

From: [Mayor](#)
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Cc: [All City Users](#); [All Police](#); [All SFD](#); [City Probation](#); [City Prosecutors](#); [City Public Defender Office](#); [Municipal Court](#); [Chanse, Andrew](#); [Amanda Donovan](#); [Rae-Lynn Barden](#)
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Nadine Woodward

The City of Spokane COVID-19 News Update for Oct. 13

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 Mayor Woodward

This year has taught us some valuable lessons about collaboration, which has come in many forms. It has guided our regional response to the health pandemic, kept us delivering critical services while our workforce has become increasingly distributed, and kept us connected as a community even as we must remain physically distant.

While we continue to work regionally on limiting new cases so that we can safely and slowly reopen, we are refocusing our efforts as a City organization by embarking on [a Next 100 Days Plan](#) that [emphasizes strategic organizational work](#).

COVID-19 has fundamentally shifted our path as a community and demonstrated the need for a new plan that considers the challenges of 2020 and forges a path of recovery. The plan prioritizes work in critical operational areas, including revising the joint strategic plan with the City Council.

We will pilot leadership structure refinements as well. Scott Simmons, Garrett Jones, Tonya Wallace, and Amber Richards--directors in public works, parks, finance, and human resources--will become strategic leads for Public Infrastructure; Resident Experience; Management, Technology, and Budget; and Internal Services, respectively. They will coordinate large organizational initiatives and facilitate conversations to generate holistic approaches. We will also continue to emphasize the communication and relationship between the City Council and the Mayor's Office.

Relationships have become even more important these days. Staying connected to one another has kept our community together during an illness that has tried its best to divide us.

Over the past few weeks, City employees paused briefly to send thank you notes to well-deserving heroes -- foster parents, therapists, victim advocates, social workers, peer support specialists, and therapeutic aids who represent a measure of critical stability during this unpredictable time. The nearly 300 notes took just a few minutes to write and yet are important recognition when we need it most. Our community is stronger because of the support and collaboration.

We will continue to discuss the pilot leadership refinements over the next few months, including a discussion at the Department Heads meeting on November 4. You will see from the plan that the pilot phase will be followed by a refinement period. Please any feedback you have with your supervisor or feel free to drop me an email at mayor@spokanecity.org.

Thank you for everything you are doing for the community and organization during these extreme times.

Stay Current on the Budget and What's Happening at the City

Last night, Mayor Nadine Woodward delivered the annual "Statement of Conditions & Affairs" to the City Council. The Mayor credited strict adherence to budget principles that allowed the City to begin the year

on solid financial footing for the current relative stability. [See the full presentation on the City's web site.](#)

The Mayor also delivered her preliminary budget to the Council in the last week. [Here's an overview of what's included.](#) The Mayor's proposed budget officially goes to the City Council on Nov. 2.

Changes coming related to COVID guidance

Gov. Jay Inslee today announced new guidance, easing some restrictions across the state. New guidance relates to movie theaters, restaurants, and outdoor recreation, among other things. Spokane County remains in phase 2 of the state's reopening plan.

For counties in the second phase of the plan, movie theaters will be able to operate at 25% capacity, and in the third phase, at 50% capacity. Facial coverings and 6 feet of distance between households will be required. Restaurants in second- or third-phase counties can serve alcohol now up to 11 p.m. Those establishments will be able to boost their table size to six in the second phase, and to eight in the third phase. Real estate open houses are allowable with size limits.

Meanwhile, more guidance is expected for outdoor group sports with more than a dozen participants. And some water recreation facilities will be able to open on a limited basis. More details are expected.

Flu Shots Available Through Oct. 15

Annual flu shot clinics for City employees run through Oct. 15. The shots are available at no cost to any employee eligible with health benefits. If employees are currently in a telework or remote work status, they can visit any City facility for a flu shot clinic. Employees may participate in City flu shot clinics during regular work, including those on telework or remote working. Access flu shots through non-City flu clinics is subject to the normal rules and conditions for sick leave. [Here is the full list of flu clinics available.](#)

The Washington state Department of Health says that people should consider [a flu vaccine "essential"](#) this year. With the ongoing COVID pandemic, getting a flu shot will help reduce strain on Washington's health care system, the DOH says.

Virtual Compost Fair

There will not be a Fall Compost Fair at the Finch Arboretum this October but you can still learn about composting fall leaves. The Spokane County Master Composters/Recyclers are bringing their Fall Compost Fair to the public in a virtual event. For one week, county residents can get great home composting tips in the online event and earn **a free compost bin!**

Planning for a Safe Halloween

Halloween is a great tradition, but it will require some additional thought and creativity to celebrate safely during the pandemic. The Spokane Regional Health District, the CDC, and other health professionals have put out ideas and tips. Our City team has compiled the information and put out some [great information in a blog post on the City's web site.](#)

More Information to Assist Our Employees

Here are some more resources from our Employee Assistance Program:

- [Five ways to stop an anxiety spiral](#)
Anxious moments happen to everyone. But they don't have to take over. Having strategies to calm yourself down and re-center can make all the difference, whether dealing with an anxiety disorder or an extra-stressful time in life.
Need some help finding ways to bring your anxiety level down? Dayna Y. Jondal, M.A., NBC-HWC, a resiliency specialist at Mayo Clinic Healthy Living Program, has strategies that can work. Experiment with some of these strategies and find out which ones work best for you.
- [Help With Your Dog's Separation Anxiety](#)
Dogs with separation anxiety exhibit behavior problems when they're left alone. The most common behaviors include:

- Digging, chewing, and scratching at doors or windows in an attempt to escape and reunite with their owners.
- Howling, barking, and crying in an attempt to get their owner to return.
- Urination and defecation (even with housetrained dogs) as a result of distress.

Is it separation anxiety? If most, or all, of the following statements, are true about your dog, he may have a separation anxiety problem:

- The behavior occurs exclusively or primarily when he's left alone.
- He follows you from room to room whenever you're home.
- He displays effusive, frantic greeting behaviors.
- The behavior always occurs when he's left alone, whether for a short or long time.
- He reacts with excitement, depression, or anxiety to your preparations to leave the house.

To access more topics related to COVID-19 visit: [EAPHelpLink.com](https://www.eaphelp.com), using company code: **CITSP0**

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.