

From: [Mayor](#)
 To: [Mayor](#)
 Subject: COVID-19 update
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 Attachments: [COVID-19 Employee FAQ updated 03152020.docx](#)



The City of Spokane COVID-19 News Update for March 16

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. This chart, from the Washington State Department of Health, provides a look at the levels of a health emergency and indicates where we are as a community. (Currently, we are at Level 2.)

Current Level				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase handwashing and use of alcohol-based sanitizer • Respiratory Hygiene/ Cough Etiquette • Keep distance from others (>6 feet) • Frequently clean and disinfect personal surfaces (doorknobs, phones, keyboards, etc.) • Remain home through the duration of respiratory illness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary isolation of sick persons • Voluntary quarantine of contacts of sick persons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involuntary isolation of sick persons • Involuntary quarantine of contacts of sick persons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order cancellation of major public and large private gatherings • Order closure of schools, childcare facilities, workplaces, and public buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent non-emergency travel outside of the home • Establish a cordon sanitaire

Source: Washington State Department of Health (DOH) Nonpharmaceutical Intervention (NPI) Implementation Guide

From Mayor Woodward

Information and community needs evolved rapidly over the weekend. The first three confirmed cases were announced in Spokane County. Schools are making plans to close for at least six weeks. Spokane Public Library branches closed into next month. Community Court postponed its hearing schedule into next month. Spokane Parks and Recreation is evaluating its program and event schedules to determine how best to meet the community's needs. Winter weather returned to the area adding another layer of complexity to meeting the needs of our vulnerable populations.

City of Spokane employees have a responsibility to the community we serve and to help our colleagues lead and manage through these challenging times. Following are just some of the items on the agenda today and this week:

City response: The City's Incident Management Team has been meeting daily to identify community and organizational needs. The Team includes about 20 staff members from across all our departments. The Team is coordinating with the County and other jurisdictions in our area. We are part of standing up an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to collaborate on the region's response to this situation. Our Team is coordinating internal protective measures, procuring necessary equipment and facilities, and taking action

to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on our community.

Regional partnership: The City has invited the Spokane County Department of Emergency Management to establish the regional EOC in the Spokane Fire Department Training Center. Monday at noon will be the formal activation of the EOC that will bring all of the regional partners together for a collaborative and coordinated response.

Communication: Regular updates are going to employees, the community, and the media. An employee web page will be activated by Tuesday as a central repository for information that impacts employees. And watch for our child care needs survey for employees. The best way to stay current on community and media communication is to visit [My.SpokaneCity.org](https://www.spokane.gov/MySpokaneCity.org) or follow @spokanecity on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/spokanecity) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/spokanecity).

Vulnerable populations: The City Community, Health, and Human Services department is working with regional health and services provider organizations to identify additional shelter space and to establish quarantine facilities for those who need assistance doing that outside of their current living situations. Establishing social distancing at existing shelters is creating a potential need for additional space.

Healthcare and first responders: Steps are being taken to meet childcare and other needs created by community closures for healthcare and first responders to ensure staffing levels remain high in those critical needs areas.

School district coordination: The City has met throughout the weekend with Spokane Public Schools leaders to assist with needs created by the impending school closure beginning Tuesday. The organizations are identifying opportunities to partner to meet community needs for childcare and nutrition services. Nearly 60 percent of SPS students receive breakfast and lunch at school daily through the federal free and reduced lunch program. The City is also monitoring needs in neighboring school districts, particularly those with some geographic overlap to the city.

Health and evaluation: A regional healthcare partnership is finalizing arrangements to establish a temporary walk-up capability to rapidly and in greater numbers evaluate and, if necessary, test people in our community with cold and flu-like symptoms. The evaluations, which will be done by medical professionals from the major healthcare providers in our community, will help individuals make informed decisions about the need for isolation or quarantine.

Employee and public areas: Additional cleaning time and supplies have been focused toward areas with public counters and higher outside traffic. The City is also encouraging citizens to use online options to interact, pay bills, and conduct permitting business. Non-time-sensitive meetings are being postponed and City staff is working with the City Council to evaluate options to allow public engagement to continue while heeding the guidance of public health experts to limit large gatherings and close interactions.

Human Resources Guidance: Attached please find the HR Guidance yet again. We have modified the section on international travel to address concerns more effectively. Remember, this document details information on use of leave banks, employee travel, telecommuting options for some employees, and tools and tips to limit in-person meetings.

Thank you: As always, we want to take a moment to thank our employees for their dedication to our community. We are responsible for critical public services that are needed now more than ever. I know our team will work together to ensure our citizens are cared for during these unprecedented times.

