

December 9, 2020

Broadcast to employees

Subject: Governor Inslee Extends Statewide COVID-19 Restrictions for the Next Four Weeks

Dear City employees,

Yesterday, Governor Jay Inslee announced that he would extend the [new statewide restrictions](#) on social gatherings and businesses in response to the surge of COVID-19 across Washington state. While we have one of the lowest rates of cases of any major city, we are not immune to the public health crisis surging in our nation, state, and region. People are hurting right now. Our workers and small businesses have been facing the largest economic crisis since the Great Depression.

In the last two weeks, King County has had [9,114 residents test positive for COVID-19](#) including 2,170 new cases in Seattle and nearly 100 new hospitalizations of Seattle residents. Governor Inslee has extended his statewide restrictions on social gatherings and businesses until January 4, 2021. More information is available on the [Governor's website](#).

One of the most important ways we can help slow the spread of COVID-19 is by making sure we quarantine as soon as we learn we're exposed to the virus. The Washington State Department of Health recently launched WA Exposure Notifications (WA Notify) to help with that. It uses smartphones to alert you if you may have been exposed to COVID-19. It is completely private, and doesn't know or track who you are or where you go.

If you haven't already, I encourage you to active WA Notify on your phone. It's an extremely convenient, safe, and private way to know if you've been exposed and need to quarantine, and it lets you get the care you need quickly and helps prevent you from spreading COVID-19 to the people around you. You can find more information at <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/COVID19/WANotify>.

I know that many of us were hopeful that staying home for Thanksgiving would enable us to spend time with our families and loved ones for the upcoming winter holidays – but unfortunately, we continue to see surging cases and hospitalization levels not seen since Spring. Our actions will shape our ability to return to a more normal life in the months to come. While we're nine months into this deadly virus that has impacted our lives dramatically, we must strictly follow all public health guidance including testing, masking, and avoiding gatherings.

While these changes undoubtedly will impact each of our lives, these restrictions will not impact the current environment here at work. We also know that many activities – both indoor and outdoor – can be done safely, and the City of Seattle has implemented many new safety and health protocols.

All frontline personnel who have been reporting to work in-person should continue to do so, while following public health requirements like wearing a mask, physical distancing, temperature screening, and practicing good hygiene. If you haven't already, please review our workplace [face covering](#) and [COVID-19 self-assessment protocols](#). On behalf of the entire City of Seattle, I extend my most profound gratitude to our frontline personnel and first responders. Your dedication is what keeps our City going.

As always, thank you for everything you're doing to serve our Seattle communities during this exceptional moment in history. I remain so proud and humbled to be a part of this incredible workforce.

Please stay safe and healthy.

Jenny