confirmed COVID deaths.

COVID on the death certificate includes any variation on spelling of the following COVID, or COVID-like terms and which do not include exclusion criteria (found at the end of this report):

COVID: Confirmed Deaths		
COVID	Corona19	Corona Virus
NCOV	COV2	SAR2COV19

COVID-like: Confirmed Deaths		
Respiratory Distress	Respiratory Failure	Acute Respiratory
Severe acute respiratory syndrome*	SARS*	ARDS
Viral Illness	Pneumonia	Hypoxia

*Only if no other strain is specified.

Pending deaths

- Pending deaths are deaths whose death certificate is still pending, or deaths that are missing a cause of death on the death certificate. Many of these deaths are very recent deaths, out of state deaths to Washington residents, or complex deaths waiting for additional information from the local medical examiner or coroner. Currently, 25 (2%) of the total deaths are pending.

Suspect deaths

- Suspect deaths are natural deaths (among those who have tested positive for COVID-19) which do not include the COVID terms listed above on the death certificate. The Department of Health follows up on all Suspect deaths to rule in or rule out COVID-19 as a cause or contributor to death. Currently, 67 (5%) of the total deaths are Suspect deaths.

Non-COVID-19 deaths

- Non-COVID-19 deaths include deaths that occur among those who have tested positive for COVID-19, but who have died of unrelated causes. This includes homicides, suicides, overdoses, accidents (without mention of COVID), and natural deaths where COVID-19 has been ruled out as contributing to the death. This includes deaths that occurred more than 60 days after the specimen collection date for the positive COVID-19 test and whose death certificate did not mention COVID-19. We have identified 65 (4%) deaths that are Non-COVID-19 deaths and are removed from the total counts presented on our dashboard.

County Breakdown

County	Total Deaths	CONFIRMED	NON-COVID	PENDING	SUSPECT
Asotin County	2	2	0	0	0
Benton County	95	89	3	1	2
Chelan County	7	6	0	0	1
Clark County	33	26	0	0	7
Douglas County	3	3	0	0	0
Franklin County	38	32	0	1	5
Grant County	8	8	0	0	0
Island County	12	11	1	0	0
King County	645	592	23	8	22
Kitsap County	2	2	0	0	0
Klickitat County	3	2	0	0	1
Lewis County	3	3	0	0	0
Mason County	1	1	0	0	0
Missing County	1	1	0	0	0
Okanogan County	2	2	0	0	0
Pacific County	1	1	0	0	0
Pierce County	114	95	6	4	9
Skagit County	17	15	2	0	0
Snohomish County	179	161	4	2	12
Spokane County	43	40	2	0	1
Stevens County	1	1	0	0	0

County	Total Deaths	CONFIRMED	NON-COVID	PENDING	SUSPECT
Thurston County	8	5	3	0	0
Walla Walla County	3	2	0	1	0
Whatcom County	41	33	5	1	2
Yakima County	196	168	16	7	5
Total	1,458	1,301	65	25	67

Deaths Probably Due to COVID

- Probable deaths include deaths where the death certificate lists COVID-19 as a cause or contributor to the death, but do not have a known positive COVID-19 PCR test. We have identified 80 deaths that are probable deaths. These deaths include any variation on the spelling of the following terms on the death certificate:

Criteria: Probable Deaths		
COVID	Corona19	Corona Virus
NCOV	COV2	SAR2COV19
Severe acute respiratory syndrome*	SARS*	

*Only if no other strain is specified.

County Breakdown for Probable Deaths

County	Probable
Benton County	3
Chelan County	1
Clark County	2
Douglas County	1
Franklin County	1
Island County	3
King County	17
Kitsap County	1
Pierce County	7
Skagit County	1
Snohomish County	12
Spokane County	3
Thurston County	1
Unknown County	2
Walla Walla County	1
Whatcom County	10
Whitman County	1
Yakima County	13
Total	80

Exclusion Criteria

To avoid counting deaths that list COVID-19 in negative terms, or which list SARS but specify another strain, the following criteria are used to remove deaths from the “confirmed” and “probable” categories:

Exclusion Criteria		
HKU1	NL63	NL63
OC43	Not Covid	Non Covid
COVID 19 Negative	SARS COV Negative	Rule Out COVID
COVID Negative	Not due to COVID	Negative COVID
SARS Negative		
