

**From:** [Marissa Armstrong](#)  
**To:** [Maxford Nelsen](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Counting COVID-19 deaths  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 9, 2020 3:54:17 PM

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Hi Maxford,

Clark County Public Health uses the state Department of Health definition of a COVID-associated death: a person who dies following a positive COVID-19 test.

Marissa



**Marissa Armstrong**  
Communications specialist  
PUBLIC HEALTH

w. 564.397.7307  
c. 360.518.1731



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**From:** Maxford Nelsen [<mailto:MNelsen@freedomfoundation.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 09, 2020 1:14 PM  
**To:** Cnty Public Health General Delivery  
**Subject:** Counting COVID-19 deaths

Clark County Staff,

I have a question regarding Clark County's method for counting COVID-19 deaths that I hope you can help me with. Specifically, what criteria does the county use when counting a death as related to COVID-19?

I've so far identified two different methods used by various public health agencies in Washington.

The statewide COVID-19 fatality count publicized by the Washington Department of Health includes any person who tested positive for COVID-19 and subsequently died, even if the death certificate made no mention of COVID-19 as playing a role in the death.

However, I know some county health departments only count deaths of persons who tested positive for COVID-19 *and* died for reasons related to the virus. In [Thurston County](#), for instance, "[a]n individual is counted as a COVID-19 death if they were diagnosed with COVID-19 and died due to

health complications related to the illness.”

Which method does Clark County use? Or does it use a different method entirely?

Thanks in advance for your time.

Best,

## **Maxford Nelsen**

Director of Labor Policy | Freedom Foundation

[MNelsen@FreedomFoundation.com](mailto:MNelsen@FreedomFoundation.com)

360.956.3482 | PO Box 552 Olympia, WA 98507

[FreedomFoundation.com](http://FreedomFoundation.com)

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