

Statement Regarding City of King COVID-19 Preparedness and Response March 15, 2020, 4:00 p.m.

This public update is provided to keep everyone informed of the City's efforts to address the COVID-19 public health crisis that we are currently under. The City of King's leadership at all levels is working extremely hard and around the clock to address public, employee, and overall health and wellness concerns. Moving forward, we will do our best to keep communication open with everyone; please understand that depending on how this issue continues to evolve, that communication may be in different formats and structured to best fit the needs of our citizens, staff, businesses, and all other stakeholders. At all times, we will do our very best to communicate updates and changes in a timely and responsible manner, and request everyone's continued assistance and patience.

Discussions about City readiness and response began in earnest among the City of King's leadership team in early February, and EVERYONE on our staff has done a great job of thinking through issues, communicating concerns, and maintaining composure and professionalism as we coordinate, communicate, and implement the City's response. It is VITAL that we all continue to work together to respond appropriately, and set the right example for each other and the citizens of King and those around us as we continue to deal with the effects that this health concern has on our community. THANK YOU to our City Staff for their continued hard work, feedback, expertise, and professionalism.

The world health community continues to monitor closely the emergence of the "coronavirus disease 2019" (COVID-19). At this time, no one knows how severe this outbreak will be. Given this uncertainty, and the fact that the seasonal influenza (flu) virus is also widespread, we are taking proactive steps to address a number of concerns. First and foremost, we want to maintain safe workplaces and City facilities, and encourage practices that protect the health of employees, customers, visitors or others. We also want to ensure the continuity of all local government operations to the greatest extent possible. Several major events have already been cancelled or postponed, and all planned meetings and activities are being evaluated on a case by case basis. We are finalizing plans for increased response as necessary to address new developments. We ask for everyone's cooperation in reducing the transmission of communicable diseases throughout our community. The following guidelines, if followed, will help tremendously:

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Wash your hands frequently (after sneezing, blowing your nose, before eating or preparing food, after unavoidable direct contact with another person in public spaces) with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover your mouth with tissues whenever you sneeze or blow your nose, and discard used tissues in the trash.
- Avoid people who are sick with respiratory symptoms, or facilities where more vulnerable (sick or elderly) individuals are gathered, i.e. hospitals, assisted living facilities, etc.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces regularly

-Avoid direct personal contact, such as shaking hands, as much as possible while in public spaces and in your encounters with others. A six-foot distance between you and another person is recommended.

Earlier today, the City of King implemented more strict cleaning procedures for City facilities, including more frequent cleanings, and ensuring that all cleaning supplies are effective for disinfection of this virus strain and other germs. Employees have been directed to clean frequently touched surfaces several times throughout each day.

It is CRITICAL that individuals stay out of public places and limit personal interactions while they are experiencing respiratory symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills or fatigue. Currently, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that individuals remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C) or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Please contact us IMMEDIATELY via email, phone, or Facebook Messenger if you observe or hear of conditions that may pose health risks to others or the general public, and we will respond in a timely and situationally appropriate manner.

Please monitor this page and other City of King social media venues, CodeRed alerts, press releases, and the City's website for updates, as well as resources from other credible public health resources or government agencies.

This concern continues to develop, and will likely result in more inconveniences, costs, and disappointments for everyone as schedules, plans, and information continue to change. To paraphrase a discussion heard earlier today, remember that "This is not about us. This is about the most vulnerable among us, and ALL OF US doing our part to ensure their—and our own—health, safety, and well-being".

Homer Dearmin
City Manager