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COVID-19 Update, May 21, 2020

Good afternoon! The state Department of Health (<http://www.doh.wa.gov/>) 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.

Keep your hands clean

We are still learning a lot about COVID-19. What we know now is that this virus spreads easily—more easily than the flu—from person to person when we are within about 6 feet of each other. It travels in respiratory droplets produced when we cough, sneeze, talk, or sing. Some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus while talking or singing.

Although it may be possible to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes, COVID-19 does not spread easily that way. And you can prevent that kind of exposure by being sure to wash your hands before you touch your face.

If your skin is healthy and you don't touch your face, you can't get COVID-19 just by touching something with the virus on it. So for most situations—like driving, running errands, using an ATM, pumping gas, or pushing a shopping cart—wearing gloves is not a helpful way to protect yourself. It would be more helpful to use hand sanitizer frequently while running errands and be careful not to touch your face. Then, be sure to wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds when you get home!

There are some times when you should wear gloves:

- When you are cleaning and disinfecting your home. Look at the labels on your cleaning products. They may recommend that you wear gloves while using them. Be sure to open a window or turn on a fan to keep fresh air moving in the room you are cleaning.
- If you are caring for someone who is sick with COVID-19 at home, use disposable gloves when cleaning the area around the person who is sick and when touching anything that had body fluids on it. Do not try to disinfect or reuse the gloves. Throw them away and wash your hands.

Numbers. The latest numbers are updated on our webpage. As of 11:59 p.m. on May 19, there are 297,942 people in Washington who have been tested for COVID-19. Of those, 18,971 people (or 6.4%) have tested positive for COVID-19. Of those, 1,037 people (or 5.5%) have died of the disease.

Practice compassion. As counties move into Phase 2 of the governor's reopening plan, small gatherings of fewer than 5 people outside a household will be allowed. As you plan and look forward to these small gatherings, protect your friends and family by planning for at least 6 feet of space around each person.

Stay well,

Lauren

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Department of Health call center: 1-800-525-0127, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m, seven days a week

Please check our website for the most up-to-date info on Washington's response to COVID-19 at www.doh.wa.gov/coronavirus.
