

The City of Spokane

Weekly News Update for Sept. 7

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

Change can be difficult. Lately it may seem like the only constant, the one thing we can count on in this extended upside-down world.

After a while, the volatility begins to be a wear on your mental health. The stress, strain, and uncertainty pulls, tugs, and tears. The anxiety manifests itself in interpersonal interactions, relationships, and overall wellbeing.

How we adapt to the stress, how we cope will define our way forward. That means doing things we may not want to do, accepting things we were not ready to deal with, and stepping up to move ahead.

Life is full of setback. They can stagger us, even knock us down, but we must choose to get back up. Quitting. Failing. Those are not options.

The only way through the struggle is to ask for help and give it when it is asked of you. Looking out for your team, your group, your circle is as important as looking out for yourself.

One day, the people in your life will need you every bit as much as you need them. Be there for them. Really show up the way they have shown up for you. No excuses, no questions asked.

Be there to listen, to understand, to comfort. Show them you care. Show them they matter. Give them your full focus and follow through.

People are struggling silently right now, many of them people who are close to you. They are overwhelmed by the ups and downs, the constant adjustments, the unsteady ground. They need your help.

We can manage through the anxious moments together if we look up, look around, and look out for each other. Realize that when you are struggling, in the middle of a bad day, you are not alone.

We are all in this together and have to be able to count on each other. Our collective mental health depends on it.

Get Vaccinated For FREE

The COVID-19 vaccine is free for those with insurance and those who are uninsured. To find a vaccine near you visit vaccinelocator.doh.wa.gov.

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 and meet virtually if possible
- Refrain from any shared food, such as pizza, cakes, donuts, muffins, and other items that are not individually packaged, at all times

Employees can request a mask by contacting [Thea Prince](#).

Kaiser Permanente Network Change

Kaiser Permanente has notified their members they will no longer include MultiCare (Rockwood Clinic, Valley Hospital, Deaconess Hospital, etc.) as “in-network” providers effective January 1, 2022. If you are a Kaiser Permanente Member with medical coverage through the City of Spokane, you have no “out-of-network” benefit coverage **with the exception of emergency care**.

During Open Enrollment (Nov. 12, 2021 – Jan. 1 2022) you have the ability to move from Kaiser Permanente to Premera Blue Cross if you want to continue to access MultiCare Providers as “in-network”.

If you have additional questions about this change, please contact [Employee Benefits](#).

Washington Cares Fund

The Washington Cares Fund is a mandatory payroll tax effective January 1, 2022. You can opt-out of the program if you purchase a qualified private Long-Term Care Policy.

[Click here](#) to learn the following valuable information about the Program:

- Purpose
- Benefits
- Contributions
- Key Dates
- Live Webinar Dates

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.