



The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation  
P.O. Box 150, Nespelem, WA 99155

(509) 634-2200  
FAX: (509) 634-4116



April 1, 2020

From the Desk of the Executive Director

To All Employees – URGENT

Subject: Personal Protection – Our fight against COVID-19

Many of you know the seriousness of this virus and how it has affected the daily lives of our Tribal Community, our State and our Country. Our only defense against the spread of this virus is to exercise these simple but necessary rules:

- Stay home if you are ill and consult your medical provider.
- Exercise “Social Distancing” keep at least 6 feet distance from each other.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, frequently.
- Use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% Alcohol.
- Do not touch your face with your hands.
- Do not congregate in groups of more than 10 people.
- Clean all surfaces you or others have touched with a cleanser.
- Travel only when necessary to get groceries, prescriptions and necessary supplies.

Remember, following these simple rules will protect You, Your Family and Your Co-Workers. We are in this battle together. We must do our part to keep our Tribal Community as safe as possible.

I know that many of you were planning a “spring break vacation”. This is not the time to risk you and your family health. You are at a greater risk if you travel. Yet it is a time to consider activities close to home such as walking, or a day trip to your favorite out door reservation site as long as you do not congregate into groups of more than 10 participants. Cleaning your yards, painting your home or fence, small repairs to your homes are all projects you can do and stay safe.

The Colville Business Council, the Administration, Directors and all of our Supervisors are united in fighting this battle against the COVID-19 virus and at the same time providing for Continuity of Governmental Services to the Membership

while maintaining and promoting a safe work environment to all of our employees. On March 30, 2020, the Colville Business Council extended the partial shutdown of all non-essential operations until April 30, 2020 (Tribal Resolution 2020-156). All non-essential operational employees are on stand by and may be called back to work as needed for any or all operations.

During the next 30 days the Administration, Directors, Program Managers and Supervisors will develop a plan for the remainder of the fiscal year. This plan could include a lay-off, furlough, suspension, or other similar change to stand-by status for some employees. We are preparing you for this possible outcome. Should the plan include a lay-off we want you to start planning for your financial security. It is critical that you evaluate your financial situation and make appropriate changes should you be placed in lay off status. You should also start researching how to apply for Unemployment benefits. You can contact the Human Resource Department for assistance at (509) 634-1310 or the State of Washington Employment Security Department at [www.ESD.WA.gov](http://www.ESD.WA.gov) for assistance in filing your claim should you be laid off. We will be establishing safe sites in each District for on-line filing of unemployment applications with the State of Washington. You should not file an unemployment claim unless and until you receive a formal notice from Human Resources but you can do research so that you are prepared.

It is our hope that each of you exercise in your daily routine, whether it be at home or at your work site the rules listed above. This is the only defense you and your family have against the spread of this virus. Remember, COVID-19 is spread from person to person, and from Community to Community. We must change our behavior to keep ourselves, our Families, our Co Workers and our Tribal Community Safe. Together we will survive this threat.

Stay Safe.

Francis W.Somday

Executive Director.

**EMERGENCY  
RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the Colville Business Council as the duly elected governing body of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation is charged with the profound responsibility of caring for the public health and safety of all members of the Colville Tribes and of all residents of the Colville Reservation; and

WHEREAS the novel coronavirus COVID-19, a virus which spreads easily from person to person and can result in hospitalization or death, has been classified by the World Health Organization as a global pandemic; and

WHEREAS there are currently at least 2,221 documented cases of COVID-19 within Washington State, which have tragically resulted in at least 110 deaths; and

WHEREAS cases of COVID-19 have been reported in counties occupied by, or neighboring, the Colville Reservation; and

WHEREAS medical models predict that the virus can spread so quickly that hospitals and other medical care facilities can become overwhelmed with critically ill patients, and the real impact of increasing hospitalizations has already been observed in Washington State and around the country and the world; and

WHEREAS it is necessary to substantially slow the spread of the virus to maximize public safety; and

WHEREAS this pandemic threatens the life and health of all residents of the Colville Reservation, as well as the economy of the Colville Reservation; and

WHEREAS enforcing strict social distancing between people has been an effective means of slowing the spread of the virus; and

WHEREAS the Tribes began expending resources to protect the public very early in the crisis, including a deep cleaning of Tribal facilities from March 5, 2020 to March 8, 2020 with a day of administrative leave for affected employees, and the Tribes began foregoing revenue to protect the public, including the closure of a major Tribal casino on March 15, 2020; and

WHEREAS the Tribes announced a partial shutdown of Tribal government on March 18, 2020, and released a formal COVID-19 Emergency Action Plan on March 19, 2020 to mandate a partial shutdown of Tribal operations which are not necessary to preserve public safety or for the immediate continuity of essential governmental services, to be effective until April 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS the Colville Tribes passed Resolution #2020-126 on March 19, 2020, which declared a Public Health Emergency due to the COVID-19 outbreak, and formed an Incident Response Team to coordinate resources with the Tribes' governmental partners and across the Colville Reservation, and in which the Tribes requested assistance from its state and federal partners to secure additional resources to supplement the resources of the Tribes which will be severely strained during this crisis; and

WHEREAS the Tribes passed Emergency Resolution #2020-149 on March 23, 2020, to prohibit camping within the exterior boundaries of the Colville Reservation; and

WHEREAS the Tribes passed Emergency Resolution #2020-150 on March 23, 2020, to prohibit public congregations for purposes of public entertainment, recreation, food or beverage service, and other similar activities, and;

WHEREAS the Tribes passed Emergency Resolution #2020-151 on March 23, 2020, to prohibit gatherings of ten or more people in public spaces; and

WHEREAS the Tribes announced on March 25, 2020 that the Colville Reservation is closed to non-essential traffic until further notice, with all of these governmental actions intended to enforce social distancing, slow the spread of the virus, limit the economic damage caused by spread of the virus, and to safeguard public health and safety; and

WHEREAS the Governor of the State of Washington has instituted "stay at home and stay safe" orders, including Proclamation #20-25 on March 23, 2020, to close businesses and keep citizens at home within Washington, while other states have not issued any such orders, and the Colville Tribes has acted to cooperate with and reinforce the State of Washington's approach to protecting the public health and safety for all residents within the State of Washington; and

WHEREAS the Colville Reservation sits in a rural, poor area of the State of Washington and lacks adequate medical resources in the best of times, as, for example, many residents live many miles from any clinic or hospital; and

WHEREAS all of the revenue generated by for-profit enterprises of the Colville Tribes is used exclusively for the purpose of providing essential government services to enrolled members of the Colville Tribes and to all residents of the Colville Reservation; and

WHEREAS American Indians and Alaska Natives are known to be historically impacted at a disproportionate level by outbreaks of communicable disease, such as during the 2009 H1N1 pandemic when the Center for Disease Control advised in a December 11, 2009 letter that American Indians and Alaska Natives should be considered a priority population;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Colville Business Council through its duly appointed Chairman, Rodney Cawston, does hereby proclaim that a State of Emergency as described in Resolution #2020-126 continues to exist on the Colville Reservation and will continue to exist until further notice. All prior proclamations and Resolutions and orders and directives of the Colville Business Council and its agencies are to remain in full force and effect until formally amended or terminated.

FURTHER, the prohibitions contained within Resolutions #149, 150, and 151, which are all designed to enforce social distancing, prohibit public congregations, and to require citizens to stay safe by staying at home, and the announced closure of the Colville Reservation to non-essential traffic, will remain in effect until midnight on April 30, 2020, unless later extended beyond that date.

FURTHER, the COVID-19 Emergency Action Plan announced on March 19, 2020, which included the partial shutdown of those functions of Tribal government not immediately required to protect public safety or to secure the continuous function of Tribal government, is extended until midnight on April 30, 2020 unless later extended beyond that date. An appendix is attached hereto which reflects the

current determinations of work status across the many agencies of Tribal governments. The work status of employees as reflected in these documents will continue until midnight on April 30, 2020 unless later extended beyond that date, and except as amended by future Resolution of the Colville Business Council or by supervisors of individual tribal agencies.

FURTHER, all essential activities for which residents of the Colville Reservation may leave their homes are defined to include obtaining supplies and services necessary to maintain safety, sanitation and essential maintenance of a home for family or household members and pets; activities essential for health and safety such as seeking medical or emergency care or obtaining medical supplies or medication; caring for a family member, friend, or pet; and engaging in limited outdoor activities such as walking or biking but only if appropriate social distancing practices are used.

FURTHER, Resolution #2020-149 is hereby amended to permit camping within the exterior boundaries of the Colville Reservation by enrolled tribal members, but the prohibition on camping shall otherwise continue until midnight on April 30, 2020 unless later extended beyond that date, and the prohibition on gatherings of ten or more people in public places applies to allowed camping by enrolled tribal members.

FURTHER, this prohibition shall not apply to people experiencing homelessness or whose homes become unsafe, such as victims of domestic violence, but such people are strongly encouraged to find safe shelter as soon as possible.

FURTHER, all non-essential businesses on the Colville Reservation shall cease operations except for performing basic minimum operations. All essential businesses are encouraged to remain open and maintain operations, but must comply with social distancing and sanitation measures as established by the United States Department of Labor or the Washington State Department of Health Guidelines. Essential businesses are defined in the Appendix to the Governor of Washington's Proclamation #20-25 issued on March 23, 2020, with the concurrence of the Colville Business Council but subject to amendments or re-classifications that may be made by the Colville Business Council in regard to the Colville Reservation. This prohibition shall remain in effect until midnight on April 30, 2020 unless later extended beyond that date.

Further, as announced on March 25, 2020 the Colville Reservation is now closed to visitors until further notice. Access remains allowed for tribal members, non-member residents of the Reservation, employees of the Tribes, delivery, postal, and food services, and other pre-approved outside agency personnel or essential services. The state highways on the Reservation, including Highways #155, 97, and 21, remain open to through traffic.

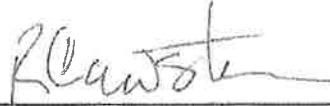
This Resolution shall not be construed to prohibit working from home, operating a single owner business with no public interaction, or restaurants or other food-service businesses providing a take-out service so long as proper social distancing and sanitation measures are implemented, nor does it prohibit construction services on facilities deemed essential by Tribal government.

FURTHER, the Colville Tribes does not waive, alter or otherwise diminish its sovereign immunity, whether express or implied, by virtue of the declaration of emergency or other actions taken to combat the spread of COVID-19.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the Colville Business Council, **by authority of Resolution 1991-431 (10 affirmative signatures on this recommendation sheet, an emergency)** this **30<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020**, acting for and in behalf of the Colville Confederated Tribes, Nespelem, Washington, do hereby approve the above recommendation of the Tribal Government Committee.

The foregoing was duly enacted by the Colville Business Council by a vote of **10 FOR 0 AGAINST 0 ABSTAINED**, under authority contained in Article V, Section 1(a) of the Constitution of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, ratified by the Colville Indians on February 26, 1938, and approved by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in April 19, 1938.

**ATTEST:**



---

**Rodney Cawston, Chairperson  
Colville Business Council**

cc: Marvin Kheel, Committee Chair  
Deanna James, Committee Secretary  
Francis Somday, Executive Director  
William Nicholson II, Chief Financial Officer  
Dept. or Program: Marty Raap, Office of Reservation Attorney

