



# **NEWS** from **Clatsop County**

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## Public Health is Transparent about Employee COVID infections

May 10, 2022 (Astoria, OR) — COVID cases among vaccinated and boosted Clatsop County Public Health employees is bringing attention to the fact that people still need to take precautions to reduce their risk of becoming seriously ill with COVID.

“All of our public health employees are vaccinated, we consistently wear masks at work and the public is required to wear masks in our offices,” said Margo Lalich, interim Clatsop County public health director. “Since masks are no longer required in the general population, it is nearly impossible to know if and when someone is exposed in a community or family setting.”

“I’ve often talked about how the health and well-being of a community is a shared responsibility. We take this shared responsibility seriously and that is why I am being transparent about the cases of illness among public health employees,” she said. Employees weren’t allowed to return to work until they had completed the required isolation period.

“Although deaths from COVID-19 remain relatively low in Clatsop County, each one is a loss for the community and their loved ones,” Lalich said. While cases are increasing in the fully vaccinated and boosted population, the unvaccinated remain more likely to experience more severe illness, hospitalization, and loss of life.

“Hospitalizations are up across Oregon and the U.S. As much as people want to believe the pandemic is over, it is not,” she said. “We need to keep in mind that we are still learning about this virus in real-time. The best way to protect ourselves, our loved ones and friends is by being vaccinated and getting boosters. The vaccine doesn’t keep you from getting COVID, it protects you from getting seriously ill.”

Anyone experiencing symptoms who wishes to be tested can make an appointment at the Public Health COVID test site. Free vaccine or booster appointments and testing can be scheduled by calling 503-325-8500.

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