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Census Begins with Mail Notice

No citizenship questions ease concerns

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'City of Roses'

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Committed to Cultural Diversity

Drastic Measures Prepare for Virus Onslaught

Public health experts warn that without drastic measures to slow the spread of the coronavirus epidemic, the demand for intensive-care beds in local hospitals could quickly outstrip capacity. As of Tuesday, the state had 65 people who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, but researchers expect the number of new cases statewide will double every 6.2 days. At that rate the state will need 1,000 additional hospital beds and another 400 intensive care beds in a matter of weeks, officials said.

Authorities urge everyone to take steps to protect themselves, their families, and those who are most vulnerable to complications from COVID-19. Those considered "high risk" include adults 60 and older, or anyone with a serious health condition, including lung or heart problems, kidney disease, diabetes, or anyone who has a suppressed immune system.

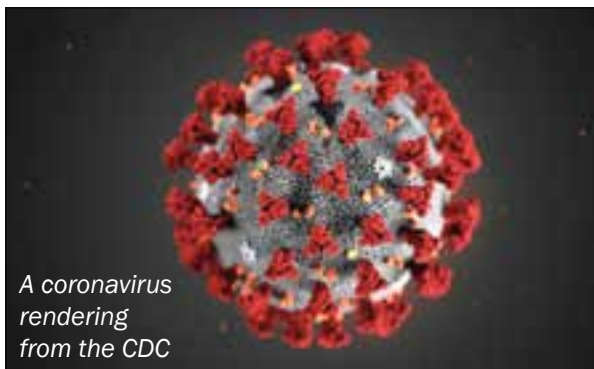
People vulnerable to complications should follow federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations to stay home as much as possible and avoid gatherings.

Every resident should take these basic steps to protect themselves and those most at risk:

Never visit a hospital or long-term-care facility if you have a fever or cough. Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces like bathrooms, desks, countertops, doorknobs, computer keyboards, faucet handles, toys and cell phones. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands. Stay home and away from others if you are ill.

After someone contracts COVID-19, illness usually develops within 14 days. Symptoms mirror those of the flu, including fever, cough, runny nose, headache, sore throat and general feelings of illness. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.



A coronavirus rendering from the CDC



Gov. Kate Brown issues an order during a press conference with state and local government officials Thursday in Portland to close all schools in the state because of the coronavirus epidemic. On Monday, she went further to limit crowds of 25 people and ordered restaurants and bars to either shut down or serve take-out only. (AP photo)

Trying to Slow an Epidemic

Isolation now will help medical response later

BY BEVERLY CORBELL
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Portland and Vancouver have their first deaths attributed to the worldwide coronavirus epidemic, or COVID-19. A 70-year-old man with underlying health conditions died on Saturday at the Portland Veterans' Affairs Medical Center and two Clark County COVID-19 patients died Monday evening, according to state and county health authorities.

As of Tuesday, Oregon had a total of 65 people diagnosed with COVID-19, but that number was expected to grow significantly. Oregon Gov. Kate Brown issued an order to limit crowds of 25 people in an attempt to slow the spread of the virus. She also ordered restaurants and bars to either shut down or serve take out only. The latest measures followed her order on Thursday to close all schools until the end of the month.

The aim of health authorities is to try to flatten the curve of new infections to alleviate a feared surge of sick patients that could overwhelm the health system. Authorities are making strong efforts to promote social isolation and social distancing as a way to prevent the spread. For the next month, people are urged to avoid being around more than 10 people at a time.

Portland Police Chief Jami Resch Monday directed officers and supervisors to contact members of the public by phone when possible, but stated that police will continue to respond in person to disturbances such as thefts in progress, burglaries, welfare checks and injury vehicle crashes, and detectives will continue to investigate crimes.

Government offices across Portland and Vancouver have closed as employees work from home. And nonprofits are also cutting back client contact. Meals on Wheels People is facing many challenges and is taking the further precaution of no longer offering even take out meals at its dining centers, according to spokeswoman Julie Piper Finley.

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