

Senate Reopening Plan

The Washington State Senate is committed to maintaining a safe working environment and reducing the likelihood for transmission of Covid-19. These guidelines direct the members, staff, and workspaces of the Senate and are not intended to address the House of Representatives or Department of Enterprise Services staff or activities. This document is based on guidance from the federal [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), the [Department of Health](#), [local public health authorities](#), the [Department of Labor & Industries](#), and the [Governor's office](#) and will be updated. As guidance frequently changes, staff and members are encouraged to contact the Human Resource Officer (HRO) or the Secretary's Office if they have questions or concerns.

Senate buildings are already open to all staff and members. Beginning on July 1, 2021, legislative facilities will be open to the public and guests. This document outlines measures the Senate will take to maintain a safe working environment.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have identified [certain people who are at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19](#). If an employee or member is at increased risk for severe illness and in need of an accommodation they should contact the HRO.

1. Overarching Public Health Principles

Face coverings will be required in all legislative facilities unless a member or employee is alone in their office with the door closed.

At least six feet of social distancing must be maintained at all times. Staff and members are advised not to congregate in public spaces when walking throughout legislative facilities.

2. Continued Allowance of Remote Work

The Senate will continue to allow employees to work remotely, with supervisor approval, through the 2021 interim. Employees should maintain an accurate work schedule through the Leave System.

3. Access to Legislative Facilities

The public will have access to legislative facilities start on July 1, 2021. Anyone entering legislative facilities must wear a face covering and maintain distance from others, regardless of vaccination status.

4. How will the physical space of the Senate be maintained?

The Secretary will coordinate with the Department of Enterprise Services (DES) and Legislative Support Services (LSS) to make arrangements for the following:

- Identify problem areas for physical distancing.
- Support respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene. This includes, for example, making tissues available, providing soap and water, placing hand sanitizers in multiple locations, and displaying posters to remind individuals to wash their hands and refrain from touching their faces or masks.
- Remove or block seating to allow for distancing in communal areas.
- Provide signage to reinforce safe practices.
- Post printer and copier usage and cleaning instructions and ensure that sanitizing supplies are provided.
- Post instructions for elevator use, including limiting the number of users, marked waiting area, and cleaning for touch points.
- Mark areas such as tight stairways or hallways to only allow for “one-way passage” to limit face to face interactions.
- Ensure that ventilation and filtration systems are updated consistent with CDC guidelines.
- Make improvements to the engineering controls using the building’s ventilation system.
- Perform routine environmental cleaning and disinfection, particularly of surfaces that are frequently touched.

5. What screening procedures will be in place for those entering legislative facilities?

Any person entering legislative facilities must review the posted screening questions (see below). If they answer “yes” to any of the questions below, they should not enter legislative facilities and contact the HRO for guidance and next steps.

1. Do you have any of these symptoms that are not caused by another condition?
 - Fever or chills
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Persistent headache
 - Recent loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea

2. Within the past 14 days, have you had contact with anyone that you know had COVID-19 or COVID-like symptoms? Contact is being 6 feet or closer for more than 15 minutes cumulatively in a 24-hour period with a person, or having direct contact with fluids from a person with COVID-19 (for example, being coughed or sneezed on).
3. Have you had a positive COVID-19 test for active virus in the past 10 days?
4. Within the past 14 days, has a public health or medical professional told you to self-monitor, self-isolate, or self-quarantine because of concerns about COVID-19 infection?

6. What is expected of staff and members when they are working on-site?

Staff and members will be asked to join in efforts to keep each other safer by reducing the likelihood for transmission of Coronavirus and other air-borne illnesses. (See [How to Protect Yourself and Others](#))

- Face coverings must be worn inside legislative facilities unless a member or employee is alone in their office. If an employee's workspace is not a private office with a closing door, they will be required to wear a face covering. The Senate will provide masks. (See [How to Wear Face Coverings](#) and [How to Wash Face Coverings](#))
- At least six feet of distance must be maintained at all times. People must disperse if a situation arises that makes adequate distancing impossible.
- Throughout the workday, staff and members should regularly wash their hands, refrain from touching their face or masks, and practice good hygiene habits. (See [Coughing and Sneezing Etiquette](#))
- Meetings should continue to occur virtually. If an in-person meeting is necessary, attendees must be masked and it should be conducted in a large room to maintain at least six feet of distance.
- Staff may, but are not required, to attend in-person meetings. If they have any questions or concerns, they should contact the HRO.
- Communal rooms will be open, but staff and members should respect distancing requirements and guidance in posted signs in these spaces.
- Capacity for elevators will be limited to one person at a time. Those with disabilities or other physical limitations have priority in elevator use.
- Chairs and seating in communal areas will be removed.

7. What if a member or employee tests positive for COVID-19, experiences COVID-19 like symptoms, or is exposed to someone with COVID-19?

- The Senate will work with local public health authorities and follow DOH guidelines to reduce the risk of transmission in the workplace. Additionally, the Senate will notify staff and members who may have been exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace and notify them of next steps, including information on testing and when they may return to legislative facilities.
- The Senate will work with local public health authorities in identifying close contacts for purposes of contact tracing. A close contact is defined by the CDC as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic persons, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.
- **Positive COVID-19 Diagnosis.** If staff or members have been working in legislative facilities and receive a positive diagnosis of COVID-19, they should not return to work and immediately notify the HRO. The employee or member should isolate at home according to DOH's guidance. Unless directed otherwise by a medical provider, a member or employee with confirmed COVID-19 with symptoms should isolate until they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, the symptoms have gotten better, and least 10 days have passed since the symptoms first appeared. If a member or employee tests positive for COVID-19, but does not have any symptoms, they should isolate at home until least 10 days have gone by since the date of the first positive COVID-19 test and the person has not gotten sick with COVID-19.
- **COVID-19 like symptoms without known exposure.** If an employee or member develops COVID-19 like symptoms while working in a legislative building they must immediately leave the building and notify the HRO. Likewise, if an employee or member develops COVID-19 like symptoms and has been in a legislative facility, they should not return to work and should notify the HRO. The employee or member should also contact their healthcare provider for further instruction. They should not return to work until cleared by their healthcare provider.
- **Exposure to someone with COVID-19 or COVID-19-like symptoms.** If a member or employee is a close contact to someone they know had COVID-19 or COVID-like symptoms, they should not return to legislative facilities for at least 14 days and seek further direction from their medical provider. They must also report this to the HRO. Again, a close contact is defined by the CDC as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic persons, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.
- The identity of those reporting any of this information to the HRO will remain confidential. If the HRO is required to share any information with public health authorities, they will notify the employee or member before doing so.
- In a situation where a person with COVID-19 has been in legislative facilities, DES will clean and disinfect the area to minimize the potential of other employees being exposed to respiratory droplets.

8. Testing

Testing will be required in the following circumstances:

- Someone has COVID-19 like symptoms. In this case, the test results would be used to determine how long until a person may return to legislative facilities.
- Someone was in close contact with a person with COVID-19 or COVID-19 like symptoms. In this case, that individual would need to get tested AND stay away for a minimum of 14 days (the length of time it can take for symptoms to appear).