



November 15, 2020

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## **Independent Grocers' Statement on New COVID Restrictions**

*WFIA President urges patience with shoppers as stores adjust to new state rules*

**OLYMPIA** — Tammie Hetrick, president and CEO of The Washington Food Industry Association (WFIA), representing the state's independent grocers and convenience stores, issued the following statement today regarding Gov. Jay Inslee's new COVID shopping rules:

"Washington state's independent grocery and convenience stores are working hard to safely meet the needs of customers during COVID-19. Since the early days of the outbreak, grocery stores have complied with COVID regulations — masking up, sanitizing, and providing clean, safe shopping experiences. Now, our members are asking for the public's continued patience as local grocers adjust to operating under these new rules during the busiest shopping season of the year," said Hetrick.

"Grocers do not make these regulations, but they are required to enforce them. Like you, we are adjusting to new and ever-changing rules about how to shop safely during this unprecedented time. Stores are doing their best to innovate and offer safe, convenient services and maintain reasonable access. Shoppers: Please do not take your frustrations out on store employees, who are just doing their jobs. Our stores and our suppliers are working diligently to ensure shoppers will have safe access to the food and other products they seek this holiday season," she added.

“Safety remains the top priority for our stores, their employees and the shopping public. We must continue to work together and help one another if we are to put an end to this pandemic and begin the road back to normalcy.”

**About the Washington Food Industry Association**

*The Washington Food Industry Association (WFIA) is dedicated to promoting and protecting the independent, community-focused grocery and convenience store industry and its suppliers. Founded in 1899, the WFIA represents the state’s independent grocers and convenience stores. Membership includes all levels of the food and beverage distribution industry who collaborate to promote the principles of free enterprise to ensure a vigorous, competitive, economically healthy food industry. The grocery and convenience store industry provides about 50,000 Washington jobs. For more information, visit [www.wa-food-ind.org](http://www.wa-food-ind.org).*