



## **FAQs: Public Health Order Regarding Restaurant and Bar Patrons**

**Issued September 2, 2021**

**FAQs updated 02/16/2022**

### **Q: Do I have to show proof of vaccination to dine at a restaurant or bar's outdoor patio?**

A: A business retains the right to enforce its own rules about how to best comply with any health order. A recent clarification to the order does allow a restaurant or bar to serve patrons seated outdoors without requiring proof of vaccination. Restaurants and bars must require people who are unable to provide proof of vaccination to wear masks continually while indoors, according to Dr. Allison Berry, Jefferson County Health Officer.

### **Q: Do I need to show proof of vaccination to use the restroom inside of a restaurant or bar?**

A: A business retains the right to enforce its own rules about how to best comply with any health order. Restaurants and bars must require people who are unable to provide proof of vaccination to wear masks continually while indoors, according to Dr. Allison Berry, Jefferson County Health Officer.

### **Q: May I go inside of a restaurant or bar to pick up my take-out order without showing proof of vaccination?**

A: A business retains the right to enforce its own rules about how to best comply with any health order. A recent clarification to the order does allow a restaurant or bar to admit a customer indoors without proof of vaccination for the purpose of picking up a takeout order, under the following condition: Restaurants and bars must require people who are unable to provide proof of vaccination to wear masks continually while indoors, according to Dr. Allison Berry, Jefferson County Health Officer.

### **Q: May I dine indoors at a restaurant or bar if I show proof of medical or religious exemption from vaccination?**

A: No. Customers exempt from vaccination for medical or religious reasons may choose to dine outdoors or order takeout, if those options are available. However, proof of medical or religious exemption from vaccination does not allow a customer to take off their mask inside a restaurant or bar.



**Q: Is anyone exempt from this order?**

A: This order does not apply to children younger than 12 years old because they are ineligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Children younger than 12 years old may dine indoors without showing proof of vaccination. Anyone else who cannot show proof of vaccination may not dine indoors. Individuals who continuously wear a mask may walk indoors to pick up a takeout order or use the bathroom without showing proof of vaccination.

**Q: Will Jefferson County Public Health provide workers to help restaurants and bars check patrons for proof of vaccination?**

A: No. As always, it is the responsibility of a business owner to meet all public health requirements.

If the Jefferson County Public Health department follows up on a complaint of noncompliance with this order, a staff member may ask a restaurant patron who is dining indoors to provide proof of vaccination.

**Q: What do I do if I suspect someone forged a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card?**

A: The unauthorized use of an official government agency's seal is a crime that may be punishable under Title 18, United States Code, Section 1017, and other federal laws. Penalties may include fines and prison time. Anyone with information regarding the fraudulent creation or sale of COVID-19 vaccination cards can file a report by calling 1-800-CALL-FBI. Tips may also be submitted anonymously to [tips.fbi.gov](https://tips.fbi.gov).

You may also submit a report to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General by submitting a report online at <https://oig.hhs.gov/fraud/report-fraud/> or by calling 800-447-8477.

Additionally, you may report it to the Washington State Department of Health by sending an email to [Covid.Vaccine@doh.wa.gov](mailto:Covid.Vaccine@doh.wa.gov).

Lastly, you may fill out a complaint form with the Washington State Office of the Attorney General at <https://fortress.wa.gov/atg/formhandler/ago/ComplaintForm.aspx>



**Q: What are acceptable forms of proof of vaccination?**

A: Restaurant and bar employees should make their best effort to become familiar with the following documents and use their best judgement to determine if the proof presented falls into one of the following categories:

- Completed CDC vaccination card
- State Department of Health Certificate of COVID-19 Vaccination
- Printed copy of a State Department of Health vaccine record
- A photograph of any of the above documents
- An app-based vaccine passport
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**Q: What if a business suspects a vaccination document has been forged?**

A: Anyone with information regarding the fraudulent creation or sale of COVID-19 vaccination cards can file a report by calling 1-800-CALL-FBI. Tips may also be submitted anonymously to [tips.fbi.gov](https://tips.fbi.gov).

Restaurant and bar employees should make their best effort to become familiar with the following documents and use their best judgement to determine if the proof presented falls into one of the following categories: completed CDC vaccination card; State Department of Health Certificate of COVID-19 Vaccination; printed copy of a State Department of Health vaccine record; a photograph of any of the previous documents; an app-based vaccine passport.

**Q: Do catered events need to comply with this health order?**

A: Catered events are exempt from this order UNLESS those events are held at a restaurant or bar. Permitted, commercial kitchens may be used to prepare food for those events. Jefferson County Public Health recommends requiring vaccination for attendees.

**Q: Do private clubs need to comply with this health order?**

A: Private clubs that meet within a restaurant/bar or in a space that contains a restaurant/bar need to comply.

**Q: What is a vaccine passport?**

A: "Vaccine passports" are digital or paper documents that show you were vaccinated against COVID-19. There are a number of apps on the market that can help you create a digital document. Those apps allow you to upload proof of vaccination and a form of identification to create a vaccine-status QR code.



**Q: What if I lose my proof of vaccination?**

A: Your first option is to go online at <https://app.myirmobile.com/auth/register>

Fill out the form to retrieve a record of your vaccination. If the system does not find your record immediately, it will lead you through an additional step to find it.

For even more options, visit:

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/Immunization/ChildProfileHealthPromotion/ForParents/AccessyourFamiliesImmunizationInformation>

**Q: How do I report a business not in compliance with the health order?**

A: Fill out a form online at: <https://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/formcenter/eoc-19/covid19-complaint-form-to-report-busine-76> or call 360-385-9444

**Q: Is this health order enforceable by law?**

A: Yes, this health order means restaurants and bars are legally required to ask patrons for proof of vaccination for indoor dining. Noncompliance may subject the restaurant/bar to permit suspension, and is punishable as a misdemeanor as provided under RCW 70.05.120.

**Q: Why does this health order not require restaurant and bar employees to be vaccinated?**

A: Part of our health officer's job is to identify the areas of greatest risk to public health. At this time, restaurant patrons who must unmask in order to eat and drink when seated indoors represent one of the highest situational risks for COVID-19 transmission. Dr. Alison Berry believes in the effectiveness of specific, targeted health orders that directly combat those areas of highest risk. The goal of this health order is to slow the spread of COVID-19 by lowering case rates. If the health order does not draw us close enough to that goal, then she may issue additional health orders in the future, as necessary.



**Q: Why is proof of vaccination not required at other types of businesses?**

A: Dr. Allison Berry, Jefferson County Health Officer, issued the order pertaining to patrons of restaurants and bars because people who are eating and drinking while unmasked in indoor, public places pose one of the greatest public health risks at this point in the pandemic.

Dr. Berry said, "We try to make orders as limited and focused as possible. We are prioritizing the highest risk establishments."

Additional health orders may be issued in the future if more action needs to be taken to slow the spread of COVID-19.

**Q: Does the health order apply to schools?**

A: No, this health order only applies to restaurants and bars.

**Q: What geographical area does the health order apply to?**

A: This order applies to all of Jefferson County. Jefferson County's public health officer is also the health officer for Clallam County. She issued the same public health order for all of Clallam County.

**Q: If it is against my beliefs to enforce or comply with this health order, what should I do?**

A: You may participate in outdoor dining or pick up a takeout order (if you are masked) without providing proof of vaccination.

**Q: How long will this health order be in effect?**

A: Friday, March 11, 2022.