

Community Transit Employee Communication – March 2, 2020

This email is intended to address employee concerns regarding COVID-19, the coronavirus.

You have likely seen news reports that the total number of cases in Snohomish and King counties has grown. We understand that employees may be feeling anxiety; we take this very seriously.

It is likely the number of reported cases in our state will grow in coming days, but that is not reason to panic. According to the Snohomish Health District, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low, but not zero.

The most important thing that we can all do is to remain calm, prepared, and informed. We ask that all employees take the advice of health authorities to stay home and avoid public places if you or someone you live with are sick, especially if there are symptoms such as a fever, cough or other respiratory symptoms.

Remain Calm

Our priority is to ensure that employees feel safe and informed. Community Transit's leadership and Security & Emergency Management Program staff are closely monitoring the situation.

As part of our work over the last year to create an updated emergency operations plan, we have been preparing for situations of this nature. We are collaborating with our regional partners and are using this response plan to respond and keep employees informed. Security & Emergency Management Program staff and agency leadership are working directly with managers to keep everyone prepared going forward.

Our regular vehicle cleaning process includes picking up trash and cleaning up any spills daily, with a deeper cleaning including wiping down all high-touch areas weekly. Coach operators were provided disposable gloves and sanitizing wipes this morning to do an additional wipe down of their work areas. If you have concerns or observe a bus or vehicle that needs attention, please call it in to dispatch right away.

Be Prepared

Local health officials strongly emphasize the importance of standard prevention steps for respiratory illness. To help prevent spread of respiratory illnesses, which includes both influenza (flu) and coronavirus, follow these five steps every time for washing your hands:



1. **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
4. **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
5. **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

Other prevention and preparation steps include:

- If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
 - Coach operators can make use of the “care area” located in the MCOB Great Hall (see photo).
- Regularly clean shared surfaces, such as doorknobs, handles, and countertops.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the sleeve of your elbow. Throw away the tissue and wash your hands.
 - The CDC does not recommend the use of facemasks unless you are ill or caring for someone who is.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html#risk-assessment>
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Make an emergency plan of action with household members, relatives and friends. This should include who will pick up and care for children if school or day care is closed or if a child becomes sick.
- **Stay home from work and avoid close contact with others if you or someone you live with are sick.**
 - In preparation for the possibility that you or a family member might become sick, have emergency supplies like non-perishable food, water, personal hygiene, medications and medical supplies in an emergency kit with enough supplies to last your household at least 14 days.
- Make a list of emergency contacts as well as medical conditions of all household members.

- If you or a family member feel sick with a fever, cough or have difficulty breathing, call your health provider before going to a facility to seek care. Describe the symptoms you are experiencing and your recent travel information.

Stay Informed

The Security & Emergency Management Program and Agency Communications are in close communication with Snohomish Health District and regional emergency management partners and will continue to provide you with timely updates and best practices for prevention methods as this situation changes. We plan to send an update to employees weekly, more frequently if needed. Our statement to the public is available at <https://www.communitytransit.org/coronavirus>.

In the event the CDC changes its prevention recommendations, including the use of face masks, we will notify employees immediately and will provide all supplies needed to comply.

Information is changing frequently. Check the Health District's webpage on coronavirus (www.snohd.org/ncov2019) or follow on social media.

For more information about novel coronavirus or influenza (flu):

- Snohomish Health District (public health district for Snohomish County): <https://www.snohd.org/>
- Washington State Department of Health (Washington state government): <https://www.doh.wa.gov/>
 - Call Center: 1-800-525-0127, then press #
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S. government): <https://www.cdc.gov/>

If you have questions about sick leave or HR-related issues, contact your HR Generalist or [REDACTED] 2315.

Other non-HR questions should be directed to Jacob Peltier at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] at [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

Public Information Specialist

