

From: [Maxford Nelsen](#)
To: [Stephanie Shopbell](#)
Subject: RE: Counting COVID-19 deaths
Date: Monday, June 15, 2020 12:18:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Ms. Shopbell,

Thanks for the response. I do have a couple additional clarifying questions, though. If the county is not reviewing death certificates, what means did it use to determine that the four cases you reference below "subsequently passed away due to complications"?

Also, the [county reports](#) five COVID-19 deaths at the moment, but you reference only four below. Does that mean that the fifth death involved a person who tested positive for the virus at some point but died/may have died from some other cause?

Best,

Maxford Nelsen

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From: Stephanie Shopbell <sshopbell@granthealth.org>
Sent: Sunday, June 14, 2020 4:03 PM
To: Maxford Nelsen <MNelsen@freedomfoundation.com>
Subject: RE: Counting COVID-19 deaths

Four of our deaths have been among those who tested positive and subsequently passed away due to complications. We have not reviewed any final death certificates, except in the most recent death who was a resident of a long term care facility. The first 4 deaths all tested positive, had worsening COVID symptoms which led to hospitalization (with the exception of death #4) and passed away.

Stephanie Shopbell Environmental Health Manager

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Always working for a safer and healthier Grant County

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From: Maxford Nelsen
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 1:18 PM
To: info@granthealth.org
Subject: Counting COVID-19 deaths

Grant County Public Health Staff,

I have a question regarding Grant 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 Grant County use? Or does it use a different method entirely?

Thanks in advance for your time.

Best,

Maxford Nelsen

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