



New deck employees join the fleet

I'm happy to announce that nine new deck employees completed our orientation training program last week and are working in the fleet! Before anyone can serve as a crewmember on one of our vessels, they must go through weeks of intensive training, which includes firefighting, personal safety and survival, classroom time and job duty familiarization in the fleet. Due to COVID-19, we were unable to conduct these face-to-face new deck employee orientations until last month. Congratulations graduates and thank you instructors and our training department for the great work!



New deck employee graduates pose with instructors aboard the recently retired Elwha, which we used as a floating classroom.

Reduced service due to crewing challenges

The new graduates have helped a bit with our current lack of available crewmembers. However, with more than 100 high-risk employees still unavailable due to the pandemic, we continue to struggle in crewing each of our vessels with the

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[#MaskUpWA](#)

Under a [proclamation](#) from the governor that took effect Tuesday, July 7, businesses may not serve any customer who does not comply with the governor's [statewide face covering order](#). The order requires every Washingtonian in an indoor public space, or in an outside public space when unable to physically distance from others, to wear a face covering. We ask that everyone follow this mandate while on our ferries and in our terminals.



All of our vessel and terminal employees have been required to wear a mask while at work since May 18.

number needed to meet U.S. Coast Guard safety requirements. As a reminder, our Edmonds/Kingston and Mukilteo/Clinton routes will be on one-boat service each Saturday and Sunday in July, in an effort to maintain some service on all our routes during this difficult time.

If you have to catch a ferry right now, I encourage you to review our [current schedules](#), sign up for ferry [email alerts](#), check [terminal conditions](#), review our [COVID-19 travel updates](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Whale incident near Mukilteo terminal

On Monday, two humpback whales surfaced just in front of *Tokitae* as the vessel was approaching our Mukilteo terminal. Although our crew acted quickly and slowed down, NOAA Fisheries says they believe our ferry made contact with the whale. There is an ongoing investigation into the situation.

I can assure you that the health and safety of Puget Sound's whales are extremely important to us. We have procedures in place to [watch for marine mammals](#) and work with the [Orca Network](#) to report whale sightings and stranded marine mammals. To all our customers, and anyone on the water, please be on the lookout for the increasing numbers of humpback and gray whales in our waters, and if you spot a dead or injured whale, call the NOAA Fisheries hotline at 866-767-6114.

Amy Scarton

Assistant Secretary, WSDOT/Ferries Division



"[Your June 30 public] webinar was super helpful to understand what the ferry system is dealing with and why. [...] Your panel did such an awesome job explaining and answering questions, even after you already covered the why, and kept your attitudes in a good place. I was impressed. That was probably not super easy.

"I hope you can find a way to get the word out to more people about your [four] pillars and so why things are happening the way they are. I know that helps me to be more understanding. [...] Thanks everyone! Great job! Thanks for doing the work you are doing! It is not easy any time, but right now especially! We are grateful to you!"

-Whidbey Island customer



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