

To: Media
From: Keith Johnson, Franklin County Administrator
Re: County Operations during COVID-19 Pandemic

On March 23, 2020 Governor Inslee issued a new Executive Order directing all residents immediately to heed current State public health directives to stay home, except as absolutely needed.

In response to Governor Inslee's newest order and guidance regarding the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus (Coronavirus), Franklin County expresses our concern for the safety and well-being of the employees of Franklin County and their families as well as the public we serve. Franklin County initiated changes over the past week in closing or partially closing offices, restricting public access, organizing work schedules of employees yet still maintaining continuity of essential operations of county government. Employees continue to work remotely where possible, yet are required to remain available and reachable during their normal work hours. Administrative leave is being authorized to minimize the economic disruption to employees.

The courthouse offices, with the exception of the courts operating from 1:00pm - 3:00pm, will have open communication via email or by telephone to assist with essential needs of the public. For citizens who have business to conduct at the courthouse, we strongly encourage you to call that office beforehand to schedule an appointment. Departmental contact information is listed on the county's website. Otherwise, the offices are closed to the public with the exception of those who have made appointments. If adjustments need to be made, we will notify the media and post information to the county website at www.co.franklin.wa.us.

We encourage citizens to pay attention to the information that comes from official sources listed below. We recognize that the situation remains fluid and quickly changing. We ask all citizens to exercise appropriate caution personally as well as act responsibly in maintaining a supportive and safe community.

Benton Franklin Health District -- <https://www.bfhd.wa.gov>
Washington State Department of Health – <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>
Center for Disease Control and Prevention – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCov>

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