



**Inland COVID-19 Response
Emergency Coordination Center**
Joint Press Release

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For Immediate Release

May 14, 2020

90-day regional COVID-response shelters to open this week

Sites meet physical distancing requirements to limit spread of illness in shelters

Two temporary shelter locations will open this week to accommodate physical distancing among unsheltered adults, replacing sites that have been utilized for the community response to COVID-19, the regional Emergency Operations Center (EOC) announced today.

Homelessness experts with the Spokane Regional Health District, Spokane County, City of Spokane, and City of Spokane Valley, who are members of the EOC vulnerable populations group, toured numerous potential shelter locations to identify buildings. Requirements for those facilities included availability for the next three months and access to restroom and shower facilities. The group selected Spokane County's Community Services Building and the Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena as locations to house unsheltered adults who are not sick with COVID-19. Both facilities meet the identified criteria.

Adult women who have been temporarily staying at the downtown library will move into a shelter being established at the Community Services Building owned by Spokane County. Shelter services for adult men and women, who have been staying in the seasonal Cannon Street warming center and the downtown library, will relocate to a back-of-the-house area of the arena. Access to other parts of the facility will be restricted.

Both shelter locations will be used to meet the regional 90-day, continuous-stay shelter need for unsheltered adults. Hope House staff will operate the women's shelter at the Community Services Building. The Guardians will operate the arena site. Occupants of both will transition to the new locations by this Saturday, May 16.

Physical distancing within the shelter systems has helped prevent the spread of COVID-19 among the region's vulnerable unsheltered population. Contracts for construction work on the downtown library, owned by the City of Spokane, were established before the spread of the virus. Work is contracted to begin on Monday, May 18. The Cannon Street building will be renovated and reopened as a day shelter.

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