August 10, 2021

LCC Employees,

I would like to share a few important updates related to the current COVID pandemic.

• According to the Department of Health, COVID-19 cases in Cowlitz County began to steadily increase in early July, with the average number of cases reported each day rising from 7 for the week of July 4-10 to 36 for the week of July 22-28. The county now has the fourth highest case rate in the state. Last week alone, August 2-6, more than 400 cases were reported.

• Low vaccination rates and more contagious variants are contributing to the rise in cases.

• Yesterday, Governor Inslee announced that vaccines will be mandatory for some state employees. This mandate does not apply to colleges and universities at this time.

• In order to reduce potential spread on the LCC campus, we are again requiring fully vaccinated employees to quarantine if they have been in close contact with a positive case.

"Close-contact" is defined as within 6 feet for 15 minutes in a 24 hour period. The rules for quarantine depend on your vaccination status and align with current CDC recommendations. Please review the "Return to Campus Guide" or the "Return to Campus Childcare Guide" for more information.

If the current trend in community spread continues, more safety precautions will likely be implemented on campus such as a potential return to everyone wearing masks. Thank you in advance for understanding. We will keep everyone informed as the situation evolves.

Take care and stay well.

Nolan

Nolan K. Wheeler
Vice President of Administration
Lower Columbia College