

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Charlie Bermant, with local news and commentary for Thursday, July 23, 2020.

Jefferson County's COVID-19 case number held fast this week, remaining at 50. As of Wednesday 4,428 local residents have been tested with 4,309 testing negative. This represents a positive rate of 1.1%, significantly less than many parts of the country.

Sixty nine people are awaiting results.

The Fort Worden Public Development Authority will reopen its rental accommodations on Saturday August 1.

According to a statement, the park delayed reopening to allow more time to implement extensive COVID-19 sanitization and cleaning measures as well as time to train staff on these new protocols. That policy requires the cleaning and sanitizing for all surfaces and laundry. The park is alternating and limiting house occupancy to allow added time between cleanings and new occupants.

While the commons and the Reville restaurant remain closed, both Taps at the Guardhouse and the Cablehouse Canteen adjacent to the Marine Science Center pier are open for business.

The mask rules should be familiar by now. All guests and visitors must wear a mask any time they enter a building, as well as in outdoor areas when near other guests or visitors and strict physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Accordingly, the park is following the CDC, Washington State, and local health guidelines on gathering, sanitation, physical distancing and masking mandates. Personnel are adaptive and responsive to changing regulations and industry best practices, and will make the public aware of any changes.

For more information go to the Fort Worden website (<https://fortworden.org/>).

In related news, the Washington State Parks and the Washington State Library have resumed the Check Out Washington program in libraries across the state, which allows library patrons to borrow a Discover pass for one week. The service is available at 175 libraries throughout the state, including the Jefferson County and Port Townsend Libraries.

Library cardholders may use the pass to access parks and recreation lands managed by Washington State Parks, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Department of Natural Resources. According to a press statement, the program allows those who may not have the means to purchase their own Discover Pass an opportunity to enjoy public facilities.

Last year, libraries lent activity backpacks with binoculars along with the pass, but most libraries will not do so this year due to sanitation requirements between uses.

Jefferson County's Courthouse Facilitator service has restarted after a suspension caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and is once again available to help families navigate family law proceedings.

The Courthouse Facilitator, Sharon McCracken, can help people who don't have an attorney by guiding them to the correct forms, explaining terms and procedures, setting hearings and preparing to appear before a judge. While she is not an attorney, she cannot give legal advice but can explain the available options.

Due to the virus, meetings are held over the phone rather than in person. The fee is \$20. To set up an appointment call the clerk's office, 360-385-9125.

McCracken has provided assistance to unrepresented litigants in family law cases for fourteen years.

A little more than 2,600 ballots, or 10% of those mailed out, had arrived at the Jefferson County Auditor's Office as of Wednesday. The ballots are due on August 4, or more specifically, the Tuesday after next. Port Townsend voters seeing signs supporting county commissioner candidates Amanda Funaro, Heidi Eisenhour and Lorna Smith might be confused if those names aren't on the ballot. The race is for District 2, and only voters within its boundaries can vote in the primary.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon Monday through Saturday and at 5pm PM Monday through Thursday. You can contact us through news at kptz.org.

This is Charlie Bermant. Thank you for listening.