



March 25, 2020

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a major change in our lives. Schools and libraries were closed earlier this month, and now most businesses are closed, including sit-down restaurants, bars and other businesses that rely on walk-in customers (with more to close as of this evening; see details below). I know this is a frustrating situation for all of us, but it's important for all of us to focus on facts, not fear, and follow the precautions that we're all being advised to follow.

The ultimate goal is to minimize the number of people needing hospitalization. Even though our hospitals and health-care professionals are excellent, there is limited bed space in hospitals and other medical facilities to treat people who react badly to the coronavirus, just as it would be for any other serious communicable illness.

This is especially the case in our small communities. I recently received an email from the mayor of Stevenson, who expressed concern that many people (mostly coming from out of town) are not taking "social distancing" seriously. The mayor wrote to me: "Now, more than ever, our socio-economic ecosystem is quite fragile. As a small town which relies heavily on tourism, our businesses normally would delight in this level of tourist traffic, but these are not normal times. Continued visitation of the same caliber not only mocks social distancing measures already in place, but will further test our strained supply chains, overload our emergency responders and overwhelm our limited resources."

That is why it's important for all of us to do what we can to limit the spread of COVID-19 and prevent a spike in the number of confirmed cases.

We have made recommendations to the Governor's Office about the use of Yakima Regional Hospital. It is critical, especially in eastern Washington, that all possible hospital beds are made available to help fight COVID-19.

I hope you and your loved ones are doing well during this difficult time caused by the pandemic. The weeks ahead will be an especially challenging time for our communities. Let's support and look out for each other, but let's also do what we can to stop the spread of COVID-19 – starting with social distancing and washing our hands.



Stay Home. Stay Healthy.

Do:

- Stay home as much as possible.
- Go out for essential needs, such as grocery or medical care.
- Get outside, but avoid groups and stay six feet away from others
- Call, e-mail and connect online with friends and family.

Don't:

- Gather in groups for any purpose, at home or outside.
- Buy more than you need when shopping. Save some for your neighbors.

Source: Washington State Joint Information Center

Governor announces "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order

Late Monday, Governor Inslee signed a [statewide proclamation](#) for a "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order in our state. This is similar to what has been done in several other states. This order, which took effect immediately, requires every Washingtonian to stay at home unless they are pursuing an essential activity, like shopping for groceries, going to a doctor's appointment, or going to work at an essential business. It bans all gatherings of people for social, spiritual, and recreational purposes. This means both private and public gatherings, including weddings and funerals. The declaration also closes all businesses except those considered essential, [starting this evening](#). The governor noted many businesses can continue to operate using telework. All grocery stores, pharmacies, gas stations, food-supply chains, and other businesses necessary for continued operations will remain open. This is not a "shelter in place" order, and people are allowed to be outside, though all are encouraged to practice social distancing. To watch TVW's coverage of the governor's explanation of his proclamation, click [here](#).

Helpful links, phone numbers

There are many helpful websites that provide useful and up-to-date information on the COVID-19 virus and government resources to help those in need of assistance.

- coronavirus.wa.gov (official state site)
- cdc.gov (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- doh.wa.gov (Department of Health)
- lni.wa.gov (Department of Labor and Industries, employer guidance)

- k12.wa.us (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, school closures and updates)
- esd.wa.gov (Employment Security Department)
- disasterloan.sba.gov (federal resources)
- dor.wa.gov/taxrelief (business relief during COVID-19 pandemic)

The Department of Health recently created a COVID-19 daily bulletin. To sign up for the daily bulletin, go [here](#).

Here are helpful phone numbers to reach various state agencies if you need assistance related to the COVID-19 outbreak:

- Department of Health: 1-800-525-0127
- Department of Revenue: 360-705-6705 (tax extensions and waiver requests)
- Labor and Industries: 360-902-5800

President Trump's 'major disaster' declaration for Washington

Last weekend, President Trump approved a major disaster declaration for our state. Click [here](#) for details.

Google creates COVID-19 resource website

Google recently created a website that is continually updated in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other authorities. The main webpage has a box in the lower-right corner where you can choose a state and you are redirected to resources and information in that state. This allows people to easily find out what is happening in other states in case they have relatives there. You can visit Google's new website [here](#).

We're all in this together. We will get through this!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anita P. King". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.