



July 14, 2022

Infection Prevention message for all staff

To Northwest Kidney Centers Staff,

Unfortunately, we are seeing an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases across our clinics in both patients and staff. The counties we serve continue to have high rates of COVID-19, all well over 100 cases per 100,000 residents. Many of the NKC cases have been tied to outside exposure, but we want to continue to ensure we are reducing the risk of transmission in our facilities.

Please verify you are continuing to follow our COVID-19 prevention strategies:

In clinical settings:

- Staff are wearing respirators in any location they may interact with a patient and/or visitor. This means staff need to wear either a KN95 or KF94 with a medical grade mask over it or an N95 respirator.
- Staff need to wear eye protection during all encounters with patients and visitors. This includes during patient/visitor symptom screening and patient education. We have a variety of eye protection options available from our Supply Chain such as goggles/safety glasses, masks with shields and full-face shields.
- Patients and visitors need to wear a medical grade mask at a minimum and must wear their mask properly (i.e. over the nose and mouth). We will continue to offer patients one KN95 respirator per week or more if their respirator becomes soiled or lost.
- Patients need to maintain 6 feet of distance from each other including in the lobby areas.
- Only one staff may have their mask down to eat in the breakroom or other shared space at a time. Staff should spread out to flex offices, empty conference rooms and outside when multiple staff need to eat at the same time.
- All patients and visitors need to be screened for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 on entry to the clinic. Staff need to complete self-screening at the beginning of their shift/workday.

In non-clinical settings:

- Staff need to wear a minimum of a medical grade mask. Respirators such as a KN95 or KF94 are highly recommended. More KN95s will be delivered to Burien and Haviland where non-clinical staff screening occurs to ensure these are available to you.
- Staff should maintain approximately 6 feet of physical distance whenever possible. There may be occasions where spaces are tighter so ensure you are always masking properly when in shared spaces.
- Staff can continue to meet in conference rooms but need to remain approximately 6 feet apart and mask with a minimum of a medical grade mask.
- Only one staff may have their mask down to eat in the breakroom or other shared space at a time. Staff should spread out to flex offices, empty conference rooms and outside when multiple staff need to eat at the same time.

Thank you for your continued vigilance, hard work and adherence to preventing the spread of COVID-19. I will talk about the emerging variants and their potential impacts on case numbers at COVID town hall next week (July 20 at 2:30 and 3:30 p.m.).

In the meantime, don't hesitate to reach out to me for questions or concerns and remember that **getting boosted is extremely important in tackling waning immunity, reducing the risk of severe illness and hospitalization.**

Please see the vaccine locator tools below to get a COVID-19 vaccine booster dose if you have not already or if you are eligible for a second booster (those over 50 years of age and/or who are immunocompromised).

- [**Vaccine Availability | Kaiser Permanente**](#)
- [**Vaccinate WA: Find COVID-19 Vaccine Providers Near You**](#)

Thank you,

Katrina Collins MN, RN
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