

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Carmen Jaramillo with local news for August 24, 2021.

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The Wooden Boat Festival announced Friday it will require attendees, staff and volunteers to show proof of vaccination against COVID-19 in order to participate. Attendees will need to come ready with their original vaccination card or a digital photo of it and have supporting identification available upon request. People who are medically exempt from vaccinations are required to show a negative COVID-19 test result within 72 hours of the festival. Masks will be required for children ages 2 to 11.

This requirement echoes a growing change in the outdoor festival industry. Chicago's Lollapalooza music festival, which took place at the beginning of August, required vaccinations of its 385,000 attendees. So far only .05% of festival goers have tested positive, a rate much lower than other similar festivals without vaccination requirements. Ticket holders who are now unable to attend the Wooden Boat Festival are eligible for a full refund before Aug. 27. The Wood Boat Festival kicks off Thursday September 9.

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As any Port Townsend local will tell you, going out to eat downtown is not as easy as it once was. Lines are long everywhere as many restaurants in Jefferson County and beyond are struggling to stay open due to staffing shortages and increased tourist traffic. Last Thursday, patrons at Doc's Marina Grill were surprised to find the restaurant open but empty with no employees manning the front desk or waiting tables. Apparently several employees staged a walk-out last week demanding the firing of a senior-level staff member for alleged sexual misconduct. Employees reportedly showed up to work, set the restaurant up for the day to open, and then walked out. Confused and hungry patrons wandered next door to Hudson Point Cafe looking for answers and a bite to eat. Doc's Marina Grill, which has a second location on Bainbridge Island, was open as usual the rest of the week. Whether or not the staff's demands were met is unconfirmed.

Sergeant Jason Greenspane with the Port Townsend Police Department said a report about the allegations was filed with the department last week. Greenspane said officers investigated a sexual relationship between a 50+ year old man and a 16-year-old girl, both employees of Doc's Marina Grill. However, because the age of consent in Washington is 16, he said they have not yet been able to find evidence of a crime.

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Levels of COVID-19 in Jefferson County have reached an all-time high over the past month, Dr. Allison Berry, public health officer, said Monday during her regular report to the Board of County Commissioners. Jefferson County's current case rate is 263 cases per 100,000 residents, whereas for the majority of the pandemic that number has stayed below 25. The highly transmissible delta variant is now the exclusive variant being identified in Jefferson County, she said. 84 new cases of the virus have been diagnosed in the last two weeks, making extended time spent indoors very risky. Hospitalizations across the state are up dramatically, with 1,300 people hospitalized per day. This is the highest rate of hospitalization the state has seen throughout the pandemic. While there is strain on the hospital system in Jefferson and Clallam Counties, Berry said they are holding steady and still able to offer adequate care.

On Monday the Federal Food and Drug Administration fully approved the Pfizer vaccine, making this the perfect time to get vaccinated, Berry said. While case rates are high, masks and vaccinations remain a reliable way to reduce your risk of exposure. There has been no transmission identified between people who were fully vaccinated and also wearing masks, Berry said. Transmission rates also remain reliably low outdoors.

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And that's it for today's local news. KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon Monday through Saturday and at 5pm Monday through Thursday. You can contact us through [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org). I'm Carmen Jaramillo. Thanks for listening.