



Valerie Woodward

The City of Spokane

Weekly News Update for April 27

Information about Coronavirus Disease 19 (COVID-19) is evolving rapidly, and our important work as a City is continuing. We want to make sure our City employees have up-to-date information on both COVID and employee news. 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

One of the significant struggles of the global health pandemic has been the feeling of helplessness it has left ingrained on many in our community. As a general sentiment, people want to do more to help their loved ones and community – and they want to do it faster.

For more than a year, we have done the little things that have added up to big things. Now, as we are starting to experience our numbers slipping, we have the chance to do a big thing – for your protection and for those in your circles – that will deliver an outcome we have desired for months.

Signing up for a vaccine is extremely important, especially for those 18 to 39, which is currently seeing the largest growth in cases. The investment of a few minutes will pay great dividends for our students, businesses, recreation and entertainment options, and overall community well-being.

Getting a vaccine is quick and easy and there are many ways to receive one, including public vaccination clinics, pharmacies, and personal healthcare providers. Appointments are available online and there are also walk-up options.

Vaccination rates will be important to our ability to move forward. Currently, discussion is happening about how to incorporate vaccine rate as a measure of a community's progress and eligibility for advancement. Even beyond that, achieving critical mass in vaccination rate prevents the spread of illness and keeps our healthcare system from being overwhelmed. That is the end goal.

Vaccines are now widely available to everyone 16 and older. Expanding availability to younger ages is also being studied. Visit [DOH.wa.gov](https://www.doh.wa.gov) or contact your healthcare provider for information about the vaccines and where to receive one.

This is one more step we can take as a community in our push to get past the pandemic. Spokane has a chance to continue to lead and we are up for the challenge.

Vaccines: Paid time for appointments

Numerous community resources are available to receive a vaccine, and the City would like to ensure that employees have flexibility in obtaining the vaccine.

Similar to the flu vaccine, employees will be allowed to get the COVID-19 vaccine during their shift or normal working hours, without use of their leave accruals.

- Use of paid time must be pre-authorized by the employee's supervisor and arranged for a mutually agreeable time that creates the least impact to the workplace.
- Proof of appointment is required. Proof of appointment can be obtained through the online scheduling system. Employees can either print, email or show proof of appointment to their supervisor on their smart phone.
- Employees are only authorized paid time to obtain the vaccine. If they show signs or symptoms following the vaccine administration, they must use their personal leave accruals for additional time off.
- Paid time is only authorized for employees who are able to get their vaccine during their normal shift. Employees will not be eligible for overtime if they obtain the vaccine on personal time.

Spring Market at the Pavilion

Join us at the Pavilion in Riverfront Park for the Spring Farmers Market! The market is Wednesdays, 3 – 7 p.m. through May 12th. Shop over 20 local vendors and enjoy delicious cuisine from local food trucks. For a list of participating vendors and food trucks visit our [website](#).

April Is Spokane Gives Month

Happy Spokane Gives month! There are so many nonprofits throughout Spokane looking for volunteers to help complete projects. Whether it's sprucing up the walking trail through your neighborhood, helping sort donations at a shelter, or grabbing a group to paint over graffiti – there's no limit to what an act of service can be. Check out the [City's volunteer webpage](#) or visit VolunteerSpokane.org for opportunities!

More Information to Assist Our Employees

Here are some more resources from our Employee Assistance Program:

- [Dealing with Caregiver Stress in a COVID-19 World](#)
Among the risks of caregiving before the pandemic were the tendencies for the caregiver to become isolated, overburdened, and overwhelmed. Those risks have only become more significant with new measures to protect older and infirm people from the virus. Fear of severe illness or death from COVID-19 is a new reality. Because that risk is higher for older people, caregivers tend to live with a baseline level of worry during the pandemic that they didn't have before.
- [COVID-19: Nursing Home Care and Assisted Living](#)
The decision to move a parent or older relative into assisted living or nursing home has always been a difficult and emotional one. One of the positives has been the comfort of knowing you can visit to maintain a loving social connection and supplement your relative's care. But with COVID-19, nursing homes and other group housing for older people have been in the news as centers of disease transmission, with tragic reports of high death rates. And because older people are particularly vulnerable to severe illness and death from COVID-19, many of these facilities have sharply curtailed visits from family members and friends.

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](#) 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.