

# WACOPS COVID-19 UPATE – April 13, 2020

Hello members:

Thank you for continuing to keep me informed of your experiences and questions related to COVID 19. Please keep it up! If you have any questions, stories that you want to relate (good or bad) and issues that we can help research, please email me ([ttaylor@wacops.org](mailto:ttaylor@wacops.org)).

First, on behalf of the Board of Directors and staff I want all our members to know that we mourn the loss of Bainbridge Island Officer Kurt Enget. We have been in touch with the Bainbridge Island Officer's Guild and will be making a supportive contribution from the Benevolent fund.

## **Here are a couple quick updates regarding COVID 19:**

We reported to you a few weeks ago about the First Responders' Coalition and the work we have done to elevate the common problems experienced by all first responders and frontline workers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. That letter is attached.

Since that time, we have remained in regular contact with the Governor's staff on the issues in the letter and other issues that are unique to our members and that have developed over the last few weeks.

Today the Governor took two actions directly related to our request. Please see those updated below.

**NOTE:** We know this is a constantly evolving pandemic and the issues you're experiencing are also fluid. We are doing our best to keep up on each development and take appropriate actions, when we can, to resolve issues. Please keep in touch so I can hear how things are improving (testing locations/testing results, emergency leave, PPE etc).

### **Governor Inslee Clarifies Directive to Labor and Industries (memo attached)**

We continue to work on these issues, but in our letter a few weeks ago, we asked that the Governor be clear that when a first responder must quarantine (whether directed by their employer or a doctor) that such quarantine is considered COVID related and covered time. We also asked that he clarify that any contraction of COVID to be presumed work-related. In the memo, Governor Inslee reminds L&I of his commitment to protecting you, "When I announced that workers' compensation would cover medical expenses and wage replacement during quarantine for COVID-19 exposures, I told these workers that we had their backs. As this crisis continues, it is important that we continue to show them that we do."

### **Proclamation Regarding Vulnerable Workers (proclamation attached)**

Today, Governor Inslee signs a proclamation protecting the most vulnerable workers. Whether this applies to you, or to a spouse or parent, you need to be aware of this action. Among a variety of "whereas" statements the proclamation includes this: "**WHEREAS**, to protect our public and private

sector workers in these high-risk categories from the significant life, health and safety risks of the COVID-19 disease, it is necessary that employers seek any and all options for alternative work arrangements and that these workers are protected from job displacement, loss of employment benefits, and any requirement that they use personal accrued leave before applying for any available unemployment benefits;” Please read the attached document to learn of the entire proclamation and its directive.

**HAZARD Pay –**

Please let us know if your department is offering you hazard pay and what the terms are. We have a growing number of member guilds interested in the arrangements authorized by departments across the state. Please share this information with Julie Morley ([wacops@wacops.org](mailto:wacops@wacops.org)) so we can put this info on our member’s only side of our website for all to benefit from.

Please remain safe and healthy. I am working with LEOFF 2, Behind the Badge, Department of Retirement Services, Labor and Industries and the Association of Washington Cities on a variety of issues. I will continue to send you updates. You may also read previous updates on our website at [www.wacops.org](http://www.wacops.org).

Be well and stay safe!

Teresa Taylor  
Executive Director  
WACOPS