Impacts of COVID-19 on Labor

Citizens Oversight Panel

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July 22, 2020
Why we are here

Today we are here to provide information to you about the Impacts on Labor by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

In this briefing, we will discuss:

• Timeline of Labor Related Covid-19 issues
• Sound Transit’s Response to Labor
• Issues Addressed With Labor
• COVID-19 Numbers
Timeline of Labor Related Covid-19 issues
February 29, 2020 - Governor Jay Inslee Signs Proclamation 20-05, State of Emergency Declaration
March 11, 2020 - Non-Essential Sound Transit Staff begin remote working.

March 23, 2020 – First positive Covid-19 test reported by a construction worker on a Sound Transit project (N140)

March 31, 2020 – First Sound Transit Briefing to the Labor Leaders from Washington State, King, Pierce, & Snohomish Counties
Sound Transit halts ‘almost all’ construction work due to coronavirus outbreak

But several construction projects that Sound Transit labels critical will continue, including work on the Interstate 90 floating bridge to extend light rail to the Eastside.

Inslee allows some construction projects to reopen with safety rules to protect against the coronavirus

Inslee’s 30-point plan calls for keeping workers 6 feet apart at all times and making sure contractors provide protective equipment like masks, gloves and goggles, if needed.

May 04, 2020 – Sound Transit Projects with approved COVID-19 Safety Plan allowed to Resume Construction
North-Link Weekly Worker Count 2020

Project Code: N-140 N-150 N-160 N-830/E-750
T-100 Weekly Worker Count 2020
Sound Transit’s System Expansion Construction Work is Exempted from Shutdown… Deemed an Essential Service.
Sound Transit’s Response to Labor
Reviewing the Workers “Safety Nets”

On March 11, 2020, we participated in a teleconference with Washington State Employment Security Department to learn of new emergency rules for Unemployment Insurance.
Established Communication Protocols with Labor Partners

• Weekly Covid-19 Briefing Meeting with Labor Leaders from Washington State, King, Pierce & Snohomish Counties

• ST & Labor Shared all Covid-19 Information, Materials & Best Practices

• ST Communicates with Labor when there is a suspected or confirmed case on our projects

• NO SURPRISES!
Sound Transit Assisted Other Partners with Established Communication Protocols

• **Snohomish County** – Met with their Public Works Department to discuss ways to address Covid-19 in contracting practices

• **Port of Seattle** – Met with a representative from their Labor Relations Department to demonstrate our Covid-19 briefings with Labor
COVID-19 Work Plans Were Required from ALL Contractors Prior to Resuming Construction Activities

We Expect Contractors to Plan their Work, and Work Their Plan!

Sound Transit Issued Stop Work Orders to Contractors and Work Crews who were not following their Covid-19 Safety Plans
Construction Site “New Normal”
…A day in the life of a Construction Worker

• No Carpooling
• Temperature Check Before entering Work Site
• No “Mass Gatherings” e.g. Safety Talks
• Masks/ Face Coverings Required
• Staggered Breaks / Lunches
• Sanitization crews cleaning common areas
• COVID Safety Managers were assigned for each Project
COVID-19 Training Prior to Return to Work

Social Distancing
Keeps You Safe and Healthy

AVOID ENTERING THE FACILITY IF YOU HAVE A COUGH OR FEVER

REMINDERS TO STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19
- Maintain six-foot distance from one another
- Wash hands frequently for at least 20 seconds
- Keep groups to 10 people or less
- Sneeze and cough into a cloth or tissue or, if one’s not available, into one’s elbow
- Do not shake hands or engage in any unnecessary physical contact

Sound Transit
COVID-19 Training Prior to Return to Work
Workers Adjusting to COVID-19 Requirements
Worker Issues/Concerns

• Self & Family Care
• Sick Leave / Unemployment
• Mental Health
• Wearing Masks all the time
• Safety Glasses - Fogging up
• Social Distancing
• Safety Issues
• Heat Stress Rule - Currently Under Review
Challenges Facing Workers

• 14 day quarantine period for out of state workers
• Summer Heat
• Correct PPE – Masks, face shields
• Glasses Fogging Up
COVID-19 Numbers

• Between March and July 13, 26 Workers have Confirmed Cases of C-19
• 23 cases were between 6/10 and 7/13 (5 cases per week on average)
• Over 90,000 temperatures taken. Only 1 worker sent home with temperature over 99.9
• With one exception, no evidence of transmission on the job site
Thank you.