



## Public Health Order – March 10, 2020

Local health officers are empowered by RCW 70.05.070(3) to “Control and prevent the spread of any dangerous, contagious or infectious diseases that may occur within his or her jurisdiction.” Washington State has declared a public health emergency with respect to the rapid spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, causative agent of the condition known as COVID-19.

**Effective immediately, all Employees of City and County Government in Jefferson County are required to strictly adhere to the following guidelines:**

- 1) Workers with a febrile illness (oral temperature 100.4 degrees F or greater) and symptoms of respiratory infection (sore throat, cough, difficulty breathing) are to stay home for the duration of their illness.**
- 2) Workers who develop a febrile respiratory illness while working are to notify their supervisor and go home. Do not attempt to complete the work day.**
- 3) Workers who are recovering from a respiratory illness should not return to work until they have been afebrile (no fever and no use of a fever reducing medication like acetaminophen, aspirin, or ibuprofen) for at least 72 hours. 72 hours is a new guideline adopted during the coronavirus emergency and replaces the prior practice of return to work when afebrile for >24 hours. Works who have a febrile illness and have a negative test for coronavirus can return to work after they have been fever-free for >24 hours.**

**Comment:** Staying home when you are sick has always made sense and is now more important than ever. Most people with COVID-19 will have mild symptoms and will recover without evaluation or treatment. Home isolation during times of respiratory illness are crucial to stop the spread of this infection. Handwashing, covering your cough, and avoiding facial contact (i.e. eyes, nose, or mouth) with unwashed/unsanitized hands are also crucial to prevent spread of coronavirus.

Signed,

Thomas Locke, MD, MPH  
Jefferson County Health Officer