

Good afternoon. You are listening to 91.9 FM KPTZ in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Simon Jaynes with local news for January 20, 2022.

Mostly sunny January skies out there this morning, but a brisk wind picking up in the afternoon. Probably a good idea to bring an extra layer with you when you leave the house today. The extended forecast does call for a bit of drying out over the next 5 days. As one system moves through today and finishes with lowland rain and mountain snow, an upper-level ridge will build into the area, and is expected to give Western Washington an extended period of dry but foggy weather through the middle of next week.

Today marks two years since the first case of Novel Coronavirus was found in Washington and in the United States. Our State (the Metro Area of Seattle) was the first in the nation to see the effects and the rapid spread of this virus throughout its community. Two years later with many elements of daily life dramatically changed, we continue to report updates of case counts, new variants, and the most current guidance on how to stay safe.

Jefferson County Public Health reported 22 new cases of COVID-19 yesterday. This brings our total case count, since the beginning of the pandemic, up to 2,145. There are currently 220 active cases in isolation and three Jefferson County residents are hospitalized. The county has recorded 22 deaths as a result of COVID-19 including two residents – a man and woman both in their 80s – who passed away last week. Our case rate remains at 1,460 per 100,000.

Vaccination and testing remain the best ways that individuals can fight the spread of the virus. Earlier this week the Federal Government launched a program aimed at providing every US household with up to 4 at-home tests. That website, <https://www.covidtests.gov/>, is up and running but it should be noted that these tests ship within 7-12 days. The service is designed to give households the opportunity to plan ahead for having home tests on-hand when they are necessary.

For anyone needing tests now, there are local resources available. If you have been exposed or have symptoms, you should contact Jefferson Healthcare (<https://jeffersonhealthcare.org/covid-19/>) or the Health Department for a free test. The Jefferson County Library is partnering with Jefferson County Public Health to distribute test kits from their location in Port Hadlock. Each kit contains two tests and instructions, information on where to report positive results, and a COVID testing flowchart. To receive a kit, you can simply use the library's curbside service. After arriving, call the curbside phone number ([\(360\) 385-6544](tel:3603856544)) and staff will deliver the kits to those waiting.

Anyone with a student in the Port Townsend School District needing testing for a child that may have been exposed can request a free rapid test through the school. The Jefferson County Health Department is hosting vaccination clinics this coming Saturday, January 22 and the following Saturday, January 29. Both clinics will be offering the Pfizer vaccine for children as well as Moderna vaccines and boosters for adults. The clinics this Saturday are at Blue Heron Middle School from 9-11am and at the Brinnon Community Center from 1:30-3:30pm. Next Saturday's Clinic will be at Blue Heron Middle School from 9am-4pm. For information and to make appointments visit <https://www.jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/202/Public-Health>.

The annual nationwide "Point in Time" count was set to be conducted a week from today on Thursday, January 27. Each year the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Washington state require a

statewide count of all persons staying in temporary housing programs and places not meant for human habitation. The Department of Commerce provides survey forms for counties and agencies to use for their counts with the purpose of the census to understand who is homeless, where they are homeless, and what barriers these people may be encountering. According to the Washington Department of Commerce website (<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/annual-point-time-count/>): “In light of increased COVID-19 rates, the 2022 Point in Time (PIT) count of people experiencing homelessness in Washington state is pushed back to Thursday, Feb. 24, 2022.

As it was recently reported in the Port Townsend Leader, Olympic Community Action Programs (OlyCAP) is the lead agency in Jefferson County for the PIT count. OlyCAP also has resources for those experiencing homelessness, and partners with Bayside Housing & Services and Dove House Advocacy Services in this annual count. People interested in volunteering to assist with the count in safe ways are invited to a Zoom training, set for 2pm Friday, January 21. With the recent rollback of the date for the count, the details for this training may change. But folks interested in volunteering should still consider sending an email to Allison Arthur at aarthur@olycap.org and type “PIT Volunteer” in the subject line.

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. I’m Simon Jaynes. Thanks for listening and have a great day.