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Monroe, Washington Economic Development Newsletter for May, 2020

# Monroe *Business*

## SPECIAL COVID-19 UPDATE

### Safe Start Washington

#### Re-opening Our Economy

While Stay Home, Stay Healthy is being extended to the end of May, the governor announced on May 4th his “Safe Start Washington” plan which amends some components of the original “Stay Home Stay Healthy” order and allow for a phased start to re-open the state. Read the full [Safe Start policy plan here](#).

#### Current Phase: Phase I

##### Businesses that could be open:

- retail (curbside pick-up orders only)
- automobile, recreational vehicle, boat, and off-road vehicle sales
- landscaping
- car washes
- pet walkers

Please see [guideline for re-opening on the following page](#).

**Recreation:** Allowed are hunting, fishing, golf, boating, and hiking.

**Gatherings:** No social gatherings. Drive-in spiritual services allowed with one household per vehicle.

**Travel:** Essential travel and non-essential travel for recreation, gatherings and businesses that are allowed during Phase 1. Essential travel is defined as going to the grocery store, picking up prescriptions at the pharmacy, and going to the doctor’s office. For a list of all phases go here =>

[Washington Safe Start Phases](#)

### Measuring Success

#### Metrics for Moving From Phase to Phase

The state’s “[Safe Start](#)” plan is a phased approach to re-opening Washington’s economy. Each phase will be at least three weeks. Data and metrics will determine when the state can move from one phase to another. The following “Dials” represent the metrics used to monitor progress. To view the actual metrics used and the current status go to => [Washington State Risk Assessment Dashboard](#)

#### DIAL #1 - [COVID-19 Disease Activity](#)

Low and falling disease burden

#### DIAL #2 - [Testing Capacity and Availability](#)

Availability for everyone with COVID-19 symptoms and those with high risk exposures to be tested immediately

#### DIAL#3 - [Case and Contact Investigations](#)

Ability to rapidly isolate those with COVID-19, and identify/quarantine their contacts

#### DIAL#4 - [Risk to Vulnerable Populations](#)

As measured by the number of outbreaks in long term care facilities per week as well as demographic and equity data

#### DIAL#5 - [Health Care System Readiness](#)

As measured by hospital beds, ICU capacity, ventilator numbers and state PPE Procurement

# GUIDANCE FOR PHASE 1 RE-OPENING

Governor Inslee released additional guidance for businesses and services under Phase 1 of his [Safe Start plan](#), including the ability for retail outlets to provide curbside service, pet walking and landscaping. This news follows guidance recently released for industries listed in Phase 1 of the plan and continues a dialed approach to re-opening the economy. Here is the specific guidance released today:

- [Curbside retail and e-commerce memo](#)
- [Curbside retail requirements](#)
- [Pet walking industry memo](#)
- [Pet walking industry requirements](#)
- [Landscape services and outdoor maintenance memo](#)
- [Landscape services and outdoor maintenance industry requirements](#)

You can find additional information in the press release below and [online here](#).

**RETAILERS**, please make sure to check out the state's [requirements](#) before starting businesses back up again. Under Inslee's plan, the state is reopening in four phases, with three weeks in between each phase. In-store purchases will be allowed to happen during Phase 2, with some restrictions. So please remind your customers before they arrive to remain in their vehicles. For guidance on preparations to re-open your retail operations, check out Washington Retailers Association's checklist here => [Retail COVID-19 Operational Safety Plan](#)

**AUTO SALES** May Now Reopen Under Phase 1 But Must Follow Additional Guidelines

All dealers may reopen immediately if they follow all Phase 1 requirements. [No dealer may operate until they can meet and maintain all requirements, including providing materials, schedules, and equipment required to comply.](#) Office staff may return to work; however, employees who can work remotely are encouraged to do so. All employees - management, office, sales, and support staff - must adhere to the specific additional guidelines as well. Proclamation 20-46 Stay at Home Order regarding "High Risk Employees – Workers' Rights" still remains in effect and requires employers to use all available options for alternative work assignments to protect their high-risk employees.

The additional guidance can be viewed here: [Phase 1 - Resuming Vehicle and Vessel Sales with Additional COVID-19 Requirements](#).

To read the Proclamation 20-46 for High Risk Employees - Workers' Rights, view [Proclamation 20-46 Stay Home Order for High Risk Employees – Workers' Rights](#).

General questions about how to comply with these safety practices can be submitted to the state's Business Response Center at [General Business and Return to Work Inquiries](#).

## MANUFACTURER BACK TO WORK MEASURES & CONTROLS WEBINAR

In order to manage COVID-19 risks for employees, it is critical for manufacturing facilities to review their policies and procedures relative to current knowledge of the risks.



Join the experts from Impact Washington on a call and hear how they've been coaching manufacturers thru a process for back to work site compliance. They're helping facilities determine whether Engineering Controls, Administrative Controls, or Personal Protective measures are recommended based on the work areas within their facility and each employees risk of exposure due to the nature of their job functions.

Webinar: 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

Presentation: 11:00 am-11:45 am

Q & A: 11:45 am-12:00 pm

CLICK DATE TO JOIN CALL: [Wednesday, May 13th](#) or [Monday, May 18th](#)

For questions please contact: Joseph Gosar, South Sound Account Executive, Impact Washington  
jgosar@impactwashington.org or  
253.604.8406

## Washington State Business Response Center

The state Economic Resiliency Team (ERT) Business Response Center has answered over 1,200 general business inquiries around financial help or other business assistance since coming online April 8.

This team of people from the Department of Commerce, the Joint Information Center and volunteers from throughout state government, are reviewing incoming questions and responding as quickly as possible.

The team is currently able to answer questions as quickly as they are received.

If you're a business owner or operator with a question, [ask your question here](#).

**Stay up to date on what the Economic Resiliency Team is doing by signing up for the weekly Business and Workers Update.**

**Please participate in the Business Impact Survey**

***Complete Survey Before May 21***

The City of Seattle Office of Economic Development, Greater Seattle Partners, and the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce [today released the second round of the COVID-19 Business Impact Survey](#). The regional impact survey data helps regional economic development groups understand the scope of the impact on the business community and build an inclusive economy that centers the most vulnerable small businesses and workers, and shape economic growth that is equitable, robust, and lasting.

## A Message from the EASC Regarding the \$10,000 Working Washington Small Business Emergency Grant

Thanks for submitting your application for this grant opportunity. It is regrettable that the process has been less than smooth with a lack of communication. We recognize the financial challenges facing small businesses in our communities as a result of the COVID-19 crisis and want to be responsive. There was no past experience on which to set expectations.

[Economic Alliance Snohomish County \(EASC\)](#), a private non-profit, has a partnering agreement with the WA State Dept of Commerce. We received over 2200 applications for this grant, far exceeding anything we imagined. Our original guidance from Commerce was to review/down-select all applications and forward them 144 applicants for further consideration and review by the Governor's office. After this review, Commerce initially expected to award 36 grants to companies in Snohomish County; 500 grants statewide. Working with colleagues from all cities in Snohomish County and with the County, we developed a scoring matrix to provide uniformity and to guide the process. **At the completion of this phase, EASC and our partners forwarded 246 applications to Commerce, in part reflecting an increase in total funding available through the program.**

At this point, Commerce is in the review process with awards expected at the end of May. You are receiving this email as an original applicant. If your firm is one of the 246 forwarded applicants, you will be advised by email later this week. After that, the next communication to the 246 will be award notices for the +/- 60 successful firms. Please recognize that if you do not receive updates, regrettably your application is no longer being considered. EASC will be responsible for distributing the funds.

Your understanding and patience is appreciated. We encourage you to explore other options mentioned below.

Sincerely,

The Team at Economic Alliance Snohomish County

**Economic Alliance**  
SNOHOMISH COUNTY



# FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE UPDATE

## Small Business Administration UPDATE

### Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) Federal business disaster loans now capped at \$150,000 and limited to agriculture

- Initially, the Small Business Administration allowed businesses to apply for up to \$2 million in Economic Injury Disaster Loans. That amount was just cut to \$150,000, according to The Washington Post.
- The SBA also said it would take EIDL applications only from agricultural businesses starting May 4. If you already applied prior to April 15 — when the application portal closed — you'll be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis.

### Self-employed with no employees? PPP funds still available

#### Key Concepts for the Self-Employed

- Being an independent contractor means you are a small-business owner or sole proprietor.
- Receiving one or more 1099s constitutes being an independent contractor.
- As an independent contractor or sole proprietor, you would file a Schedule C with your 1040 tax return each year.
- Paying workers with a 1099 is NOT having employees. If you *did* have employees, you would issue W2s and pay employment taxes and Workers Compensation Insurance.
- You can have a Limited Liability Company (LLC) and still be a sole proprietor or independent contractor.

As stated above, this article applies to those of you filing a Schedule C as a sole proprietor/independent contractor, NOT if you are filing as an S-Corporation and taking a salary. I mention this again, because it's important for sole proprietors to not get confused by some of the rules that apply to corporations and not to them. Please note the following:

- No calculation on the PPP application will involve payroll, because you *don't* have employees, and thus no payroll numbers for you or others will exist.
- Again, paying others with a 1099 is not considered payroll.
- Health-insurance premiums will not be considered in any part of the calculation.
- Contributions to retirement accounts, whether a SEP, Solo 401k or IRA, are irrelevant.

(These four items above only apply to corporations with W-2 Payroll)

Next, in order for a sole proprietor to properly apply for the PPP loan, it is absolutely required that they have their 2019 1040 Personal Tax Return filed and the accompanying Schedule C.

### State sets mid-June goal of addressing unemployment claims

New numbers show more than 810,000 people in Washington have filed for unemployment benefits since the beginning of March.

On Thursday, [Employment Security Department](#) Commissioner Suzi LeVine said they are aiming for mid-June when it comes to addressing all the claims they had as of May 1st. That's just the date they're using for goal setting, even though they'll keep addressing claims after that.

"Our goal is to get to 100-percent by mid-June, but hopefully a lot more before then," she said. "Our goal with Operation 100% is to make sure unemployment benefits are delivered to all Washingtonians who were impacted by COVID-19, are eligible for and want to receive those benefits."

She expects the number of new claims to keep growing until phases two and three of the governor's reopening plan, when more businesses can hire people back.

LeVine also pointed out that people who are on regular unemployment insurance will be able to apply for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance if their employer reopens but they can't go back to work due to childcare needs.



# STAY CONNECTED

## Free WiFi available

During the Stay Home Stay Healthy order it is absolutely essential to have access to high speed internet to access important services. For some people living near Monroe, lack of high-speed internet access means they can't refill prescriptions, apply for unemployment benefits, access financial assistance, participate in video conference calls and do their homework. To ensure residents are able to access these and other important online services the Washington State Department of Commerce has partnered with local technology companies to provide free, mobile hotspots across the state. For those in and around Monroe, the nearest hotspots to Monroe are;

- In Monroe at the Sno-isle Library: 1070 VILLAGE WAY
- In Sultan at the Sultan Library: 319 MAIN ST.
- In Bothell at the Bothell Library: 18215 98TH AVENUE NE

For more information or learn the location of other mobile hot-spots,

### Contact Us >>>

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360-631-0050  
JPalmer@MonroeWA.gov  
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## Why unemployment benefits for the self-employed may be less than expected

- The \$2.2 trillion coronavirus relief law, the CARES Act, extended unemployment benefits to self-employed workers.
- According to a U.S. Labor Department [directive issued](#) April 27 business are now required to use net income instead of gross income to determine unemployment pay for the self-employed. This is different from other workers whose benefits are determined by gross income.
- This could substantially reduce their unemployment pay. However, the CARES Act establishes a minimum benefit.

Further, many self-employed workers derive income from both traditional W-2 wages and contract work reported on 1099 tax forms. But state unemployment offices [generally look at the W-2 earnings](#), which may be more meager, to determine their unemployment benefits. The coronavirus relief law, known as the CARES Act, establishes a minimum weekly benefit paid by a state to self-employed workers.

A minimum threshold was established in the C.A.R.E.S. Act that would provide one half of the state's average weekly benefit. So if a self-employed worker's net income is fairly low relative to gross income, a Washington State resident would be eligible to collect a minimum of \$546.00/week (one half of the weekly average of \$1092.00/week) for a period of up to 39 weeks.



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