

From: [Mayor](#)
To: [Mayor](#)
Subject: COVID-19 Update: Learn from our Co-Workers
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A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Valerie Howard".

The City of Spokane **COVID-19 News Update for July 21**

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.

Learning from our Co-Workers

About a dozen City employees have reported that they have tested positive for COVID-19. Human Resources notified close contacts and has provided appropriate direction based on those cases.

While most of us were not a close contact of these employees, we all can learn something from them.

- Most of our employees believe they contracted the virus outside of work.
- Many employees reported that they contracted the virus at locations where mask wearing and social distancing guidance were **not** strictly adhered to.

As cases rise in our community, we need to follow health guidance and we need to make sure that we are following the same protocols at home as we do at work.

We are have and are isolating many employees who either 1) have a household member who has tested positive or 2) believe they may have been exposed and are awaiting test results as part of our standard protocol.

We have approved thousands of hours of emergency paid leave for COVID-related reasons. Early in the pandemic most of the leave was for child care reasons, but now, more is for illness or potential illness. HR is responsive and processing emergency paid leave for eligible employees in a timely manner and consistent with quarantine guidelines.

In the end, all of this impacts our families, our co-workers, and our ability to serve our community.

Recommitting to Healthy Practices

As COVID-19 cases rise in our local community, we learn more each day about the importance of following established safety protocol. We have an opportunity in our capacity as public servants to also serve as community leaders in modeling good mask-wearing and social distancing practices!

These two actions, along with early reporting, continue to be the most impactful tools in reducing the spread of this virus and in turn – keeping ourselves and our community safe. Our actions make a difference! With that in mind, let's recommit to the following best (and required) practices:

- **Masks/face coverings** – are required at all times except when working alone. This continues to have the greatest impact on minimizing our internal case numbers.
- **Social distancing** - should be maintained as much as possible. This includes respecting posted capacity limits in conference rooms and leveraging virtual tools (WebEx, Teams, conference calls, etc.) to reduce in-person interactions. It should also include practicing a bit of extra courtesy and patience to allow space for others when passing through narrow areas such as doorways or hallways.
- **Regular cleaning** - of work spaces and conference rooms after use.
- **Report positive test results** – to your supervisor or Human Resources as soon as possible to allow your co-workers who may have been exposed to respond accordingly.

Prioritizing CARES Act Funding

The City of Spokane is seeking citizen feedback in an [online survey](#) about how it should allocate CARES Act Funding. The City received \$6.6 million and some may be used for operational expenses already incurred. The City is seeking additional federal funding from other sources, and if successful, it will impact the community allocation.

A survey is made up of nine questions asking respondents to rank established areas of need for housing assistance, childcare, COVID-19 response programs, homelessness, and other costs associated with the response that won't be covered by other relief sources. The [survey is here](#).

“As we continue to respond and recover from COVID-19 it is important we are listening to the needs and priorities of our community,” says Mayor Nadine Woodward.

“Hearing from our citizens is a priority and we want to make sure we can meet the tight deadline for getting the funds dispersed and into the community as quickly as possible,” says Council President Breen Beggs.

Rules for Reopening Phases Modified

Gov. Jay Inslee and Sec. of Health John Wiesman announced a new limit on social gatherings and a ban on live entertainment across the state; the [new limits were effective](#) yesterday, Monday, July 20.

“The steps are necessary to slow down the spread of COVID-19. The unfortunate truth is that we can't let our guard down, even as we engage in more activities,” Inslee said during a press conference Thursday. “As we inch closer to the fall, we are already on an unsustainable path in the spread of this virus. We have to change to save lives and to avoid turning the dial back further on the activities we enjoy.”



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](https://covid19.spokanecity.org/) 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.