

State of  
Washington  
House of  
Representatives



## COVID-19 2022 Interim Operations Plan

### **I. OVERVIEW**

The Washington State House of Representatives (House) is committed to doing the people's work while reducing the risk of spreading COVID-19. This document provides guidelines for House operations during the 2022 interim which reflect the current state of the pandemic.

The following imperatives guided the development of this document:

- Ensuring accountable and transparent operations of the House;
- Preserving and enhancing public participation; and
- Protecting the health and safety of the public, House members, and staff.

This document relies on the latest guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), local public health authorities, the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I), and the Department of Health (DOH). Changes will be communicated and implemented as we receive new information or guidance.

### **II. INTERIM OPERATIONS**

All members and staff are permitted to access House facilities during the 2022 interim period beginning Friday, March 11, 2022. Public access will be permitted beginning Monday, March 14th. The Executive Rules Committee will determine when interim legislative committee meetings may be conducted in person or in remote or hybrid formats. Initially, committee meetings, legislative taskforces, and workgroups will continue to use a fully remote format until House facilities, technology systems, members, and staff are prepared and trained to begin using a hybrid format or resume using a fully in-person format.

The following applies to anyone accessing House facilities, whether on the Capitol Campus or in-district offices:

1. Everyone must self-screen prior to entering any House facility. Signs regarding symptoms are posted at each House entrance on the Capitol Campus and available on the House intranet. [See House Screening Questionnaire.]
2. Beginning March 12, 2022, masks are not required to be worn in House spaces. However, anyone may opt to wear a mask and masks are encouraged, particularly for larger indoor gatherings where an inability to distance and poor ventilation is present. Members and staff must not prohibit masks from being worn or otherwise discourage their use. Masks may still be required for those who recently tested positive for COVID-19, were identified as a close contact for someone with COVID-19, or for other reasons identified by public health guidance.<sup>1</sup>
3. Six-foot distancing should be maintained in spaces, when possible, especially in poorly ventilated areas.

Anyone who has questions or concerns is encouraged to contact the Chief Clerk's Office, House Counsel, or the Human Resources Director.

### **III. EXPECTATIONS FOR HOUSE OPERATIONS**

Everyone is asked to continue efforts to keep each other safe by reducing the likelihood for transmission of COVID-19. These include the following:

1. A mask may be worn by anyone in House facilities. Staff and members should refrain from comments or actions regarding the wearing or not wearing of masks by others.
2. Everyone should continue to practice proper distancing (maintaining a minimum six feet of distance) regardless of vaccination status, respiratory etiquette, hand washing, and disinfecting of shared spaces (kitchen and copiers) after use.
3. The House will continue to operate under a temporary telework policy that permits staff to entirely telework. However, staff may opt to work a blended schedule with one or more days onsite. Staff must select a set schedule indicating telework and onsite days within the work schedules system. Schedules are subject to supervisor approval.
4. If a person in an at-risk category is in need of a work accommodation (including a need to access a building facility or a need to continue to telework when they would otherwise be directed to work in a building facility) they must notify their supervisor and/or the House ADA coordinator, Kyle Overmiller (x7271).
5. Most importantly, anyone who is sick should plan to stay home and help prevent the spread of illness. Before entering House facilities for any purpose, individuals must self-screen using public health criteria. [See House Screening].
6. In-person meetings may occur in House facilities or other spaces. In-person meetings should be held in spaces that accommodate distancing between attendees. The House continues to encourage meetings to allow for virtual participation.
7. Conference room capacity is lower to support adequate distancing. Revised capacity for rooms can be found on the House intranet. Additionally, there are specific conference rooms on the capital campus set up to support hybrid meetings.
8. House travel may be resumed. All staff travel, regardless of worksite, requires advance approval through the Travel Authorization system before the travel occurs.
9. Food sharing, communal meals, and consuming food in common/public areas indoors should continue to be limited.
10. If anyone becomes ill with COVID-19 like symptoms during the workday, that person must immediately notify their supervisor and leave the building. They should not return to a House facility until cleared by a healthcare provider or as otherwise set out in CDC guidelines. Contact House Counsel at x7767 with any questions regarding return-to-work timelines.
11. If anyone accesses a House facility, and later has or develops signs/symptoms of COVID-19 (see COVID-19 screening questions) or is themselves found positive or has been in close contact with someone who is experiencing symptoms or is confirmed positive, they must report the development of symptoms, positive diagnosis, or close contact to the House Counsel and, if an employee, to the employee's staff director. Information must be provided to House Counsel on what areas they occupied and who they had close contact with, as defined by the CDC. Information will only be shared as appropriate and allowed by law. The House will also take steps to disinfect areas.
12. In the event someone becomes diagnosed with COVID-19 and accessed House facilities, the

workspace will be disinfected according to CDC guidelines.<sup>2</sup>

13. Pursuant to the requirements of Chapter 252, Laws of 2021 (ESSB 5115), the House will provide notification to staff and members on the premise at the same worksite as a qualifying individual of potential exposure.
14. Staff and members must adhere to required quarantine or isolation timeframes and mask requirements. Generally, depending on an individual's vaccination status, the individual may be required to quarantine for at least 5 days after exposure to monitor for symptoms and wear a tight-fitting mask for at least 10 days. Anyone who tests positive, regardless of vaccination status, must isolate for at least 5 days, and may only return onsite if the person's symptoms are improving. Members and staff should work with the House HR Director or House Counsel on specific return dates. Resources such as this [calculator](#) are also available to assist with determining the quarantine or isolation length of time.<sup>3</sup>

#### **IV. MOVING FORWARD**

The House will continue to take steps to safely reopen. Subject to public health guidance at the time, the House is planning for in-person events, including for the Legislative Staff Academy, the 2022 committee assembly, and 2023 legislative session. Ultimately, the House will focus efforts during the interim to adjust operations with the goal of fully reopening safely.

The Chief Clerk's Office will continue to monitor public health guidance and adjust operations as necessary. This may also include returning to more restricted access of House facilities if staff or operations are compromised. House member and staff diligence and flexibility are essential.

Thank you all for your assistance.

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- <sup>1</sup> See, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>
  - <sup>2</sup> See, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
  - <sup>3</sup> See, <https://doh.wa.gov/node/12520>