

From: [Mayor](#)
To: [Mayor](#)
Subject: COVID-19 Update: City Employees Doing their Part
Date: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 5:08:16 PM



A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Valerie Hoard".

The City of Spokane

COVID-19 News Update for April 1

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.

Open Public Meetings during the COVID-19 Response

A staple of City government is open public meetings—opportunities for our citizens to engage as we consider new policies, growth plans, and legislation. In recent years, it hasn't always been easy to get citizens to attend meetings, particularly ones that involve longer-term planning.

Today, though, our public meeting challenge is different, as we work during our response to COVID-19. In the last week, the Governor's Office issued a proclamation suspending many aspects of the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA). The proclamation actually temporarily prohibits in-person public meeting attendance. In place of the OPMA, the state has provided temporary guidance for managing the public's business at a time when gatherings are prohibited.

The City Council has evaluated its meeting schedule and provided guidance to staff and the public. Council President Breean Beggs does a great job [explaining their plan in a short video](#).

The Council are combining their 3:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. Monday meetings into one to be held at 3:30 p.m. Live testimony from the public won't be allowed, but citizens can provide written comment on any item to the Council. The Council's actions are limited to routine matters or to items related to the COVID-19 response, so their agendas are expected to be shorter, too.

For staff members, presentations to Council should all be done via WebEx in coordination with Council and NOT in person until restrictions on staying home are lifted. If you just want to watch the meeting, please use CityCable 5 so the WebEx feed is not overloaded. If you need to present at any Council meeting, please coordinate with Hannahlee Allers in the Council office to be added to the list of presenters, and you will receive the WebEx invite to join remotely.

Documents shared by the City Clerk's Office on the OPMA have been added to the [Employee Information Portal](#).

Take the Bus? New Info from STA

City employee badges also can be used as bus passes so we have quite a few people who use the bus. Beginning Monday, April 6, Spokane Transit (STA) will reduce service by implementing Service Level 3 of its Emergency Response Plan, effectively suspending express routes that typically carry morning and evening commuters. STA is making this change because its ridership has reduced significantly as a result of the "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order.

Express routes impacted include:

- Route 124 – North Express
- Route 144 – South Express
- Route 174 – Liberty Lake Express

- Route 173 – Valley Transit Center Express
- Route 190 – Valley Express

Detailed information is available at www.spokanetransit.com/TempReductions .

April 1 is Census Day

Here's a little non-COVID tidbit for your day. April 1 is Census Day. You should have received information in the mail on how to go online and get counted. Census results help determine how billions of dollars in federal funding gets allocated. We want people in Spokane to be counted to ensure that we have access to money that helps our community. Our current situation demonstrates why federal help can be very important. So, while you're spending time at home tonight or tomorrow or later in the week, take a moment to respond. More information is available at 2020census.gov.

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. 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.