

Subject Line: Governor’s “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” Order Extended Until May 31

Dear City Employees,

Over the last nine weeks, Seattle has been a model for the rest of the country in how to flatten the curve, save lives, and protect our health care system from becoming overwhelmed. While we have slowed the spread, we have to remember that there are significantly more cases in our community now than in early March when we began restrictions. And we must remember that King County has experienced more cases and deaths than any other part of Washington state. It is still far too early to take our foot off the brake, or else we risk an exponential increase. To save lives, every one of us must continue physical distancing until our infection rates have dropped significantly.

Earlier today, Governor Inslee extended his statewide “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order through May 31. Governor Inslee has led our state with science and data, and extending the “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order and creating a phased approach to reopening is critical to saving lives and preventing a resurgence of the virus. As the Governor said, our new normal is not here yet, but public health measures like this are critical to ensuring we can gradually reopen our communities and economy.

I know that these necessary preventative measures have changed so many of our lives, including our city family. I expect that every single one of your jobs looks completely different than it did nine weeks ago. Some of you have been reassigned to help perform functions critical to advancing the health and safety of our communities most at risk, including staffing shelters and hygiene stations for our neighbors experiencing homelessness, collecting personal protective equipment for our first responders, and helping our small businesses access much-needed relief. The work that many of you are doing has put our City’s race and social justice principles at the forefront of our crisis response. We know that our most vulnerable individuals and businesses have felt the most disproportionate impact of this crisis.

The City will be extending our COVID-19 personnel policies to align with the Governor’s May 31 extension of the Stay Home, Stay Health order. All employees who can telework, should continue to do so. If you have been redeployed, are receiving COVID-19 pay, or have an updated telework agreement, those arrangements will continue for the time being. If you have any questions about the specifics of this extension, please contact your supervisor or your department’s [human resources business partner](#).

In the coming weeks as we evaluated additional public health data in Seattle and King County, I hope to share more details about how we can best protect our residents, businesses, and City employees as we safely reopen our city and our region through a phased approach. While the Governor has articulated principles for the state, we know that we have to ensure we can keep our community safe locally. Our City government will continue to perform the critical functions that our residents and businesses rely on while also planning to safely start many of our businesses that have been closed.

Thanks for everything you continue to do. I have been absolutely humbled and inspired by the incredible actions of our workforce. Each one of you has been providing hope and comfort for our residents during this unknown time.

Please stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Jenny