

March 1, 2020

Doing our part to prepare for the effects of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) on our community

Dear colleagues,

As many of you know, two people have died due to a novel coronavirus (COVID-19) infection in King County and more cases were identified in our region this weekend. Our hearts go out to the victims' family and friends.

We are working closely with the County's Public Health Department to keep our employees and customers safe. Metro is doing our part to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

I have established a Metro Incident Management Team (IMT) to implement policies, plans, and operational protocols that we will be developing in the coming days and weeks to better coordinate our response to this rapidly changing situation. We are actively responding to the media and communicating with our customers. You can read information we've shared with the public about our current cleaning practices on our blog: kingcountymetro.blog.

I will provide more updates as we learn more and plan for potential changes to operations to minimize the effects of COVID-19 on our community. Some of you have already expressed concerns about what part we can play as employees of one of the County's largest service providers to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

Here are some key steps you can take to help:

- As always, stay home and avoid close contact with others while you are sick and make use of sick leave. Please ensure you discuss absences with your supervisor beforehand and follow sick leave policies.

In addition, here are some resources to consult:

- Public health's website (kingcounty.gov/depts/health/communicable-diseases/disease-control/novel-coronavirus.aspx) is the best source of information about how to be personally prepared.
- Here's a link to a fact sheet (kingcounty.gov/depts/health/communicable-diseases/disease-control/novel-coronavirus/FAQ.aspx) with details about the COVID-19 that you should read and are welcome to share.
- The CDC (cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html) has up-to-date information on prevention, treatment, FAQs, and more.
- Alert Seattle (alert.seattle.gov) is the official emergency notification system that sends text messages, emails and voices messages during emergencies.

The same steps you take to minimize spreading the flu and common cold will help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces with regular household cleaning products.
- Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- The CDC does not recommend that masks be worn by people who are well, but does recommend wearing masks if you are experiencing virus symptoms.

I know we are all concerned about each other and the people in our communities. In addition to fears about the spread of COVID-19, we have also heard reports from people in our communities who are experiencing bias. Remember discrimination based on ethnicity or ancestry will make the situation worse. Having Chinese ancestry – or any other ancestry – does not make a person more vulnerable to this illness. COVID-19 doesn't recognize race, nationality nor ethnicity.

Safety, public service, and providing the best possible customer service remain our highest priorities. Thank you for continuing to treat our customers and our fellow co-workers with respect, courtesy and calmness.

Moving forward together,

Rob Gannon
General Manager

You make us **Outstanding!**

