



*Yulie Woodward*

The City of Spokane

## Weekly News Update for Aug. 24

*Information about 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**

Spokane, like all communities across the state, recently hit a bump in the road. Case counts have risen with the more widespread introduction of the Delta variant. Simultaneously the rate of new vaccinations has slowed considerably.

The result has been a significantly increasing burden on the healthcare system impacted by unvaccinated individuals. The corresponding ripple effect has been a rekindling of polarizing disagreements and nasty banter between differing sides of the debate.

Disagreement is okay, even healthy when done respectfully. Unfortunately, the level of disrespect is rising right along with the frustration over the prolonged duration of the pandemic and the limitations it has placed on all of us.

I recently had the opportunity to attend Unity in the Community, an event to promote connectivity through education and awareness. One of my takeaways was the reinforcement of my strong belief that people can always find common ground around which to come together in conversation and ultimately work together.

It got me thinking about how that lesson applies to the pandemic. My conclusion is a simple: The one thing we all want when it comes to the pandemic is to be on the other side of it. That's the one thing we can all agree on.

So, as we regroup, let's start there.

Spokane has a long, proud history of coming together during difficult times. That was true long before the pandemic hit and has definitely been the case as we have navigated the challenges and changes over the past 18 months.

As we take our next steps together, let's be intentional about listening to and respecting the different perspectives, take a moment to re-examine the information available to all of us, and learn from each other.

We are in new territory with a lot coming at each of us as we try to make decisions about our families, employment, and community. The divisiveness is not productive.

Unity in the community. We need it now more than ever.

## **Masking Guidance**

Masking is required for all City employees, customers, and visitors in all City facilities when not sitting alone at your desk. Along with masking, we are reminding everyone to:

- Respect the 6-foot social distance rule
- Avoid large gatherings in conference rooms or other communal work spaces
- Limit the number of in-person meetings when possible and practical
- Refrain from any shared food, such as pizza, cakes, donuts, muffins, and other items that are not individually packaged, at all times

## **More Information to Assist Our Employees**

*Here are some more resources from our Employee Assistance Program:*

- [Building Skills That Enhance Friendships](#)  
Everyone brings special qualities to friendships—qualities that make friendships richer and stronger. Make a list of the strengths you bring to your friendships or to the people in your life, give yourself credit for these positive attributes.
- [Connecting with Your Partner](#)  
This is a good time to reflect on your relationship and how to make it stronger. Strong couples share many of the same qualities.

## **Employee Information Portal ([covid19.spokanecity.org/](https://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.