

From: [Mayor](#)
To: [Mayor](#)
Subject: COVID-19 Update: A Mayor Message & updated HR Guidance
Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 4:48:28 PM
Attachments: [COVID-19 Employee FAQ updated 03182020.pdf](#)
[Request for 80-percent FTE Work Schedule - FILLABLE.pdf](#)
[Natural Disaster - COVID Form.pdf](#)
Importance: High



Galie Hoodward

The City of Spokane **COVID-19 News Update for March 18**

Information about Coronavirus Disease 19 (COVID-19) is evolving rapidly. We want to make sure our City employees have up-to-date information. We will provide this update, as needed, to communicate what you need to know, while we work to reduce the spread of this disease in our community and continue to provide critical public services.

A Message from the Mayor

Good afternoon, everyone. Today, Governor Jay Inslee announced a temporary moratorium on evictions in the state of Washington. Providing peace of mind to those who suddenly find themselves vulnerable to losing their home during this health and economic emergency is a conversation we have been wrestling with for days at the City. There are no easy or perfect answers.

Philosophically, we all agree that adding housing insecurity to the list of concerns our community is dealing with is something to avoid. Taking this action is best done at a statewide level to be consistent in its application and impact and we as a City will support that order.

We are mindful that limiting the actions of a landlord is something that carries downstream ramifications to the property owner, property management companies, contractors, maintenance workers, and others who may be employed by the property owner. As I said, there are no easy or perfect answers.

These are unprecedented times. We are acutely aware that for every action there may be unintended outcomes, and we are doing everything we can to anticipate and minimize them.

As a City organization, I know we are aware that the anxiety our community is facing is very real. I appreciate all the long hours that are teams are investing on this issue. Spokane deserves our best and we are committed to delivering on those expectations.

Thank you for doing your part to limit the spread of this illness by being cautious for your community, especially those who are vulnerable, practicing good sneeze and cough hygiene, staying home when you are sick, and generally observing the guidance coming from public health experts. We are stronger together and will get through this together.

Updated Human Resources Guidance

Today, we are attaching an updated HR guidance document. Check out some new topics related to notification of employees if a co-worker has tested positive for COVID-19 and what to do if leave banks aren't sufficient or if leave banks become maxed out because of cancellation of time off.

Most importantly, for those with child care concerns, HR has detailed some options for employees. Some employees may be able to telecommute. Others may need extended leave, and the City is allowing access to FMLA banks, access to 72 hours of natural disaster leave, an option to reduce to a 32-hour work week, and access to shared leave. Please read through this section if this applies to you. We also have attached forms to apply for the natural disaster leave and the reduction to a 32-hour workweek.

Child Care Survey

Thanks to the employees who filled out the Child Care Survey. Human Resources is compiling the results and working on recommendations to assist our employees with child care needs. HR will provide updated information as soon as it is available.

Rely on official sources

Continuous discussion about the COVID-19 situation is making it difficult to evaluate information. We strongly encourage you to rely on official sources for information and the latest updates. Currently, there are five confirmed COVID-19 cases in Spokane County, according to the Spokane Regional Health District. Three were reported Saturday by the SRHD and the other two this week. [DOH updates that data](#) every afternoon. Please also be careful with the terminology you use when discussing health-related concerns to provide as much clarity as possible. Terms like “exposure,” “test,” “isolation,” and “quarantine” carry extra significance during this time. The [SRHD is updating its COVID-19 page regularly](#) with current guidance and information.

Employee Information Portal (<https://covid19.spokanecity.org/>)

Remember, this Employee Information Portal is a great resource for employees to stay current on what’s happening with the COVID-19 response. We are getting information out to our employees as efficiently and quickly as we can. We have done most of that via email, but we know that doesn’t reach our whole employee base. Here is a link to an [Employee Information Portal](#) that can be accessed from work or home, using a computer or mobile device. All of the emailed information we have sent to employees is archived here, along with the updated HR Guidance, directions on how to use technology for telecommuting or virtual meetings, policy guidance, and more.

City Services Changes

We have changed hours, implemented closures, and more at the City over the last week or so. Stay up to date on all the changes through this [web page](#).