



City of Yakima

# **News Release**

**Subject: City of Yakima Emergency Declaration**

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**Release Date: Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

## **Yakima City Council Ratifies Declaration of Emergency Due to COVID-19**

At a special meeting today, the Yakima City Council unanimously ratified a declaration of emergency due the presence of confirmed cases of COVID-19, commonly referred to as coronavirus, in Yakima County. The Yakima County Health District has reported that the virus has been confirmed to have infected three people in Yakima County.

Yesterday, Mayor Patricia Byers signed the declaration, which took effect immediately. Under state law, the full Council needed to ratify the declaration in order for it to remain in effect long term.

The Yakima County Commission also issued a declaration of emergency during a special meeting yesterday. The Yakima County Health District announced at the County Commission special meeting that it, too, had issued a declaration of emergency.

Along with a decision today by Governor Inslee that extends a ban on gatherings of 250 people or more to the entire state, the Health District has recommended that no gatherings of 100 or more people take place in Yakima County until further notice. Accordingly, the City has closed or restricted meeting sizes at City-owned facilities.

The Harman Senior Center, the Henry Beauchamp Community Center, and the Washington Fruit Community Center, all City-owned, are closed until further notice. Events at the Capitol Theatre and the Yakima Convention Center, both of which are also owned by the City, have been cancelled for the remainder of March.

All City board, commission, and committee meetings are cancelled until further notice.

Additionally, the Council's March 17<sup>th</sup> regular meeting will be the last to take place publicly during the month of March. The Council encourages community members that don't have specific business to discuss at the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting not attend the meeting.

Signs have been posted at City facilities letting community members know the steps the City is taking to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The signs also inform community members how they can take care of City business without having to do so in person.

Additional information will be provided regarding the City's declaration of emergency as necessary.