

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Grant County, Washington

**RESOLUTION TO MOVE GRANT
COUNTY TO PHASE 2 OF THE
GOVERNOR'S REOPENING PLAN**

RESOLUTION No. 20- 048 -CC

WHEREAS, on February 29, 2020 Governor Inslee declared a State of Emergency in response to the COVID 19 Pandemic; and

WHEREAS, On March 13, 2020 the Grant County Board of County Commissioners declared an emergency regarding the COVID 19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, By various emergency proclamations the Governor has severely restricted economic activity to deal with the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, The Governor has announced a four phase approach to re-opening the economy; and

WHEREAS, Grant County has met the criteria announced on May 19, 2020 to move to phase two of the recovery plan; and

WHEREAS, On May 22, 2020 Dr. Alexander Brzezny, Grant County Health Officer, submitted a letter to the Grant County Board of Health with his recommendation to apply for the phase 2 variance per "Safe Start Washington".

WHEREAS, This recommendation is based on Dr. Brzezny's assessment of Grant County's decreasing COVID-19 transmission, increased access to COVID-19 testing, Public Health's robust capacity of timely isolation of positive cases and quarantine and contact tracing of close contacts, and

WHEREAS, The Grant County Health District and the medical infrastructure in Grant County are sufficient and prepared to move to phase 2.

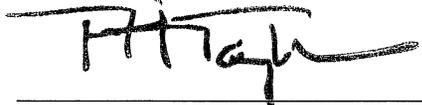
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Grant County shall submit its request to the State to move to phase 2 of the recovery plan and move to phase two as soon as authorization is received from the State.

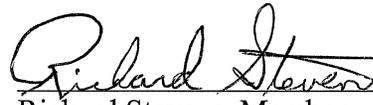
DATED this 22nd day of May, 2020.

**BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS
GRANT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Yea Nay Abstain


Cindy Carter, Chair


Tom Taylor, Vice-Chair


Richard Stevens, Member

ATTEST:

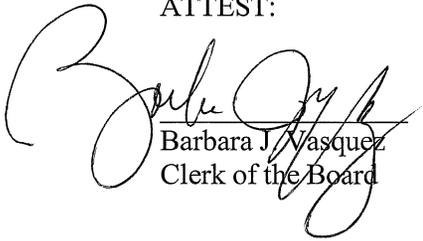
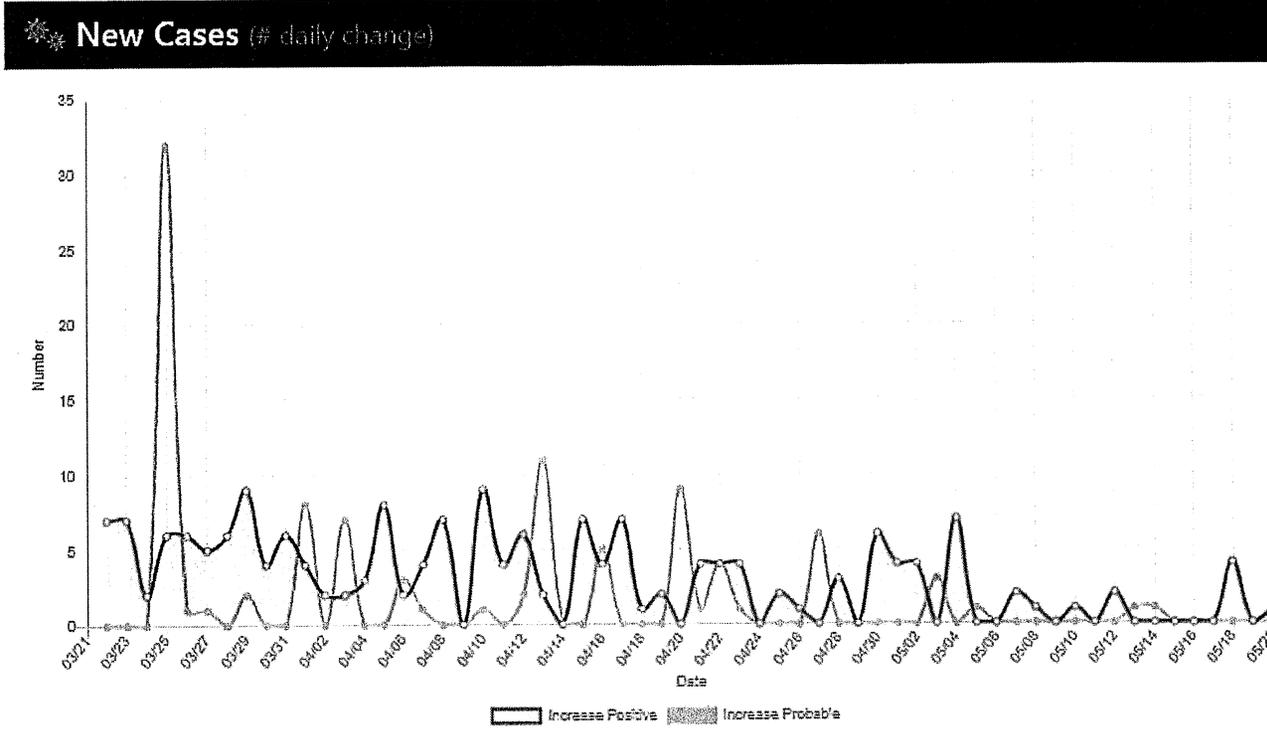

Barbara J. Vasquez
Clerk of the Board

FIGURE 2. Grant County, WA, New Cases Per Day (n)

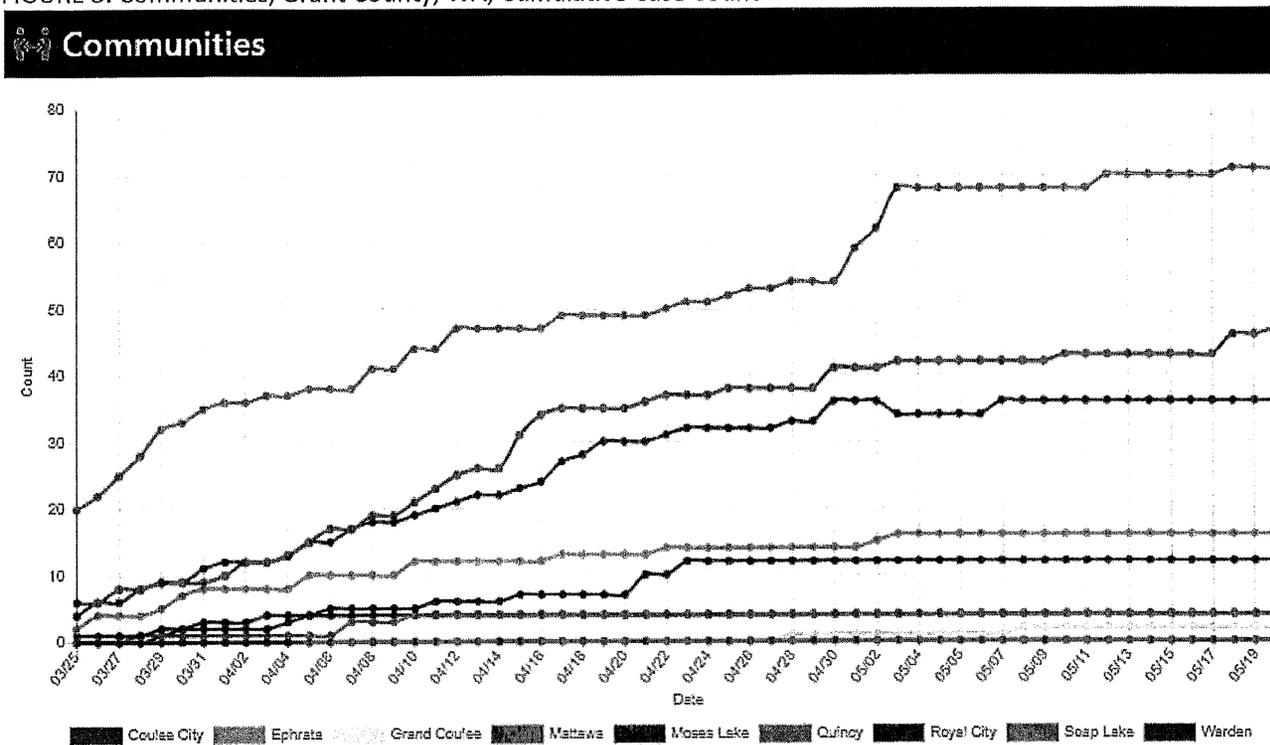


c. During a two-week specimen collection period between 05/05/2020 and 05/18/2020, there were on average **0.71 newly diagnosed cases per day** for a crude rate of about **0.7 cases /100,000 /day**. This remained the case for the two-week time period ending 05/20/2020, according to the most recent count (with additional tests pending).

d. If Grant County's undocumented residents and migrant farm workers were included in the population count, a daily incidence would be below 0.7 /100,000 /day during the last 3 weeks. However as is the case with any rural agricultural county, even a few additional individuals with COVID-19 or one outbreak among farm workers can dramatically impact the statistics in the opposite direction.

e. Grant County cities of Quincy and Mattawa have experienced a disproportionately higher number of COVID-19 cases, while central and northern cities of Ephrata, Moses Lake, Soap Lake, Electric City /Grand Coulee have seen a protracted period of proportionately lower activity (Fig. 3. Communities). It is estimated that migrant housing communities (located mostly in the southern and western part of the county) will continue to pose a challenge to local statistics, presently essential to the variance determination and without any extenuating circumstances provisions in the current variance eligibility calculus.

FIGURE 3. Communities, Grant County, WA, Cumulative Case Count



f. There have been **no outbreaks of COVID-19** in long-term care facilities or other congregate living or institutional settings in Grant County since late April, when a cluster of individuals with the novel coronavirus was investigated in a congregate H2A housing near Quincy.

2. Number of SARS-CoV-2 positive tests is declining, while the total test numbers remain steady.

a. The number of individuals with **COVID-19 positive test** has been generally declining during the last 3 weeks.

b. The rate of increase in cases has slowed from the April's peak of 10% a day at the beginning of the month, about 5.3% during mid-April, to 0%-2.13% per day during the last 15 days (Fig. 4. New Positives).

c. During May 2020, there were 713 tests performed in Grant County to date, with a total of 22 positive tests. This means that it took on average 32.5 tests to discover one new confirmed COVID-19 case in May. However, during the last two weeks a total of 450 test were performed with 9 positive tests: it took about 50 tests to discover one case (FIG. 5. Testing).

d. The proportion of positive tests vs. all tests performed per week has also been declining: a month ago, about 9.3% of tests were positive per week, 2 weeks ago that number declined to about 2%. During the last 2 weeks, exactly 2% of all tests were positive for COVID-19.

e. The number of tests performed in Grant County has remained steady at about 32 tests per day during the last 2 weeks, which is close to the average of about 34 tests per day during the same period of time a month ago, while the number of positives has declined fourfold.

FIGURE 4. Grant County, WA, New Positives (% vs. prior day total)

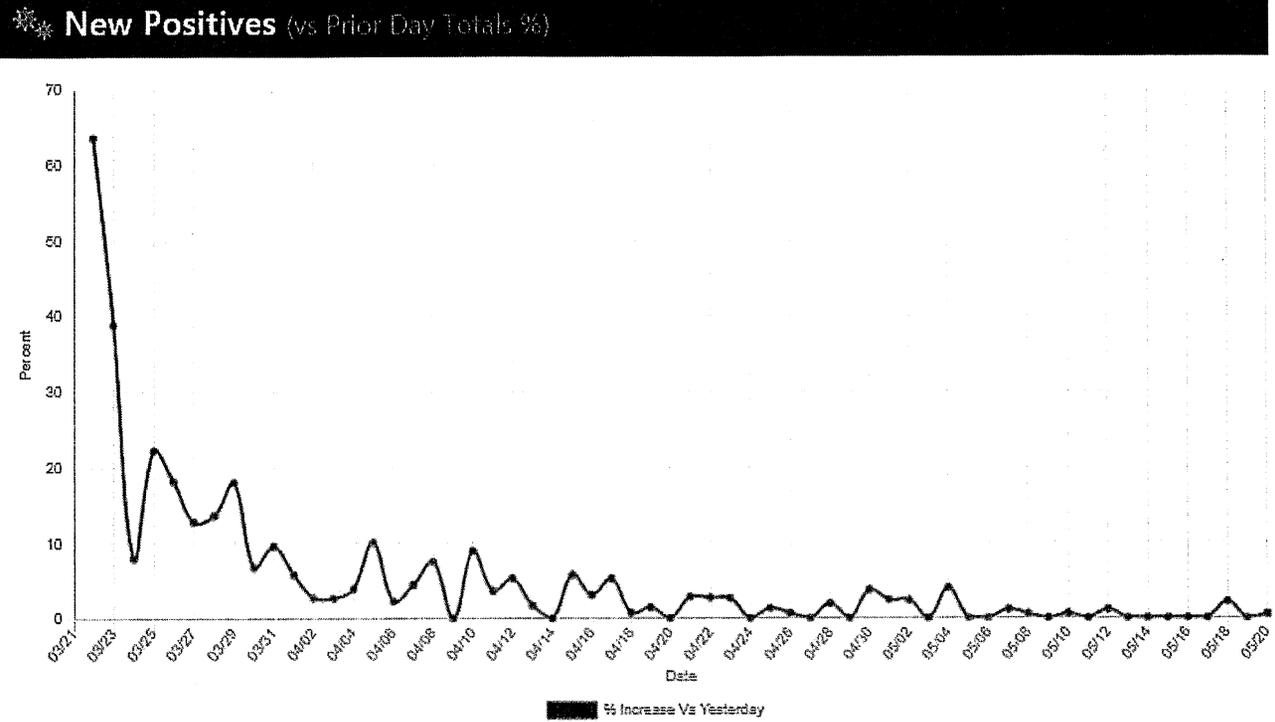
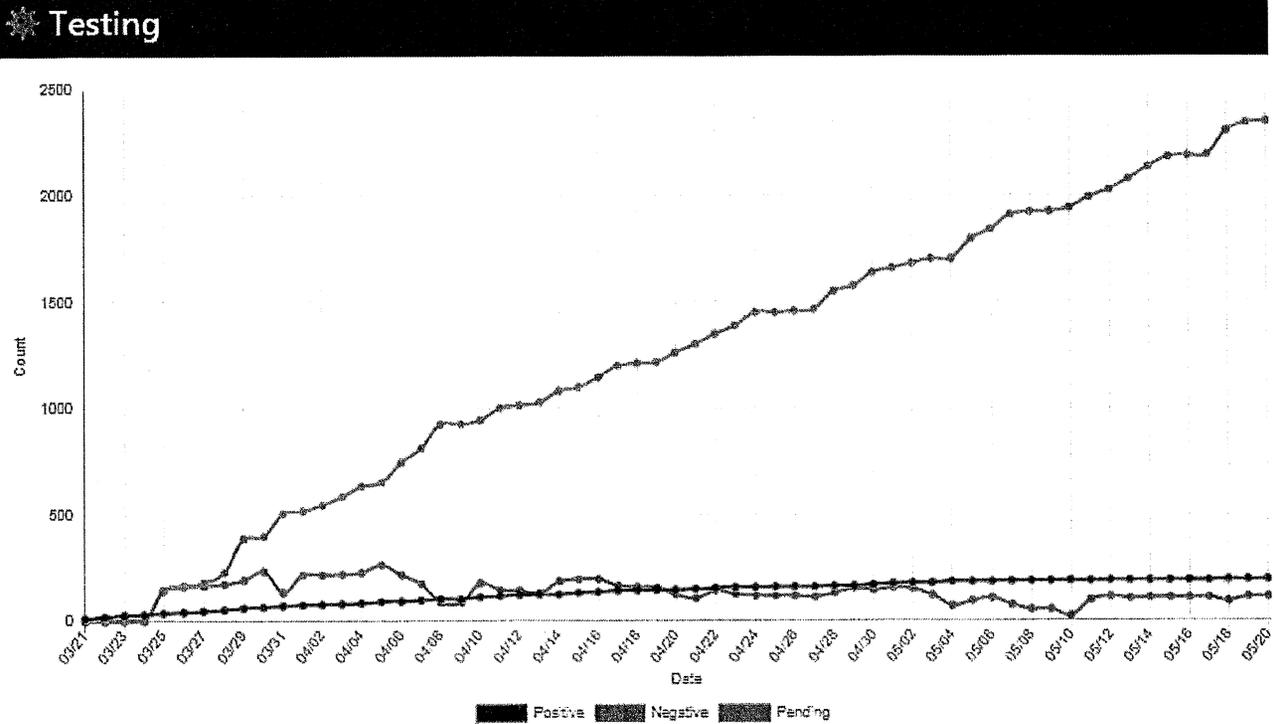


FIGURE 5. Grant County, WA, Testing (n)



3. Healthcare facilities in Grant County have sufficient and available capacity, per their assessment.

a. Emergency Room visits have declined substantially since March in all four public hospitals in Grant County, showing only mild rebound unrelated to COVID-19 care recently.

b. Grant County's four public hospitals report **occupancy below 50% of all available beds during the last 4 weeks with a bed surge capacity to >120% available if necessary.** In addition, Samaritan Hospital in Moses Lake reports an action plan to stand up a respiratory care /ventilator unit for >10 beds if necessary, with a potential to surge this capacity further (assuming an additional ventilator availability).

c. So far, local hospitals did not experience a surge in COVID-19 visits or hospitalizations. A total of **six individuals with COVID-19 were hospitalized for at least some period of time in Grant County** (Samaritan Hospital, Moses Lake) mainly during March and early April. **In total, 21 (10.9% of all cases) Grant County residents required hospitalization for COVID-19 since the beginning of this emergency,** most of them placed in a regional center in Wenatchee.

d. **A total of four Grant County residents died from COVID-19 since beginning of this emergency (2.1% of all cases):** two passing away in a regional hospital (neighboring county), one out of state, and another at home.

e. According to WATrac, referral hospitals in Spokane and Wenatchee continue to possess additional capacity to accept patients from Grant County if needed.

f. Hospitals in Grant County are reporting more than 14 days of PPEs on hand.

g. Local surge ventilator capacity in Grant County is not optimal. Previously obtained and delivered ventilators from the National Stockpile had to be returned back. At that time, verbal reassurances were provided by DOH that, if needed, state-resourced ventilators would be made available.

4. Public health investigations of individuals suspected or confirmed for COVID-19 and tracing of their contacts is aggressive, its results reassuring, and the capacity to test very good and increasing.

a. GCHD has always aimed for all individuals suspected or confirmed for COVID-19 to receive an investigator call within 24 hours to assure an immediate isolation. In addition, GCHD is now contacting all confirmed individuals daily. GCHD has responded **within 24 hours of the initial report to 99% of all COVID-19 confirmed cases.**

b. GCHD has been in contact with a large proportion of all tested individuals **BEFORE** their test result.

c. Most contacts are reached within 24 hours; more than 90% of known contacts are reached or have an attempt to be reached recorded within 48 hours.

d. Arrangements have just been finalized for an **isolation and quarantine facility.**

e. GCHD has 1,500 test kits ready for use in case of large outbreaks. The largest public hospital (Samaritan Hospital, Moses Lake) has the capacity to perform 100 tests per day through their test site and is preparing an outdoor screening /drive through unit capable of handling even greater number of tests per day. All municipalities in Grant County possess testing capacity, with public hospital districts conveniently located in key parts of the county. Mobile testing team for remote locations could be assembled utilizing healthcare staff within 24 hours with a testing capacity of hundreds of cases per day.

5. Greatest threat to Grant County's COVID-19 case load comes from a large number of congregate settings associated with agriculture and from a recently observed informal relaxing of physical distancing and masking standards in our communities.

- a. While H2A housing-associated cases of COVID comprise a low proportion of all cases so far, at least one cluster of individuals with COVID-19 has already been investigated at a H2A housing community, with a large proportion of asymptomatic individuals testing positive.
- b. Approximately 8,000 individuals are expected to reside in Grant County's H2A housing units by the summer, with additional non-H2A-housing temporary farm workers arriving by that time.
- c. GCHD has taken additional steps to prevent occurrence of outbreaks in congregate setting associated with essential agricultural production by working closely with the farms and the housing communities, by developing specific farm housing guidance, by prepositioning testing capacity, and by working closely with and learning from neighboring counties with similar challenges.
- d. Even though a greater risk of clusters and outbreaks in these congregate settings exists, the individuals residing in this setting are predominantly young and healthy, their activity in the community at large is generally low, their risk for hospitalizations is also low, while the capacity for their sequestration away from the community at large is good (assuming early cases identification).
- e. In addition, recent mobility data demonstrated an increase in activity community-wide. Anecdotal reports of reduced voluntary mask use and relaxation of physical distancing have been received by GCHD. Out-of-county visitor numbers have also been observed as increasing.
- f. In response, and to improve public awareness about integrating physical distancing and disease surveillance into our daily life, GCHD has recommended its own "COVID-19 SMART" business guide suitable for a county-wide implementation in this and any subsequent phase of the "Safe Start Washington".

While the presence of COVID-19 in our county demands a continued vigilance and a readiness to re-impose more stringent community-wide mitigation measures in case of a disease surge, it is my assessment that Grant County is presently experiencing an objective decrease in local SARS-CoV-2 activity with additional favorable mitigation indicators. However, with the aforementioned risks unique to Grant County, it is my plan to issue additional directives to the county residents including a face covering requirement at indoor or confined public settings (when within 6 feet of another person with whom they don't live) should this Board decide to move forward with a variance request and become successful.

Ultimately, as a result of my review, including the assessment of county's existing healthcare capacity supported by a robust public health response, **I recommend requesting a variance to implement all Phase 2 modifications per the Governor's "Safe Start Washington"**.

Respectfully Submitted,



Alexander L. Brzezny, MD, MPH, FAAFP
Grant County Health Officer

RESOLUTION 20-5

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF THE GRANT COUNTY BOARD OF RESOLUTION TO APPLY FOR A
VARIANCE TO PHASE 2 OF THE GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN.**

Section 1. RECITALS

The Board of Health finds that:

1. WHEREAS, on March 5, 2020, the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) confirmed the first case of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Grant County, Washington, and the Grant County Health District and the Washington State Department of Health have since worked to identify, contact, monitor and test others in Grant County potentially exposed to COVID-19 in coordination with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and
2. WHEREAS, COVID-19, a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death, is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which is a new strain of coronavirus that had not been previously identified in humans and can easily spread from person to person; and
3. WHEREAS, the CDC identifies the potential public health threat posed by COVID-19 both globally and in the United States as "very high," and has advised that person-to-person spread of COVID-19 will continue to occur globally, including within the United States and Grant County; and
4. WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency for COVID-19, beginning January 27, 2020; and
5. WHEREAS, on February 29, 2020, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee proclaimed a public health emergency for COVID-19, beginning February 29, 2020; and
6. WHEREAS, on March 2, 2020, the Grant County Health District activated its District Operations Center to manage their response to the COVID-19 cases; and
7. WHEREAS, on March 12th, 2020, the Grant County Health Officer proclaimed a countywide public health emergency (Per RCW 70.05.070) for COVID-19; and
8. WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the Grant County Board of Commissioners declared a State of Emergency in Grant County, beginning March 13, 2020; and
9. WHEREAS, on March 23, 2020, Board Chair Massa, Health Officer Brzezny, and Administrator Adkinson issued a Declaration of Emergency, declaring COVID-19 pandemic to be an emergency in Grant County pursuant to Section 38.52.010 RCW, Chapter 70.05 RCW, and other relevant provisions of state, local, and federal law.



10. WHEREAS, on May 21, 2020 Grant County Health District was notified of their opportunity to apply for a variance to Phase 2 of the Washington State Governor's COVID-19 Recovery plan due to the downward trend in COVID-19 cases in Grant County.
11. WHEREAS, on May 22, 2020, Health Officer Alexander Brzezny presented to the Grant County Board of Health and the Grant County Commissioners his recommendations to apply for the Phase 2 variance based on his evaluation of the current COVID-19 data, increased testing capacity, and robust disease investigation and contact tracing abilities within Grant County Health District and its partners.
12. WHEREAS, on May 22, 2020 Grant County Health District has demonstrated in the variance application the required expectations of the Washington State Department of Health.
13. WHEREAS, on May 22, 2020 all Grant County Hospitals submitted letters to Grant County Health District indicating their 20% surge capacity and 14-day surplus supply of PPE as required for the variance application.

Section 2. RESOLVED

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Health of the Grant County Health District, Grant County, Washington, that:

The Grant County Board of Health accepts Grant County Health Officer's letter regarding the phased approach to COVID-19 recovery.

Be it resolved by the Board of Health of the Grant County Health District here by directs the Grant County Health District to apply for a Phase 2 variance in the Governor's COVID-19 Recovery Plan.

Section 3. BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERSHIP VOTE

Board Members Present:

Board Members Who Were Absent:

Board Members Who Made the Motion and Seconded:

Board Members Who Pass this Resolution by a vote of Yay:

Board Members Who No Not Pass this Resolution by a vote of Nay:



Section 4. BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERSHIP VOTE

This resolution shall take effect on May 22, 2020

PASSED BY THE GRANT COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH AND SIGNED BY ITS CHAIR ON May 22, 2020

Tony Massa, Chairman of the Board

ATTEST:

Theresa Adkinson, Administrator