



Julie Woodward

The City of Spokane

Weekly News Update for May 18

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

Homelessness continues to be a major challenge for our region. The situation requires an outcomes-based approach that balances the different voices, perspectives, and needs. This week, that effort takes its next big step forward.

We are working with the City Council to fund the continuation of a successful provider partnership that over the past few months has operated a 24-hour drop-in shelter at Cannon Street. The funding will keep that operation intact through the summer while a year-round provider can be hired during a public competitive proposal process.

Getting a year-round operator on board is crucial to the continued success of our plan to fundamentally shift how we transition people out of homelessness and fill identified gaps in the regional system. A year-round operator introduces greater stability of resources for system users and consistent staffing for the provider, builds greater flexibility to meet short-term emergent needs related to weather and other environmental impacts, and adds dependable day space that has been missing.

Most importantly, the Cannon shelter will become a critical homelessness services center intake point for a regional system that is improving how it transitions people out of homelessness. The center already gives people experiencing homelessness a place to rest, get a meal, take a shower, use the restroom, recharge electronic devices, and do laundry. As a services center, it will become a convenient place to meet with housing, employment, mental health, addiction, and other specialists.

Over the next several days, we will announce additional enhancements to a system that is evolving to better meet the needs of everyone who uses our downtown and other heavily trafficked areas. The expectation is to leverage those services to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring and develop greater capacity in the system by moving people into stable housing.

The goals are lofty and requires collaboration, determination, and creativity to get us where we need to be as a region for the benefit of everyone. More to come in the next few days.

Moving to Phase 3

Governor Jay Inslee announced that the state is moving toward a statewide June 30 reopening date and that all counties in Washington will move to Phase 3 of the [Healthy Washington: Roadmap to Recovery](#) reopening plan effective today, May 18 until Wednesday, June 30.

Additional Mask Guidance

The CDC issued revised guidance which loosened restrictions for mask usage for fully vaccinated individuals. This is an exciting milestone! We are currently evaluating these guidelines and how they apply to our staff and City operations and will share updated guidelines with you shortly. Until that time, please continue to follow the existing protocol. We greatly appreciate your effort to do so.

Walmart Pharmacy Walk-In Vaccination Appointments

Vaccines are being administered at Walmart Pharmacies via both walk-up and scheduled appointments, providing a convenient option for customers to get protected against COVID-19. Walmart Pharmacies are open seven days a week and are administering the approved J&J, Pfizer, and Moderna vaccines. Pharmacy locations and vaccination appointments can be found [online](#).

Vaccines: Paid time for appointments

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.

To find a vaccine near you visit vaccinelocator.doh.wa.gov.

COVID-19 in the Workplace

Sometimes, despite a person's best efforts to protect themselves from an exposure, an employee may fall ill to COVID-19. Employees have had many questions on how we manage COVID-19 in the workplace. Here are the updated [FAQs for our employees](#).

Riverfront North Bank Grand Opening

Join us Friday, May 21, for the [grand opening](#) of Riverfront Spokane's North Bank! The North Bank features an Ice Age Floods-themed Playground, Skate and Wheels Park, Hooptown USA Basketball Courts, and Roskelley Performance Climbing Boulder.

More Information to Assist Our Employees

Here are some more resources from our Employee Assistance Program:

- [Home Safety and Alzheimer's Disease](#)
Over time, people with Alzheimer's Disease become less able to manage around the house. As a caregiver, you can do many things to make the person's home a safer place. Think prevention: Help avoid accidents by controlling possible problems.
- [How You Can Help Your Grieving Parent](#)
In time, grief will diminish, although it may take a year or longer. One of the best gifts you can give your parent is patience and understanding, long past the time when the outside world has stopped sending cards or asking how they are doing.

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](#) 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.