

## Phase 2 Reopening: Guide to Determining Maximum Occupant Loads

The following information is in response to the guidelines released by the Governor's office for the reopening of certain business found in Phase 2 of the ["Safe Start Plans and Guidance for Reopening"](#)<sup>1</sup>. One of the requirements specified within the guidelines provided by the Governor's Office is to limit the maximum number of occupants in a business. Due to this requirement the City of Everett has received requests from business owners to provide assistance in determining occupancy loads. The term 'maximum occupant load' is used by fire and building officials which describes the total number of persons permitted in a room at any given time. The following guidelines are provided to assist business owners in determining their maximum occupant loads. Occupant loads are determined separately for each room and for each type of business.

**Important:** *The Governor's office will determine the date when businesses within Snohomish County can move to Phase 2.*

### Phase 2 Restaurant/Tavern Reopening, COVID-19 Requirements:

"Guest occupancy must be 50% of maximum building occupancy or lower as determined by the fire code. Outdoor seating is permitted but must also be at 50% capacity. Outdoor seating does not count toward the building occupancy limit." Please reference the Governor's ["Phase 2 Restaurant/Tavern Reopening COVID-19 Requirements"](#)<sup>2</sup>.

#### Determination of Occupant load

The easiest way to determine the number of persons that are permitted in the dining areas is to locate your maximum occupant load sign. This sign should be in the location of the main entry door into the room.

If the maximum occupant load sign cannot be located, a calculation can also be used to arrive at the occupancy load. To determine the occupant load of the dining room and serving areas, measure the floor area of each service room separately. For now, do not include the area where fixed seating is provided. Use only the areas that people can stand or sit (moveable tables and chairs) and ignore areas that people cannot physically be located (cabinets, bars, walls for example). Once the floor area of the space is determined, divide that area by 15 to arrive at your occupant load.

Example – area of dining room is 1000 square feet. Divide 1000 by 15 and the occupant load is 67 (if a decimal, round up to the nearest person).

Next, add in the fixed seating. Take the length of each bench and divide the total length in inches by 18 inches for straight benches and 24 inches for curved booths. Add that number to the previous occupant load of the overall area and you have the occupant load for the room.

### Phase 2 Limited In-Store Retail Operations, COVID-19 Requirements:

"Guest occupancy must be 30% of maximum building occupancy or lower as determined by the fire code. This limit does not include employees in the calculated." Please reference the Governor's ["Phase 2 Limited In-Store Retail Operations COVID-19 Requirements"](#)<sup>3</sup>.

### **Determination of Occupant load**

The determination of the occupant load of retail spaces is somewhat different than other businesses. There will likely not be a 'maximum occupant load' sign posted as these are primarily found in assembly spaces. For mercantile areas, the overall floor area is taken and then divided by 60 to determine the occupant load. Do not subtract areas of shelving, clothes racks or merchandise cases – these items have already been factored in.

### **Phase 2 Fitness and Training, COVID-19 Requirements:**

"Total Number of people in the facility, to include staff, trainers, and clients, will be limited to 30 percent of the facility's building occupancy, as determined by the fire code." Please reference the Governor's "[Phase 2 Fitness and Training COVID-19 Guidelines](#)"<sup>4</sup>.

### **Determination of Occupant load**

The determination of the occupant load of Fitness and Training spaces is somewhat different than other businesses. There will likely not be a 'maximum occupant load' sign posted as these are primarily found in assembly spaces. For Fitness and Training areas, the overall floor area is taken and then divided by 50 to determine the occupant load. Do not subtract areas of equipment – these items have already been factored in.

### **Phase 2 Personal Services, COVID-19 Requirements:**

"Client occupancy should be kept at 50% or lower, with the exception of one to one service in an enclosed room." (Personal Services include – Cosmetologists, Hairstylists, Barbers, Estheticians, Master Estheticians, Manicurists, Nail Salon Workers, Electrologists, Permanent Makeup Artists, Tattoo Artists, Cosmetology Schools and Esthetics Schools.) Please reference the Governor's "[Phase 2 Personal Services COVID-19 Requirements](#)"<sup>5</sup>.

### **Determination of Occupant load**

In most cases to comply with the requirements for client occupancy being kept at 50% or lower, a business owner simply reduce the number of workstations used by 50%.

### **Contact Information for Questions:**

If difficulties occur in determining the occupancy load of your business, please feel free to contact the Everett Fire Marshal's Office at 425-257-8120.

### **Referenced Documents:**

1. Safe Start Plans and Guidance for Reopening:  
<https://coronavirus.wa.gov/what-you-need-know/safe-start>
2. Governor's Phase 2 Restaurant/Tavern Reopening COVID-19 Requirements:  
[https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/Phase%20%20Restaurant%20industry%20re-open%20proposal\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/Phase%20%20Restaurant%20industry%20re-open%20proposal_FINAL.pdf)
3. Governor's Phase 2 Limited In-Store Retail Operations COVID-19 Requirements:  
<https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/Phase2InStoreRetailGuidance.pdf>
4. Governor's Phase 2 Fitness and Training COVID-19 Guidelines:  
<https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/COVID19Phase2FitnessGuidelines.pdf>
5. Governor's Phase 2 Personal Services COVID-19 Requirements:  
<https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/COVID19Phase2PersonalServicesGuidance.pdf>



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