

## WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

### New Info: COVID-19 Update, March 15, 2020

#### Social distancing vs. social 'disruption'

Good afternoon! The state [Department of Health](#) wants to keep you as informed as possible about continuing developments surrounding COVID-19 as well as guidance and resources you can share with employees, clients, or customers. If you want to manage your e-newsletter subscription preferences, you can [do so here](#).

**Coming together to stay apart.** If it has started to seem like social distancing might be a major inconvenience, well, yes, it is. Social distancing is a huge disruption. A disruption that is necessary to slow the spread of COVID-19, to make sure we have enough health care resources to take care of the people who need them most, and to protect our loved ones who are at high risk for severe disease.

Let's talk about what social distancing means for our daily lives.

- It generally means we stay out of places where people gather: Places like movie theaters, religious gatherings, public transportation, group fitness classes, coffee shops. (I understand there are YouTube videos reminding us how to make coffee at home.)
- We all need to stay at home as much as possible. And when it isn't possible, we need to work together to stay at least 6 feet away from each other.
- Many people cannot work from home. If it is at all reasonable for you to do your work at home, please do. Every day.
- The schools are closed to keep the kids away from each other so that they do not spread germs to one another and to the community. We need to keep them away from each other. Please do not arrange large playdates, sleepovers, or parties. Take your children to parks and enjoy the outdoors. Take lots of walks outside, but get used to saying, no, sorry, you can't come pet the dog.
- Use a grocery delivery service to reduce the number times you need to go to the grocery store. If you do need to physically go to the store, try to go at odd hours when they won't be busy, and be sure to wash your hands before and after your trip.

Stopping a pandemic in its tracks calls for cooperation, patience, handwashing and, yes, isolation. We can do it.

**Numbers.** The latest numbers are on our webpage, which we update daily. As of today's web refresh, 769 people in Washington have tested positive for COVID-19, and 42 have died of the disease.

**Practice compassion.** And all the while we are working to stay physically apart from one another, think about what you can do to maintain connections with your friends and neighbors. Drop off a great book on a neighbor's porch with a little note. Call a friend to check in. Help your kids draw a picture or a card to mail to a relative. Stay connected, from a distance of at least 6 feet.

Wash your hands,

Lauren

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