



News Release

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COVID-19 exposure notification app WA Notify to end May 11

The smartphone technology served as a crucial tool to reduce transmission rates and save lives

OLYMPIA – WA Notify - the state’s successful, lifesaving COVID-19 exposure notification app - is scheduled to sunset May 11 in tandem with the end of the Public Health Emergency. [The smartphone application](#) utilizes privacy-preserving Bluetooth technology to anonymously alert users they may have been exposed to someone who recently tested positive for COVID-19.

Since its launch in Nov. 2020, approximately 235,000 participants confirmed a positive test result in WA Notify, generating more than 2.5 million anonymous exposure notifications, preventing tens of thousands of COVID-19 cases, and [saving lives](#). Washington was one of the first states to implement exposure notification technology and consistently had one of the lowest COVID-19 death rates in the country, despite also being host to the earliest known domestic case of the virus.

“We’re tremendously proud of what WA Notify was able to accomplish in a relatively short amount of time, and eager to find ways to utilize this life-saving technology again in the future,” said Dr. Bryant Thomas Karras, Chief Medical Informatics Officer at Washington State Department of Health. “Much of WA Notify’s success can be attributed to innovative collaboration among public, private, and academic partners including Apple, Google, Microsoft, and the University of Washington. We want to thank WA Notify users across the state for using this free, privacy-preserving tool to protect themselves and their communities.”

As the Public Health Emergency ends, high levels of vaccination, combined with widespread population immunity and available treatments, have significantly reduced the risk of severe illness, hospitalization, or death from COVID-19. These factors have also contributed to the reduced need for the WA Notify application.

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) encourages people who test positive for COVID-19 to continue anonymously notifying others via the app through May 11. After that,

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users will no longer receive notifications they were near someone who tested positive for the virus. User privacy is protected, and no GPS locations or personally identifiable information was collected or stored by the application. On May 11, or soon thereafter, WA Notify users may receive a notification on their phone alerting them the tool will be disabled. Neither Android nor iPhone users will need to take action, although Android users may uninstall the WA Notify app if they choose. Beyond May 11, DOH encourages people who test positive for COVID-19 to tell their close contacts that may have been exposed to the virus.

The [DOH website](#) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. [Find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#). Sign up for the DOH blog, [Public Health Connection](#).

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