



Workforce System COVID-19 Response for Clark, Cowlitz & Wahkiakum Counties May 14, 2020

As Governor Inslee's Phased Approach to Reopening Washington Plan enters its second week and we look forward to Phase 2, business and community partners are strategizing and developing plans to re-open while also ensuring the health and safety of their employees and customers.

Wahkiakum County, one of three counties WSW serves, has received approval from the State Department of Health to proceed to Phase 2. While the variance is effective immediately, businesses cannot begin operations until guidance has been issued. [The State webpage](#) is listing guidance documents as they are published.

As we assist businesses with their plans to bring employees back and welcome customers again, we continue to seek and identify ways to address the changing needs of businesses and individuals. If you have employee training needs or other workforce-related concerns, we'd like to hear from you.

Kevin Perkey
Chief Executive Officer

Response to Businesses

Healthcare – Results from a Washington State Medical Association [survey](#) published on May 5 speak to the financial impact COVID-19 has had on physician practices in Washington. While the survey considers only 136 independent physicians and is a snapshot into an industry that has seemingly been recession-proof, it shows that no industry is COVID-proof. Southwest Washington clinics, both independent and part of healthcare systems, have been part of this stark reality. Dental assistants, dental hygienists, massage therapists, medical assistants and registered nurses are the top five occupations filing the greatest number of unemployment claims in the healthcare industry.

Sean Moore, WSW's Senior Project Manager for Healthcare, has been in close contact with our healthcare industry partners. Telehealth check-ins, virtual appointments and other internal health system processes have been sharply upscaled to support patient care and cross-organization communication. Dental Health expects to begin rehiring staff and opening offices this month, which will be a positive turn-around for the industry. Medical clinics will follow in June, offering limited services and procedures. This will reduce the number of registered nurses and medical assistants filing unemployment claims.

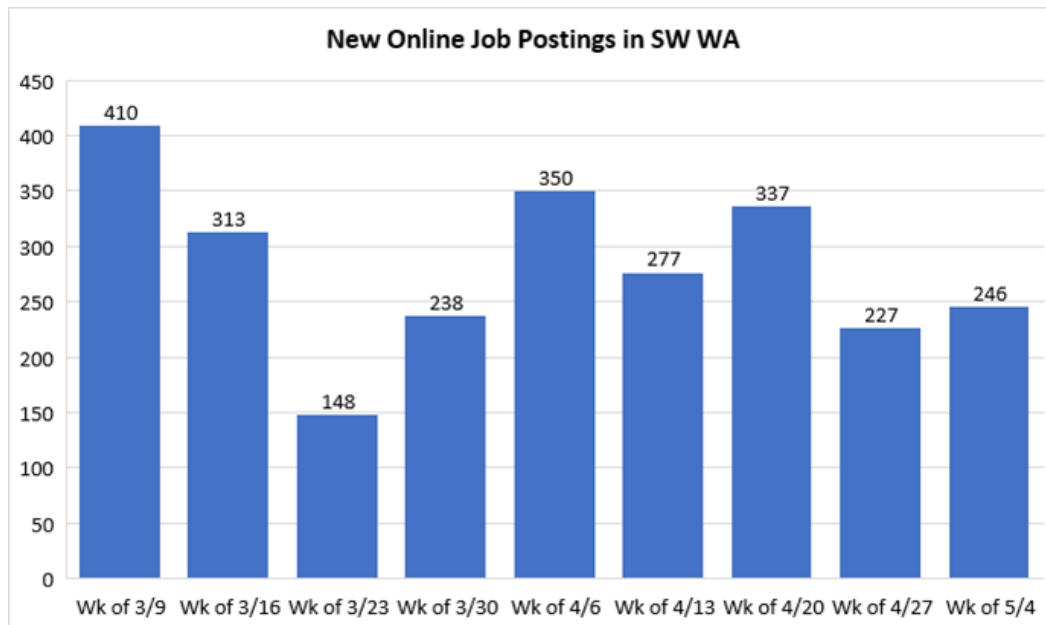
Across all healthcare sectors, an abundance of collaboration and shared best practices regarding both staff and patient safety have proliferated, while at the same time the industry is looking strategically forward as we work through these challenges.

Online job ads for the week of May 4 increased slightly to 246, up from 227 the prior week. Top job occupations being sought were: Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers; Stock Clerks/Sales Floor; Retail Salespersons.



Companies with the largest number of new online job ads:

- Amazon: Warehouse worker, warehouse associate
- NaphCare Inc: RN, LPN, Psychiatric Mental Health
- Evergreen Public Schools: Secondary Teacher, Digital Arts teacher, Elementary Secretary
- Humana: Data Scientist, Engineer, Risk Management Senior Professional



Source: [JobsEQ®](#), <http://www.chmuraecon.com/jobseq>

Assistance for People

WorkSource and Next continue to provide services virtually to adults and youth and are assisting customers by phone, email, video meetings and online workshops.

WorkSource – While the number of calls coming into WorkSource remains high, it continues to decline as more unemployment insurance claims are processed.

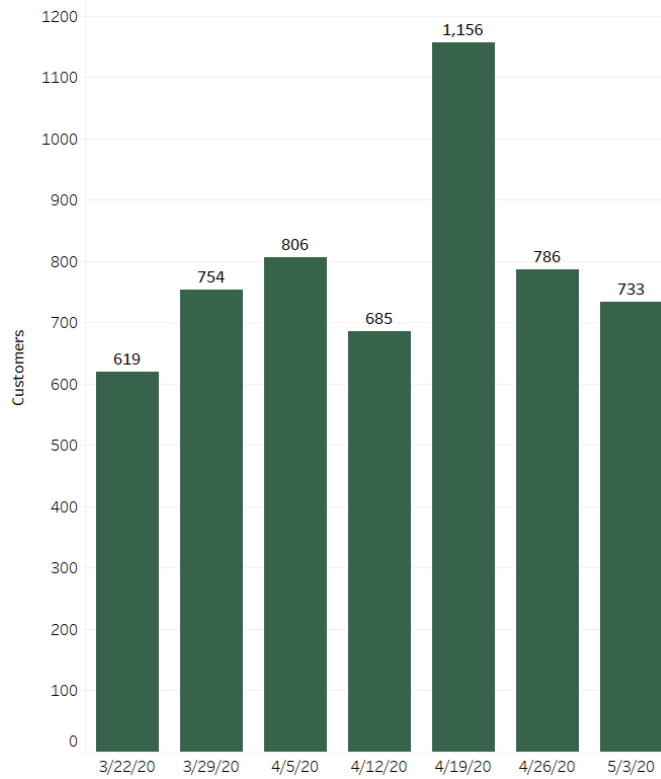
Staff will be conducting additional outreach to customers to increase enrollment and thereby have the ability to provide support funds for those who would like to return to their previous job or transition into a new career.

Assistance is available for anyone looking for work. Visit www.WorkSourceSWWA.com or in Clark County call 360.735.5000 or Cowlitz/Wahkiakum call 360.577.2250.

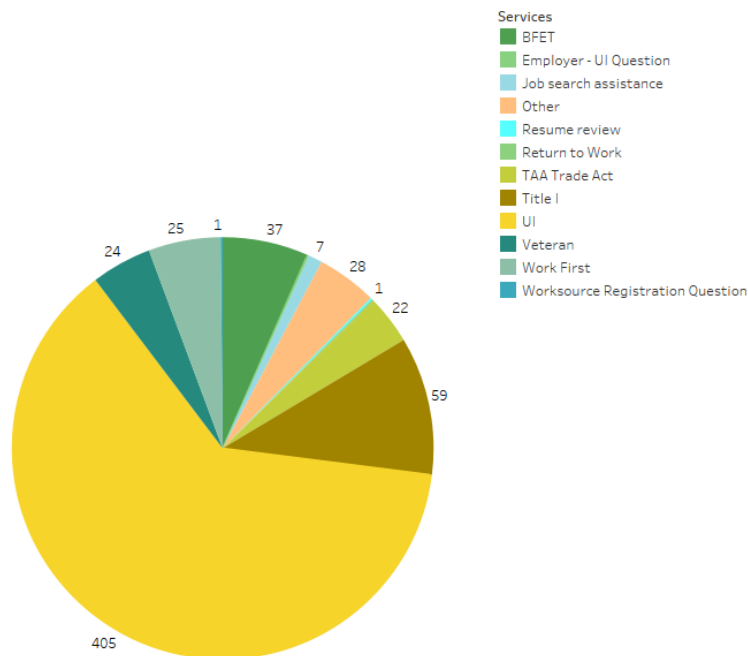
Customer Appointments shows the number of people requesting services from WorkSource. Appointments for the week of May 3 decreased to 733 from 786 the prior week, a steady decline since the peak of 1,156 during the week of April 19 when the CARES Act expanded unemployment benefits became available.



Weekly Customer Appointments



Services 5/4-5/8/2020 – While Unemployment Insurance (UI) requests have declined from 437 to 405, they remain more than half of all inquiries.





Next Youth Center – Staff has found that ongoing and regular communications is providing the support and encouragement youth need to maintain focus on their education and career goals.

- Word of mouth, referrals from Vancouver Public Schools and outreach are paying off:
 - 25 youth who had not been previously engaged with Next reached out this week to learn about services and programs.
 - 31 youth are in process of enrolling in programs.
 - 40 youth have enrolled in one of Next’s programs.
- High School and Beyond Classes are being offered, enabling youth to focus on career and educational goals.
- Youth are facing new challenges, such as struggles with housing, conflicts in the home, and balancing being at home with task completion.
- Staff are working to get computers to youth in need and get them connected to internet services through WSW’s partnership with Comcast Essentials.

Visit the Facebook page for updates: <https://www.facebook.com/NextSuccessOrg/>

System priorities

- The WSW and WS websites are routinely updated. Recent updates include childcare and domestic violence resources and free Wi-Fi locations. Accessibility tools have also been expanded on both sites to provide greater access to individuals with disabilities.
- As more resources and services move online, we want to ensure communities in our rural counties are connected and have access. In partnership with the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington, we have purchased 30 Chromebooks to distribute to low-income families in need in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties. Partners at WSU Extension, WorkSource, Wahkiakum School District, Lower Columbia Community Action Program, and Cowlitz Habitat for Humanity will help select the families.
 - These families will also receive six months of free internet access through our partnership with Comcast Essentials and the Community Foundation for SW WA.
 - Edge Networks procured and set up the devices and will provide tech support and training on how to use the devices at no cost to the families. Edge has been a great partner to WSW, donating IT support at Next and hosting a SummerWorks intern. We are grateful for their ongoing partnership.

Labor Market Update

WA State Employment Security Department (ESD) reported that during the week of May 3, approximately 1,301,564 total claims for unemployment benefits were filed in the state.



Unemployment Claim Type	Week of May 3	Week of April 26	Week of April 19
Regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) initial claims	109,425	100,762	137,605
Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) initial claims	55,911	59,234	190,948
Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) initial claims	47,626	40,267	168,165
Continued/ongoing weekly claims	1,088,602	885,768	959,190
Total claims	1,301,564	1,086,031	1,455,908

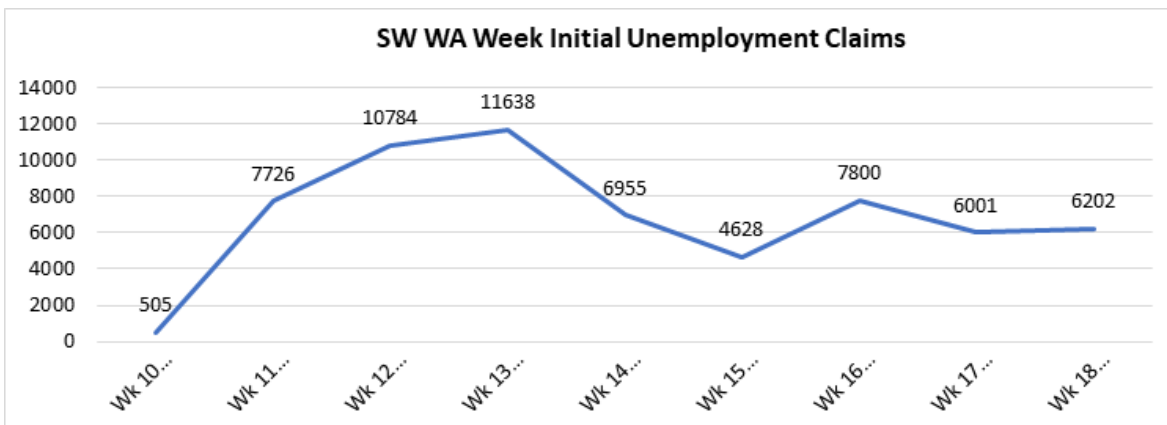
Ten-week summary of statewide initial claims filed since the start of the COVID-19 crisis
(Source: WA State Employment Security Department)

For the week ending on:	Total number of unemployment claims paid*	Number of initial unemployment claims**	Increase/decrease of initial unemployment claims over previous week	Increase of initial unemployment claims over same week in 2019
7-Mar	46,529	6,548	18.6%	1.0%
14-Mar	45,437	14,154	116.0%	182.0%
21-Mar	48,181	128,962***	811.0%	2568.0%
28-Mar	99,846	181,975	41.0%	3513.0%
4-Apr	182,276	170,063	-6.5%	2627.0%
11-Apr	265,745	143,241	-15.7%	1979.0%
18-Apr	352,870	82,435	-42.5%	1343.9%
25-Apr	504,273	137,604	66.9%	2501.0%
2-May	504,139	100,762	-26.8%	1833.3%
9-May	538,635	109,425	8.6%	2054.9%

*Total number of unemployment claims paid includes all benefit entitlements (Regular, PUA, PEUC)

** Initial claims include claims that are still being reviewed for eligibility. Counts for initial claims are not indicative of the number of claims that will result in monetary compensation. ***This number was revised downward from 133,464 to 128,962 by the U.S. Department of Labor.

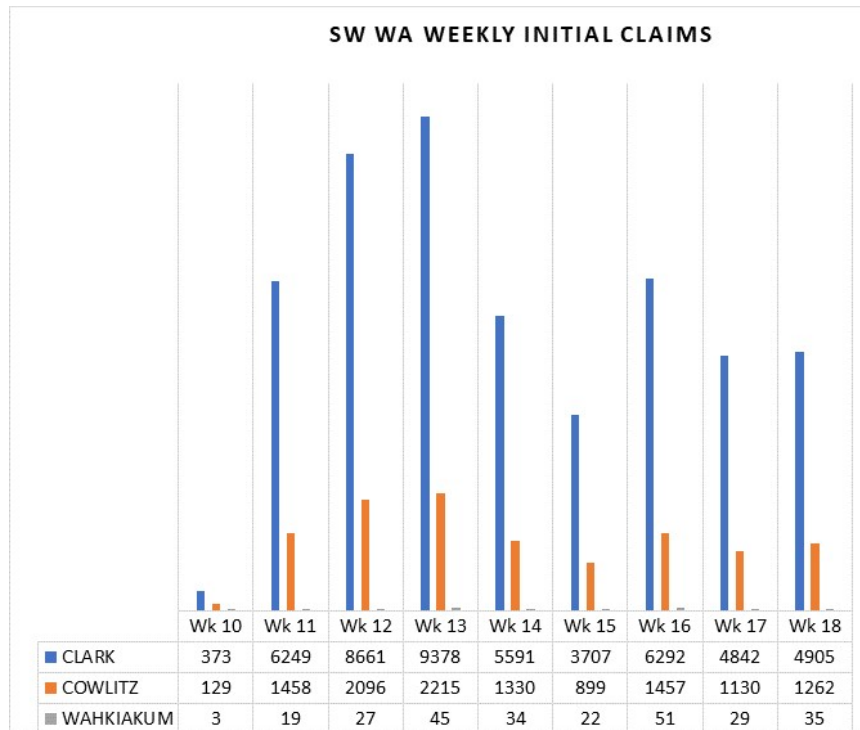
At the end of week eight of the crisis, 62,239 initial claims for unemployment insurance (UI) have been filed in our three SW WA counties. Weekly totals increased by three percent from the prior week.





During the week of May 3:

- Clark County: Initial claims increased from 4,842 to 4,905 up one percent from the week before.
- Cowlitz County: Initial claims increased to 1,262 from 1,130 up 12 percent from the prior week.
- Wahkiakum County: Initial claims increased to 35 from 29 up 21 percent from the prior week.

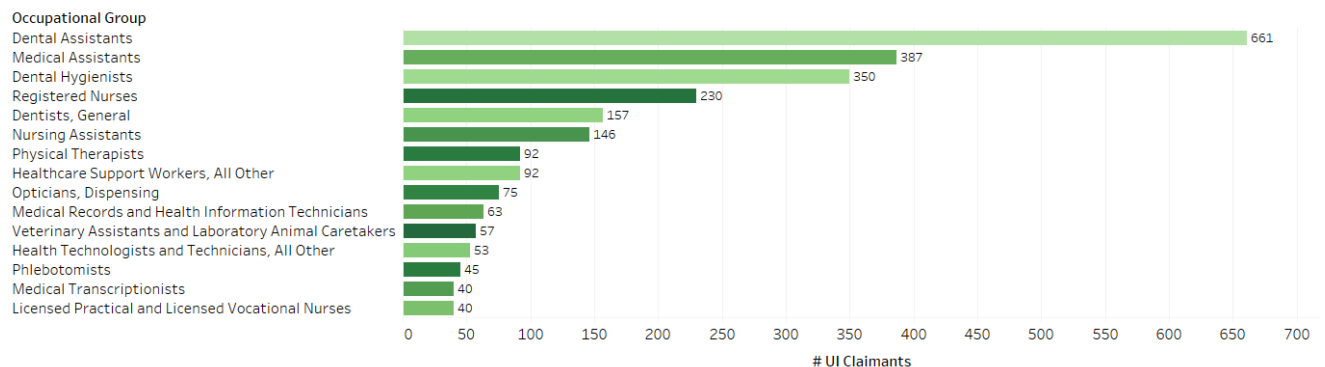


Spotlight on Healthcare

Healthcare occupations with the largest number of claimants:

- Clark County: Dental Assistants, Medical Assistants, Dental Hygienists, Registered Nurses
- Cowlitz County: Dental Assistants, Medical Assistants, Home Health Aides, Nursing Assistants
- Wahkiakum County: data is not available

Top 15 Healthcare Occupations by # of UI Claimants from Mar. 1 - May 2 in Clark County

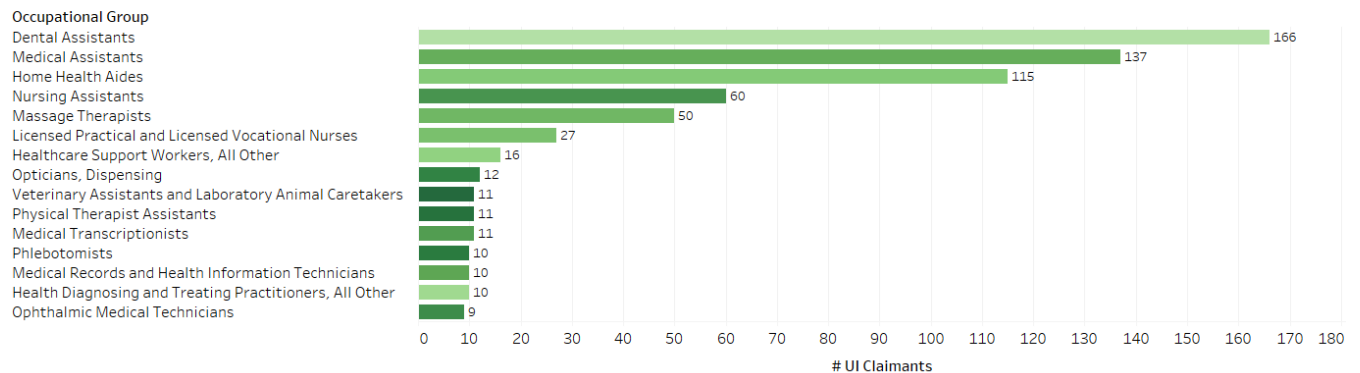




Healthcare Industry UI Claimants Mar. 1 - May 2 : Clark County

Industry	
All Other Miscellaneous Ambulatory Health Care Services	9
All Other Outpatient Care Centers	13
Ambulance Services	9
Assisted Living Facilities for the Elderly	147
Blood and Organ Banks	13
Child and Youth Services	24
Child Day Care Services	587
Community Food Services	2
Continuing Care Retirement Communities	35
Emergency and Other Relief Services	9
Family Planning Centers	3
Freestanding Ambulatory Surgical and Emergency Centers	91
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	302
HMO Medical Centers	40
Home Health Care Services	56
Medical Laboratories	16
Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	73
Offices of All Other Miscellaneous Health Practitioners	175
Offices of Chiropractors	187
Offices of Dentists	1,534
Offices of Mental Health Practitioners (except Physicians)	50
Offices of Optometrists	121
Offices of Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapists, and Audiologists	151
Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	1,096
Offices of Physicians, Mental Health Specialists	1
Other Individual and Family Services	104
Other Residential Care Facilities	12
Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers	90
Psychiatric and Substance Abuse Hospitals	17
Residential Intellectual and Developmental Disability Facilities	19
Residential Mental Health and Substance Abuse Facilities	42
Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities	472
Temporary Shelters	12
Vocational Rehabilitation Services	9
Grand Total	5,521

Top 15 Healthcare Occupations by # of UI Claimants from Mar. 1 - May 2 in Cowlitz County





Healthcare Industry UI Claimants Mar. 1 - May 2 : Cowlitz County

Industry	
All Other Miscellaneous Ambulatory Health Care Services	3
All Other Outpatient Care Centers	43
Ambulance Services	2
Assisted Living Facilities for the Elderly	31
Continuing Care Retirement Communities	22
Family Planning Centers	1
HMO Medical Centers	17
Home Health Care Services	30
Medical Laboratories	7
Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	70
Offices of All Other Miscellaneous Health Practitioners	30
Offices of Chiropractors	29
Offices of Dentists	311
Offices of Mental Health Practitioners (except Physicians)	10
Offices of Optometrists	33
Offices of Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapists, and Audiologists	28
Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	164
Other Residential Care Facilities	1
Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers	96
Residential Intellectual and Developmental Disability Facilities	21
Residential Mental Health and Substance Abuse Facilities	2
Grand Total	951

Washington State Claimants by Industry

Industry sectors experiencing the highest number of initial claims during the week of May 3 were:

- Healthcare and social assistance: 13,340 initial claims, up 3,068 claims (30 percent) from the previous week
- Educational services: 10,165 initial claims, up 5,905 claims (139 percent) from previous week
- Retail trade: 8,965 initial claims, up 476 initial claims (6 percent) from previous week
- Manufacturing: 7,894 initial claims, up 2,485 initial claims (46 percent) from the previous week
- Accommodation and food services: 6,355 initial claims, down 2,080 claims (25 percent) from the previous week