

From: [Mayor](#)
To: [Mayor](#)
Subject: COVID-19 Update: Continued Commitment to Health
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 5:22:27 PM



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

The City of Spokane

COVID-19 News Update for July 14

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.

Mayor Encourages Continued Commitment to Health

Summer, as it usually does, is speeding by. Squeezing in a getaway or two before the focus turns to the next school year is likely the topic of many conversations. Unfortunately, as our community continues to struggle with slowing the rate of COVID infection, that may be where the similarities end.

What that school year will look like is still very much an open discussion. Favorite community events have been forced to dramatically alter their plans or cancel altogether. And, the experience at your favorite businesses is a little different.

Nothing about this summer is normal. The fight to keep our community healthy and economically viable has produced much more stress and anxiety than we usually experience halfway through the summer. That is undeniably frustrating for everyone.

Unfortunately, as resilient as you have been, we are going to have to stay committed as a community to the things that have carried us this far. That means remaining physically distant whenever possible while staying emotionally connected to keep neighbors, friends, and loved ones safe and engaged in our lives. And, limiting non-critical trips, especially on the weekends.

We are amassing more data as a community and working with the Spokane Regional Health District to interpret and learn from that information to make better decisions. One of the potential trends beginning to emerge is that we are doing better on weekdays than we are on weekends.

That may be the result of circulating less frequently, being more committed to wearing a mask when we are at work, or being a little more uninhibited when we are playing. Whatever the reason, we ask that you consider your own habits, look for ways to achieve incremental gains, and evaluate ways you can accomplish your errands and support local businesses in physically distant ways.

We need our community healthy, and our businesses to survive so that our community can thrive. Thank you for your continued support of our community.

New FAQs on positive COVID cases at the City

We have spent time in this newsletter talking about how the City will work with employees as positive cases are found among our teams. A [new FAQs sheet](#) was developed by Human Resources to add some additional clarity around what happens when one of our employees tests positive for COVID.

The information details some of the steps that HR will complete when someone informs them that they are positive. The first step is to isolate the person at home and advise him or her to visit their health care

provider. Beyond that, though, HR's job is to identify who is at risk based on close contact with the positive individual. Being open and available to provide that kind of information will help reduce illness among our employees.

And one final reminder, COVID testing and treatment is covered in full by the City's health plans through the end of the year. And, employees who do test positive should contact HR to connect to appropriate leave benefits, as well.

Governor Extends Halt on Advancing Phases

Washington counties will be unable to advance to the next phase of the state's reopening plan through at least July 28. Governor Jay Inslee made the announcement during a press conference on Tuesday.

"With the spread of the virus, we need to continue to pause the reopening of our economy," Inslee said.

Yesterday, the state reported its record-high one-day count of new cases at 1,101, bringing the total in the state to 41,757. The previous one-day high was 1,087, reported July 6, the Monday after the holiday weekend.

Rental Assistance for Community Members

While the City continues to provide critical basic services to our citizens, we continue to provide additional help for those impacted by COVID-19. This week, the City announced that it will work with Spokane Workforce Council to provide a rapid-delivery Home Tenant Based Rent Assistance funded by HUD to families experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19. The program will serve a diverse population of low-income renters who have reduced or lost incomes due to the pandemic. The project has \$500,000 available and is expected to serve over 200 renters.

"This has been the perfect storm for many families. Juggling loss of income, at-home learning and food security during a pandemic is stressful," says Mayor Nadine Woodward. "I am grateful we are able to assist families with rental payments and ease that burden."

The purpose of the program is to quickly implement limited time rent payments to City residents earning less than 60 percent of the area median income and are temporarily unable to pay rent due to financial hardship because of COVID-19.

If you know someone who might benefit, they can call (509) 867-8188 to be connected with the rental assistance team at the Spokane Resource Center. The Spokane Resource Center, located at 130 S. Arthur Street, 2nd floor (above WorkSource) currently has staff assisting clients via phone.

More Information to Assist Our Employees

Here are some more resources from our Employee Assistance Program:

- [The TCPA: Protection Against RoboCalls and Prerecorded Calls](#)
Congress passed the federal Telephone Consumer Protection Act, also known as the TCPA, in response to an increasing number of consumer complaints about telemarketers and debt collector phone calls. The primary purpose of the TCPA is to reduce the number of nuisance calls. But also, and perhaps it works to protect the consumer's right to privacy.
- [Relationship Help: Advice for Building Satisfying Relationships That Last](#)
A healthy, secure romantic relationship can be an ongoing source of support and happiness in life. It can strengthen all aspects of your well-being, from your physical and mental health to your work and connections with others. However, a relationship that isn't supportive can be a tremendous drain on you emotionally. Love and relationships take work, commitment, and a willingness to adapt and change with your partner. Whether you're looking to keep a healthy relationship secure or repair a relationship on the rocks, these tips can help you build a caring and lasting union.

To access more topics related to COVID-19 visit: EAPHelpLink.com, using company code: **CITSPO**

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.