

**Subject Line: Governor’s “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” Order Extended Until May 4**

Dear City Employees,

For the past month, our City and country have experienced one of the most consequential events in recent history: the global COVID-19 pandemic. I know that we’re living in an uncertain time, and that we’re all fearful and anxious for our loved ones, our neighbors, and the most vulnerable. I also know that our city family is compassionate and is also working tirelessly to help all those in need right now. This is a marathon, not a sprint, and I know that we will get through this by taking care of each other.

Earlier this evening, Governor Inslee took another critical step to protect the health and safety of our communities and prevent the further spread of COVID-19. The Governor extended the statewide “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order until May 4. The order was first announced on March 23, and bans all gatherings, closes all non-essential businesses unless employees can work from home, and requires all Washingtonians to stay home unless they are engaging in an essential activity.

These measures are hard on our community. They have real economic consequences for the most vulnerable and low-income workers. However, we are seeing the consequences of acting too late on social distancing measures in places like New York or Louisiana. In Seattle, [we have seen preliminary data](#) that our initial actions are flattening the curve, saving lives, and protecting our hospitals systems and health care workers. I stand behind the Governor and his extension of the “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order. Without a vaccine, social distancing is the best tool available to slow the virus.

I know that these necessary preventative measures have changed so many of our lives, especially here at the City. I expect that every single one of your jobs looks completely different than it did one month 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 for our neighbors experiencing homelessness, collecting personal protective equipment for our first responders, and helping our small businesses access much-needed relief.

Know that I am committed to ensuring our workforce’s needs are met during this unprecedented moment in history. We have updated our paid leave, facility closure, and telework policies to ensure we’re being responsive to the COVID-19 pandemic. And we’ve updated our Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to make sure that amidst this pandemic, we can continue to perform our critical functions that our residents and businesses rely on.

My office is evaluating ways to align our policies both internal and external with the Governor’s extension, and I will issue a new Mayoral Directive and Executive Order to that effect tomorrow. Thanks again for your patience and partnership as we navigate this unprecedented moment in history. We’ll have more guidance in the coming days. As always, I encourage you to check our [COVID-19 SharePoint](#) page for an updated list of resources.

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