

The City of Spokane

Weekly News Update for Dec. 13

Stay up-to-date on City of Spokane and employee news with our weekly Employee Update.

City Switching to STA Connect Cards

You may have heard that the Spokane Transit Authority (STA) is in the process of moving over to the Connect card. This means that the **City will be transitioned to the new Connect cards Sunday, Jan. 1, 2023 and on Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2023 City IDs will no longer work on the bus.**

STA is planning a **pop-up event tomorrow, Dec. 14**, at City Hall. They will be located on the 4th floor in conference room 4B. You can obtain and register your card, at this time, in person, or you can email (see below) the required information to be issued a pass after the pop-up event.

Things to know before you request Connect

- Employees 18 and younger can get a Connect card free through the STA. The City of Spokane will not register these cards until the employee is 19 and required to pay fares.
- You have the option to download the [STA Connect app](#) to your smart phone and use your phone as the Connect card or you can request a physical Connect pass. The City of Spokane will only register one of these per employee since they are considered two different passes and have two separate fare caps.
- Volunteers can get a Connect card as well. Because we are unable to track these as easily, HR will maintain a spreadsheet of volunteers and their Connect cards will automatically expire at the end of the year unless the department extends it.
- Connect cards will be unregistered with the City of Spokane at time of separation, but can still be used by the separated employee by creating their own account with STA.

If you are a current bus rider, or are planning to ride the bus soon, please email the following information to: [Human Resources Connect Card Bus Pass](#).

- Your Legal Name
- Employee Number (located on your paystub or in PeopleSoft)
- If you have already downloaded the STA Connect app, or have a Connect card, provide the 20-digit member number so we can register you on the City of Spokane portal through STA.
- If you do not have a card yet and do not plan to use the STA Connect app, please email us that you would like a card sent to you.

Employees who do not ride the bus will not need to request the connect card and can obtain one later if they plan to start riding STA.

Human Resources does not have these cards on hand at this time, so collection of this information will be used to interoffice out cards as soon as we can. Do not stop by HR for a pass or you will be sad 😊.

Paid Family Medical Leave Premium Rate Change

Starting Sunday, Jan. 1, 2023:

- The total premium rate is increasing from 0.6% to 0.8% of the employees' gross wages, not including tips, up to the 2023 Social Security cap.
- Employers will pay approximately 27% of the total premium and employees will pay approximately 73%, unless otherwise stated in Union/Association agreements.
- The Social Security cap on gross wages is increasing from \$147,000 in 2022 to \$160,200 in 2023.
- The current rate of 0.6% of gross wages, up to the \$147,000 2022 cap, is in effect until December 31, 2022.

Why is the premium rate changing?

Premiums, collected from employees and employers through quarterly reporting, fund the Paid Family Medical Leave Program. By law, the Paid Leave premium rate is recalculated annually on September 30th. The premium rate is then adjusted based on the contributions received from premiums and benefits paid to individuals during the previous year.

For more information on Paid Family Medical Leave [click here](#).

2nd Harvest Food Drive

Hunger and food shortage is one of the great challenges affecting our community. The City of Spokane is hosting a food drive for 2nd Harvest. Collection boxes are located near the elevators on each floor of City Hall and at the City's satellite facilities.

2nd Harvest is looking for the following items:

- Canned fish and lean meats
- Healthy soups and stews
- Dry or canned beans
- Whole grain pasta, rice and cereal
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Peanut butter and other nut butters



Bring your food donated items anytime between now and **Friday, Dec. 30**, to help support and sustain the members of our community experiencing hunger and food uncertainty. To learn about where your donations end up, visit the 2nd Harvest [website](#).

More Information to Assist You

Here are some more resources from our Employee Assistance Program:

[The Four A's of Stress Relief](#)

There are four steps to help reduce stress and cope with the inevitable stressors of everyday life:

1. Avoid.
2. Alter.
3. Accept.
4. Adapt.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Employee Information Portal (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. The [Employee Information Portal](#) 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.