



## Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) FAQ's For Shoreline Employees Updated as of March 12, 2020, 3:00 pm

Note for ease in seeing new information, we have **highlighted** the larger changes from the previous FAQ.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

- Public Health – Seattle & King County has developed a fact sheet that answers most basic questions about COVID-19 (what it is, how it is transmitted, symptoms, how to protect yourself, etc.): [Public Health – Seattle & King County Fact Sheet on Novel Coronavirus](#). The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough and shortness of breath.
- If you would like additional information about the virus, please visit Public Health – Seattle King County's website: [kingcounty.gov/covid](http://kingcounty.gov/covid).
- The City has established a [COVID-19 SharePoint Page](#) where these FAQs and other information will be located.
- ***This is a fluid situation and rapidly evolving, and these FAQs and other information about this situation will be updated as needed.***
- ***Any policies outlined in these FAQs will be in effect from the date these FAQs are issued through April 9, 2020. The City will reassess at that time if any policies or guidelines related to the COVID-19 incident will continue beyond that date.***
- ***If you have any additional questions, please send them to Human Resources Director Don Moritz so that we can include answers in future versions of this FAQ.***

### FAQs

#### 1. Who is in charge of the COVID-19 response?

- The [Washington State Department of Public Health](#) (WA DOH) is the lead agency for the State's response to COVID-19. Public Health – Seattle King County is working closely with WA DOH on coordinating and communicating about the response in King County, which includes Shoreline.

- Public Health – Seattle King County is making recommendations about slowing the spread of COVID-19 in Shoreline and King County. This City is following the direction and recommendations of Public Health – Seattle King County.

### 2. Are there populations that are at higher risk for COVID-19?

- Public Health – Seattle King County has identified higher risk people as:
  - Over the age of 60
  - With underlying health conditions including heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes
  - With weakened immune systems
  - Who are pregnant

### 3. How are people most exposed to COVID-19?

- You generally need to be in close contact with a sick person to get infected. Close contact includes:
  - Living in the same household as a sick person with COVID-19,
  - Caring for a sick person with COVID-19
  - Being within 6 feet of a sick person with COVID-19 for about 10 minutes, OR
  - Being in direct contact with secretions from a sick person with COVID-19 (e.g., being coughed on, kissing, sharing utensils, etc.).

### 4. Can I continue to go to work if I have NOT been in close contact with a person with COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19?

- If you have *not* been in close contact with a sick person with COVID-19, you are considered to be at low risk for infection. You *can* continue to go to work and school, but should monitor your health for 14 days and stay away from others if you get sick.
- More information on what to do in this situation can be found on the WA DOH flyers, which are linked on the City's [COVID-19 SharePoint Page](#).

### 5. What should I do if I have been in close contact to someone with symptoms of COVID-19, but they have not been tested or are awaiting test results?

- **You should immediately contact Human Resources in this situation.** Human Resources will work with you to assess the appropriate actions and response based on CDC and WA DOH guidance. The City has not received specific guidance on this scenario from WA DOH or Public Health – Seattle King County. Human Resources will work with staff in this instance to determine what course of action should be taken. You should monitor your health for fever, cough and shortness of breath during the 14 days after the last day you were in close contact with the sick person with COVID-19. You should **not go to work** until after contact Human Resources, and they may determine that you should not come into work for 14 days (i.e., self-quarantine).

## 6. What should I do if I have been in close contact to someone with COVID-19?

- **You should immediately contact Human Resources in this situation.** Human Resources will work with you to assess the appropriate actions and response based on CDC and WA DOH guidance. Generally, the City will follow these guidelines:
  - **If you are in close contact to someone with COVID-19 but you are not sick**, as per guidance from the WA DOH, you should monitor your health for fever, cough and shortness of breath during the 14 days after the last day you were in close contact with the sick person with COVID-19. You should **not go to work** or school, and should avoid public places for 14 days (i.e., self-quarantine).
  - **If you are in close contact to someone with COVID-19 and you get sick with fever, cough or shortness of breath** (even if your symptoms are very mild), as per guidance from the WA DOH, you should stay at home and away from other people (i.e., self-isolation). **Do not go to work.** If you are in the high-risk category, you should contact your physician's office and tell them that you were exposed to someone with COVID-19. They may want to monitor your health more closely or test you for COVID-19.
- If you do not have a high-risk condition but want medical advice, you can call your healthcare provider and tell them that you were exposed to someone with COVID-19. Your healthcare provider can help you decide if you need to be evaluated in person. There are currently no medications to treat COVID-19. If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you may have been exposed to COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive or immediately after they arrive.
- More information on what to do in these situations can be found on the WA DOH flyers, which are linked on the City's [COVID-19 SharePoint Page](#).

## 7. What if I am showing symptoms of COVID-19 but have not been around anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19?

- **You should immediately contact Human Resources in this situation.**
- If you have a fever, cough or shortness of breath but *have not* been around anyone you know has COVID-19, the likelihood that you have COVID-19 is fairly low. However, if you have any of the conditions that may increase your risk for a serious viral infection—age 60 years or over, are pregnant, or have medical conditions—call your physician's office and ask if you need to be evaluated in person. They may want to monitor your health more closely or test you for influenza. If you do not have a high-risk condition and your symptoms are mild, you do not need to be evaluated in person and do not need to be tested for COVID-19. There are currently no medications to treat COVID-19.
- As per the WA DOH, to keep your illness from spreading, you should do the following:
  - Stay home except to get medical care. **Do not go to work**, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

- Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home (i.e., self-isolation). As much as possible, you should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available. You should restrict contact with pets and other animals while sick.
- Call ahead before visiting your doctor. If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.
- Wear a facemask, cover your coughs and sneezes, avoid sharing personal household items, clean your hands often, and clean all "high touch" surfaces every day.
- Monitor your symptoms and seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing). Before seeking care, call your healthcare provider and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility. These steps will help the healthcare provider's office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed. If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you have, or may have COVID-19.
- More information on what do in this situation can be found on the WA DOH flyers, which are linked on the City's [COVID-19 SharePoint Page](#).

**8. What should I do if I have confirmed or suspected case of (COVID-19)? Or an immediate family/household member?**

- **You should immediately contact Human Resources in this situation.**
- As per the WA DOH, if you have tested positive for COVID-19 or are suspected to have COVID-19 *but are not tested*, you should do the following:
  - Stay home except to get medical care. **Do not go to work**, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
  - Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home (i.e., self-isolation). As much as possible, you should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available. You should restrict contact with pets and other animals while sick.
  - Call ahead before visiting your doctor. If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.
  - Wear a facemask, cover your coughs and sneezes, avoid sharing personal household items, clean your hands often, and clean all "high touch" surfaces every day.
  - Monitor your symptoms and seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing). Before seeking care, call your healthcare provider and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility. These steps will help the healthcare

provider's office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed. If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you have, or may have COVID-19.

- We are interested in knowing about your immediate family/household members to help us plan for possible absences. Our continuity of operations plans relies on healthy staff in essential function positions. If people in your household become sick, this could impact these plans.
- More information on what to do in these situations can be found on the WA DOH flyers, which are linked on the City's [COVID-19 SharePoint Page](#).

9. What should I do if I am ill at all? Should I come to work?

- Employees who are ill *at all* (including colds, seasonal flu, etc.) should stay home and **not come to work**. **You must notify your supervisor and Human Resources if you are unable to report to work due to illness.** If an employee is ill, the employee should not return to the workplace until at least **48 hours** after the symptoms have cleared.

10. What should I do if I am at work and become ill?

- If you become ill while at work, you should notify your supervisor. **If you become ill with a fever, you will be directed to go home.** If sent home, you must not return to the workplace until at least **48 hours** after the symptoms have cleared. If you do not have sufficient leave to use for the illness, you should discuss the matter with Human Resources. Supervisors should inform Human Resources immediately if they ever have to send an ill employee home; this should be done prior to sending the employee home.
- **Disposable thermometers will be available from Human Resources at City Hall or a designated supervisor at each remote work location (Spartan, Pool, Ronald, Hamlin). Employees may take their own temperature, but not that of others. Supervisors will not be taking employee temperatures. If an employee has a fever, they will be directed to go home immediately and should consult with their health care provider.**

11. Should a returning employee who has been out with an illness have to get medical approval to return to work?

- In general, employees will not be required to obtain medical certification to return from leave if they are no longer ill and it has been at least **48 hours** since symptoms have cleared. Any employee who has tested positive for COVID-19 should coordinate their return to work with Human Resources before returning to work.

12. Will we be told if a coworker tests positive for COVID – 19 or are in quarantine?

- Employees will be notified if a coworker tests positive for COVID-19. HIPAA and ADA regulations prohibit an employer from sharing the name of the coworker who tested positive, but those that may have interacted with or come in direct contact with this

individual will be notified and encouraged to monitor themselves for symptoms and consult with their health care provider.

13. What are the City's general objectives regarding COVID-19?

- The City of Shoreline is actively monitoring the situation closely and following the guidance of WA DOH and Public Health – Seattle King County. The City has outlined six (6) objectives in response to COVID-19. They are:
  - **Objective 1:** Provide coordination and support to Public Health - Seattle King County as the Lead Agency for overall response.
  - **Objective 2:** Maintain constant Situational Awareness of COVID-19 impacts to the City.
  - **Objective 3:** Provide consistent and accurate public information, in multiple languages, through the Shoreline Public Information Office in coordination with Public Health - Seattle & King County.
  - **Objective 4:** Provide consistent and accurate information to all City staff through the Human Resources Department.
  - **Objective 5:** Develop plans and processes to maintain essential city services while identifying and addressing policy issues in a timely manner.
  - **Objective 6:** Work with partner agencies to ensure the safety and security of at-risk populations and communities, including persons experiencing homelessness.

The City Manager has also signed a Declaration of Health Emergency, which is effective immediately. This provides the City additional support to prepare for, prevent and respond to the event.

14. Has the City opened up its Emergency Operations Center?

- The City has not opened its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at this time, but as part of the evolving nature of this event, could do so in the future. The City's Emergency Management Coordinator is coordinating with other agencies and providing regular updates to City Leadership. The City can request resources from the State EOC and County EOC even though our EOC has not been physically activated at this time.

15. What precautions is the City taking to prevent the spread of COVID-19?

- The City is utilizing the Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs) outlined by the WA DOH and Public Health – Seattle King County as the best measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. These strategies include encouraging and reminding employees about:
  - Increased handwashing and the use of alcohol-based sanitizer,
  - Respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette,
  - Social distancing (disbursement of people and reducing the amount of face-to-face contact people have to help reduce the spread of infectious disease),

keeping a distance from others of more than 6 feet, and possibly working from home,

- Remaining at home during times of illness,
- Voluntary isolation of sick persons, and
- Voluntary quarantine of contacts of sick persons, among other strategies.

16. Is the City planning to clean or disinfect City Hall or other City facilities?

- The City's janitorial service will clean and disinfect City Hall and the Police Station routinely. Because Janitorial Services will be required only in staff areas of the Spartan Rec Center, Richmond Highlands Rec Center, and the Shoreline Pool, the City's janitorial service will clean and disinfect staff areas in these facilities until we return to full programming. The City's janitorial service uses approved products that can help minimize the spread of germs. Given that most of our facilities have multiple people throughout the facility each day, the City encourages staff to use disinfectant wipes or spray on surfaces in shared workspaces and common areas during the day. Disinfectant supplies will be made available throughout City facilities. If we were to have an incident in which a person infected with COVID-19 was in one of our facilities, we would seek guidance on the appropriate cleaning and sanitizing process to follow.

17. What about cleaning after meetings in conference rooms?

- We are asking staff to wipe down surfaces in City Hall conference rooms after they have been used. Disinfectant spray will be made available in conference rooms in City Hall for this purpose.

18. What is the current direction about social distancing? Is the City considering allowing telecommuting now to proactively reduce social contact?

- Yes. As per direction from Public Health - Seattle King County issued on March 4, 2020, the City is encouraging telecommuting for those positions that are able to telecommute to help minimize social contact and create social distance. The recommendation from Public Health - Seattle King County is that all employees that can work from home should if they are able to and approved. The recommendation is for this to occur for three (3) weeks. The City will be instituting a telecommuting protocol for employees beginning Monday, March 9 through March 27. Department Directors and Human Resources will be organizing and coordinating this effort with Supervisors and Managers.
- If an employee wants to telecommute and their position is one that lends itself to telecommuting, the employee and their supervisor will need to determine the parameters of how telecommuting will work for the employee and the City. The employee and their Supervisor would then enter into a Telecommuting Agreement. The Telecommuting Agreement and a Telecommuting Protocol and Guidelines Document

can be found on the City's COVID-19 SharePoint Page. Supervisors should 1) submit the signed Telecommuting Agreement to HR, and 2) send a IS Help Desk request only if the employee needs Remote Access while telecommuting.

19. What if I need technology support to telecommute?

- Generally, employees must have internet and a personal computer or their City-issued laptop in order to telecommute. IT has a few laptops that may be checked out for employees eligible to telecommute. Employees should contact IT to determine if a laptop is available for their use. Other resources, such as additional monitors, are not being prioritized at this time so that IT staff may support other aspects of the COVID-19 response and essential City functions. Laptops may be recalled if the City opens the EOC.

20. What if I can't telecommute? Do I have to report to work?

- Yes. Staff that is not able to telecommute due to the function of their position will need to report to work. We ask that staff reporting to work practice social distancing while at work to the greatest extent feasible. Signs have been placed at various locations throughout City facilities to remind staff and the public about engaging in social distancing to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

21. What if a staff member feels that it is unfair that some staff can telecommute, and others cannot?

- The purpose of the increased telecommuting is to support social distancing as a precautionary measure to inhibit the spread of COVID-19. This is a key recommendation by Public Health – Seattle King County for all employers throughout the County. Staff positions that were identified as eligible for telecommuting were identified based on the function of the position. The goal is to increase overall social distancing of members of our organization to make the entire community safer. While we may have temporarily closed some of our facilities to the public, City Hall remains open and we continue to provide services to the public. Certain functions cannot be performed by telecommuting and require the presence of a staff member. As the situation continues to evolve, we will reassess what services we are able to provide and what level of staffing is required to meet that service need.

22. Can I use leave because I am concerned about being exposed to COVID-19 at work?

- Employees may be able to use accrued leave (vacation leave, sick leave, management leave, personal days or earned comp time) if they feel uncomfortable coming to work due to concern about potential exposure to COVID-19 and are not able to telecommute. **Use of accrued leave for this purpose must be approved by Human Resources.** If this situation develops, please contact Human Resources. If you do not have any leave to use, the employee should discuss the matter with Human Resources. **Additional**

guidance on the use of accrued leave can be found in the *COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Pay and Leave for City Employees Administrative Policy*.

23. Can an employee who is in quarantine use paid leave accruals?

- Yes, an employee who is quarantined may use accrued leave, including sick leave, for the required duration of quarantine. If during quarantine, the employees' combined leave accruals drop below 80 hours, they may be eligible for supplemental leave or donated leave. **Please notify Human Resources if you self-elect or are instructed to go into quarantine.** Additional guidance on the use of accrued leave can be found in the *COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Pay and Leave for City Employees Administrative Policy*.

24. What happens in the case where an employee's child's school or care-giver location is closed? What about elder care facilities?

- An employee may use accrued leave, including sick leave, to care for their child when their child's school, day-care, or regular person or place of care is closed or unavailable due to COVID-19. The above provisions also apply to similar elder care situations. If the employee combined leave accruals drop below 80 hours, they may be eligible for supplemental leave or donated leave. Please notify Human Resources in this instance. Additional guidance on the use of accrued leave can be found in the *COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Pay and Leave for City Employees Administrative Policy*.

25. If I have to take time off work to provide supervision for my children, must this be supervision be done only at our home, or can I take the kids somewhere else, such as a cabin, and will it still qualify for using sick leave?

- The City's policy does not dictate where daily supervision of children must be done. The intent is to allow employees access all types of paid accrual benefits when they must stay home because their children's school, daycare or regular care provider is not available, and where telecommuting is not option. The key distinction is that the employee is the person responsible for providing the supervision of the children. The City is not prescribing where the supervision be done. To qualify for using leave for this purpose, it must be a City employee that is designated as the primary person responsible for providing oversight and supervision of the children. If the children are being supervised by another family member or care provider (regardless of whether it's in the employee's home or elsewhere), use of leave accruals for this purpose would not be appropriate. If you were planning or do plan to utilize the school closure as an opportunity to take a family vacation, use of your vacation accruals would be the appropriate leave bank to charge the time to.

26. What if I don't have enough time and service at the City of Shoreline to qualify for supplemental paid family leave?

- The City Manager is waiving the time and service requirement to qualify for this leave due to this incident. In order to generally qualify for Supplement Paid Family Leave, an employee must have worked for the City continuously for at least 12 months and for at least 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months. This requirement will not apply for the COVID-19 incident. Additional guidance on the use of Supplemental Paid Family Leave can be found in the *COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Pay and Leave for City Employees Administrative Policy*.

27. What if I am already using supplemental paid family leave and will not have enough to cover COVID-19 related absences?

- The City Manager is creating a Donated Leave Pool for COVID-19-related absences. Employees will be able to donate to the Donated Leave Pool to assist employees who may not have enough other leave to cover COVID-19-related absences. Employees who do not have enough leave may apply for this donated leave by contacting HR. Additional guidance on the use of accrued leave can be found in the *COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Pay and Leave for City Employees Administrative Policy*.

28. Are children allowed in the workplace due to their school, day-care, or regular person or place of care is closed or unavailable due to COVID-19?

- While our workplace is not intended to be a substitute for day-care, we recognize there may be extenuating circumstances and situations where it is permissible to bring children to the workplace in light of COVID-19. Once in a while, a supervisor might permit an employee to bring a child to work, but never as a regular solution to day care. Further, a child's presence at work is conditioned on:
  1. The employee being able to be as productive as when the children are not at work;
  2. The employee supervising their children while still working (i.e., the employee should not need to ask a coworker to watch the children); and
  3. The children do not cause a disruption for other employees or customers.

With the extended nature of COVID-19 closures at this time, employees should make other arrangements for child care. Alternatively, an employee may also request vacation time, seek approval to flex their schedule, or telecommute. These additional options must be approved by the supervisor in advance and may require consultation with HR prior to approving.

29. What if the City Manager closes all City facilities?

- The City Manager may determine that it is necessary to close all City facilities and direct that only certain employees report to City work sites to complete essential City functions. During such closure, staff who are able to reasonably telecommute will be allowed to do so, and managers and supervisors will coordinate this directly with the subject employees. To the extent they are not able to fully or partially telecommute, staff will be provided City Closure Pay in accordance with the provisions in this policy. Additional guidance on Closure Pay can be found in the *COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Pay and Leave for Regular City Employees Administrative Policy*.

30. Is the City closing facilities to support Social Distancing?

- Yes, the City has closed the **Spartan Recreation Center, Shoreline Pool and Highlands Recreation Center** as of March 6, 2020 until further notice. Regular staff at those facilities are reporting to work, but the facilities will be closed to the public to support social distancing. These closures have been messaged to the public and class participants and facility renters have been notified.

31. Is the City canceling larger public/external meetings or events?

- Yes, the City has cancelled almost all larger public meetings and events that may bring groups of people together through the month of March. 'Large' meetings are currently being defined by Public Health as 10 or more people. The City has also canceled external groups' use of Shoreline City Hall and other City facilities. The City will continue to make determinations in the coming days and weeks about cancelling public meetings into April. As of the issuance of this FAQ, City Council meetings are still scheduled to occur, although conference call in options are being explored for these meetings.

32. What about internal City meetings or staff meetings?

- For internal City meetings or staff meetings, the City suggests that staff follow the guidance of having 10 or fewer people in meetings if possible. Using alternative technology solutions, such as conference calls or video conferencing to conduct meetings, are also options that staff should consider. The City urges staff to use their best judgment about holding internal meetings and attending external meetings.

33. Is the City going to limit public access to City Hall?

- The City is not limiting public access to City Hall at this time. However, the City is closely monitoring this situation and could enact different operational protocols for City Hall or other City facilities in the future. Signs have been placed at various locations throughout City facilities to remind staff and the public about engaging in social distancing to help stop the spread of COVID-19. **The City is also urging City Hall customers to interact with services at City Hall remotely, if possible. This includes**

making appointments for service at the Permit Center, paying utility bills online or through the mail, and calling/emailing for other services.

34. What can I do if I am feeling anxious about the Coronavirus?

- Get accurate information from the WA DOH and/or the Public Health – Seattle King County websites. Also consider contacting our Employee Assistance Program; their contact information is 1-800-570-9315.