

From: [Mayor](#)
To: [Mayor](#)
Subject: COVID-19 Update: Payroll tax "holiday"
Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2020 4:33:46 PM
Attachments: [image004.png](#)



Valerie Howard

The City of Spokane **COVID-19 News Update for Sept. 8**

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.

A Message from City Administrator Wes Crago

You may have heard about a payroll tax “holiday” that is being offered this fall. The City of Spokane will not participate in the payroll tax holiday for a couple of reasons:

- It isn’t a “holiday” at all - it is a deferral. Employees are required to *repay* the deferred tax during the first quarter of 2021; no break of any kind, just a delay in paying the taxes. We believe that will ultimately be a financial burden for all of us.
- The City’s payroll system is unable to support a payroll tax deferral as proposed.

We have found that other local government jurisdictions are making the same decision.

On Aug. 28, the IRS issued [Notice 2020-65](#), allowing employers to suspend withholding and paying to the IRS eligible employees’ Social Security payroll taxes, as part of COVID-19 relief.

The payroll tax “holiday,” or suspension period, runs from Sept. 1 through Dec. 31, 2020, and applies to employees whose wages are less than \$4,000 for a biweekly pay period, including salaried workers earning less than \$104,000 per year.

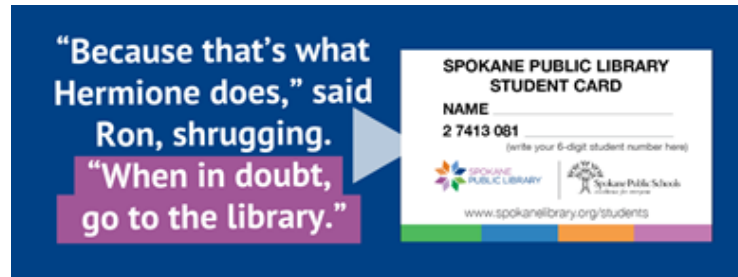
Any employer that suspends collection of employees’ payroll tax would collect additional amounts from workers’ paychecks from Jan. 1 through April 30 next year to repay the tax obligation. After April 30, 2021, penalties, interest and "additions to tax" will begin to accrue for tax amounts that have not been repaid.

Let the Library Help Your Students this Fall

All Spokane Public Schools students automatically have a Spokane Public Library card that they can use to gain access to additional resources as school begins!

Have your student find his or her student library card number and PIN at spokanelibrary.org/students. Click “Log In” and type in your Spokane Public Schools student credentials. [You can watch this tutorial for more help.](#) Use the card to access eBooks, checkout items from Curbside pickup, and more. Get started at

spokanelibrary.org/students.



Spokane Falls Boulevard will be closed this weekend!

Spokane Falls Boulevard will be closed from Howard to Monroe streets from Friday, Sept. 11, at 7 p.m. until Monday, Sept. 14, at 5 a.m. to accommodate work at the last of the City's projects to reduce overflows from combined sewers to the Spokane River. See the [CityCable 5 video](#) on the tank on Spokane Falls being connected to the sewer system.

Additionally:

- Post Street north of Spokane Falls Boulevard won't be accessible during this time.
- The River Park Square parking garage will be accessible from the entrance at Lincoln Street and Main Avenue. Customers leaving the garage will exit eastbound onto Spokane Falls Boulevard and turn south on Wall Street.
- The ongoing closure of Lincoln between Spokane Falls Boulevard and Main Avenue will remain in place.

The closure will accommodate the construction of raised crosswalk at Spokane Falls Boulevard and Lincoln that's designed to increase pedestrian safety and to add permanent striping on this section of Spokane Falls Boulevard. The work is weather dependent.

Tip Line Regarding Human Trafficking

The Federal Bureau of Investigation in conjunction with the Spokane Region's "Safe Streets Task Force" is putting out a new email account to receive tips and information regarding human trafficking in our area.

INLANDNWHOT@fbi.gov is now up and running for use by the public to share tips they may have regarding incidents related to human trafficking in our area.

The Safe Streets Task Force (SSTF) is a combination of local, state and federal law enforcement that specializes in the investigation of unique crimes and criminals that impact our community. SSTF focuses on criminal gangs, human trafficking, narcotics distribution and other types of organized criminal activity.

More Information to Assist Our Employees

Here are some more resources from our Employee Assistance Program:

- [Reduce job stress by breaking bad habits](#)
Eliminate self-defeating behaviors. Many of us make the job stress worse with negative thoughts and behavior. If you can turn around these self-defeating habits, you will find employer-imposed stress more comfortable to handle.
- **Resist perfectionism.** No project, situation, or decision is ever perfect, so trying to attain perfection on everything will add unnecessary stress to your day. When you set unrealistic

goals for yourself or try to do too much, you are setting yourself up to fall short. Aim to do your best; no one can ask for more than that.

- **Clean up your act.** If you are always running late, set your clocks and watches fast and give yourself extra time. If your desk is a mess, file and throw away the clutter; just knowing where everything is saves time and cuts stress. Make to-do lists and cross off items as you accomplish them. Plan your day and stick to the schedule—you will feel less overwhelmed.
- **Flip your negative thinking.** If you see the downside of every situation and interaction, you will find yourself drained of energy and motivation. Try to think positively about your work, avoid negative-thinking coworkers, and pat yourself on the back about small accomplishments, even if no one else does.
- **Do not try to control the uncontrollable.** Many things at work are beyond our control, particularly the behavior of other people. Rather than stressing out over them, focus on the things you can control, such as the way you choose to react to problems.
- **Your Employee Assistance Program Services:**
 - No-cost, professional, confidential counseling
 - Support and guidance on legal, financial, family and work issues
 - Consultation and coaching to managers on how to deal with difficult situations
 - Workshops on a wide variety of relevant topics
 - Online tools and information to address your well-being and concerns

No one will know that you have called the Employee Assistance Program. The service is confidential and you will not be identified. All discussions between you and your counselor are confidential. Information regarding your contact with the EAP will only be released with your written consent, except in a situation where there is a significant risk of harm to yourself or others; or in situations of abuse (child or elder abuse).

To access more topics related to COVID-19 visit: [EAPHelpLink.com](https://www.eaphelp.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](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.