



May 2020 Advocacy Newsletter

Inslee Announces Resumption of Professional Services Work as part of Phase 2 Reopening

On May 15, Gov. Inslee's office released a [memo](#) discussing the reopening of professional services offices, specifically including architecture firms. In counties that have reached **Phase 2** of the governor's Safe Start approach, businesses can resume all operations immediately as long as they meet and maintain all requirements, including providing materials, schedules, and equipment needed to comply.

You can find the requirements for reopening professional services offices here: [Guidance for Professional Services](#). These requirements are significant, and keep in mind that they could be amended at any time by the governor's office. See the accompanying box, COVID Resources, for help planning for re-occupancy.

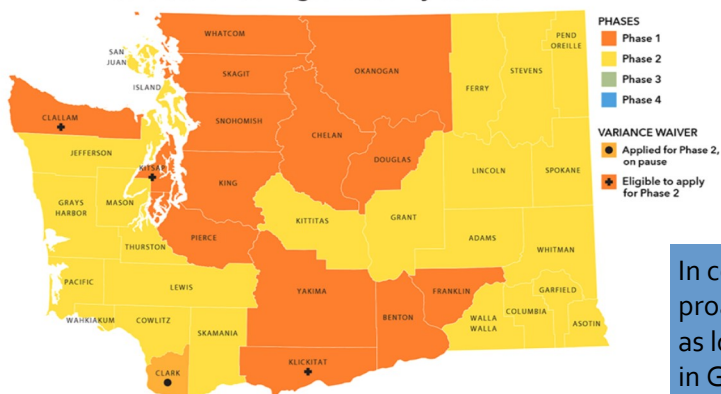
COVID Resources

- ⇒ AIA|WA's list of [COVID resources](#)
- ⇒ Washington's coronavirus [website](#)
- ⇒ AIA National's list of [COVID resources for architects](#)

Office Re-Occupancy

- ⇒ AIA National [Re-Occupancy Assessment Tool](#)
- ⇒ Boston Consulting Group: [WA Business Checklist](#)
- ⇒ Seattle & Bellevue Chambers of Commerce: [Reopening the Workplace Toolkit](#) (more detail may be downloaded [here](#))
- ⇒ Cushman & Wakefield: [Recovery Readiness How to Guide for Reopening your Workplace](#)

Safe Start Washington: County Status



In counties that have reached **Phase 2** of the Safe Start approach, businesses can resume all operations immediately as long as they meet and maintain all requirements outlined in Gov. Inslee's [Guidance for Professional Services](#).

Legislative News: Special Session to Address COVID Budget Impacts

As Gov. Inslee use his emergency authority to battle COVID-19, behind the scenes legislative leaders are exploring what they will address during a special session of the Legislature – and when.

Because Washington has healthy reserves, the state does not face an imminent budget shortfall at the end of the current fiscal year, June 30. However, the longer-term state budget picture is bleak. A preliminary revenue forecast issued in early May projected a \$7 billion drop in state tax collections over the next three years (the current two-year state budget is \$53 billion). An official quarterly revenue forecast is scheduled for release on June 17; a special session will not occur prior to that forecast.

One of the arguments for convening a June special session is that lawmakers could begin the process of slowing state spending before the new fiscal year begins and new spending bills take effect. Lawmakers may also demand a role in deciding how federal COVID relief funds are distributed. Democrats may look to codify some of Inslee's emergency proclamations (these have to be renewed every 30 days, and only with the approval of the Democratic and Republican leaders of the House and Senate) if they suspend portions of state law.

"The June revenue forecast is going to create an eye-opening experience that's like being dumped in ice water."

Speaker of the House Laurie Jinkins (D-Tacoma)

Longer term, majority Democrats are talking about the potential for state stimulus spending, perhaps in the form of a transportation package or additional capital construction spending. If they choose not to make deep cuts to the budget, they may also need to address new revenue sources.

Legislative Republicans released a **13-point policy proposal** for a potential June special session, which includes shoring up resources for long-term care facilities, providing additional help for small businesses, and eliminating public employee pay raises scheduled to take effect on July 1.

But Democrats have not decided that an earlier special session is the best course of action — especially since



there is not an emergency need to balance this year's budget. "There's an argument for moving quickly in June, but there's an equal argument for waiting," Senator Christine Rolfes, the Democratic chair of the Ways and Means Committee, told the AP.

Rolfes said the argument for waiting includes the fact the state does not yet know what additional federal stimulus and recovery money Congress might appropriate in the coming months. "So there's a discussion right now about whether we come in June and do some urgent, emergency just get-the-job-done stuff, or whether we wait more until August, September, when we have all the facts and all the information."



House & Senate Leaders: (L-R) House Speaker Laurie Jinkins (D-Tacoma); Senate Majority Leader Andy Billig (D-Spokane); House Minority Leader J.T. Wilcox (R-Yelm); Senate Minority Leader Mark Schoesler (R-Ritzville)

Ultimately, the decision to reconvene lawmakers rests with the governor, who has constitutional power to call the Legislature back into special session. If Inslee does ultimately call a special session, it will be for 30 days, although lawmakers could adjourn sooner than that.

Special Session, *cont.*

Technically, the Legislature can call itself back into session with a two-thirds vote.

Even without a special session, the governor has taken some early austerity measures. In early April, he vetoed \$235 million in new spending that had been approved during the regular 2020 legislative session. Since then, he ordered state agencies to halt hiring, personal services contracts, and equipment purchases. He also instructed agencies to identify a combined total of \$1.9 billion in immediate savings options. However, Inslee has not declared a “significant revenue shortfall,” which would allow him to reopen collective bargaining agreements and potentially renegotiate the three percent pay raises for state employees that are scheduled to kick in on July 1.

If lawmakers do reconvene, it will present unique challenges because of the need to maintain social distancing.



Senator Christine Rolfes (D-Bainbridge Island),
Chair, Senate Ways and Means Committee

Beginning in March, the House and Senate began exploring ways for lawmakers to participate in a legislative session remotely. Meeting remotely would require a change of House and Senate rules – something that has been done in other states.

Update: 2018 State Codes

On April 2, Gov. Inslee issued an **executive order** delaying the implementation date of the 2018 code updates from July 1 to Nov. 1, 2020. Subsequently, Gov. Inslee was asked by some state legislators and interest groups to delay the state code further – to July 1, 2021 – but he recently issued a **response** denying that request.

From Gov. Inslee’s letter to state legislators denying further delay of the 2018 state codes

Delaying the implementation of the 2018 code – which will already have been delayed by more than 16 months by the time it takes effect in November – does not serve Washingtonians. It postpones energy savings for homeowners, creates uncertainty in the construction supply chain and disincentivizes innovation. Delay also undermines progress in achieving the requirements the Legislature set in RCW 19.27A.160, which set goals for energy savings to be achieved by new construction by 2030.

Legislative & Statewide Elections



All statewide elected officials, all state house members, and 25 of 49 state senators are up for election in 2020. You can see which candidates filed for election [here](#). The primary election is August 4 and the general election is November 3. You can register to vote [here](#).

The potential special session of the Legislature will impact legislative campaigns, as members of the Legislature are not allowed to raise money while they are in session.

If you know or are interested in any of the candidates who are running in your district, consider attending a campaign event to talk about the issues that are important to you. These events are often small, always accessible, and they provide an opportunity for more one-on-one time with the official.

EVENTS

AIA|WA 2020 Civic Design Awards

AIA|WA is currently accepting submittals for the 2020 Civic Design Awards, which celebrate design excellence in publicly funded projects located in Washington. Find out how to submit projects [here](#). All firms/members must submit their Intent to Enter via our website no later than 5:00 pm, June 26. Those who express their Intent to Enter will have until July 24 to upload their project materials.

Our in-person Civic Design Awards program for 2020 will take place on September 10 if allowed and if we can provide a safe environment for us to gather. If we cannot celebrate in person, there will be a virtual celebration of these awards.

AIA Southwest Washington

*Golf Tournament - August 7 at Links at Hawks Prairie

AIA Spokane

- * Design Awards postponed to late summer or fall
- * Golf Tournament - Sept. 17 at Qualchan Golf Course
- * Design Awards (virtual) – October 2020

OPPORTUNITIES

Free AIAU courses for AIA members

AIA is making some of AIAU's best business and tech courses available to AIA members for free. Learn valuable skills about virtual practice, successful business strategies, risk management, and more from some of the most innovative architects, firms, and design professionals. More info [here](#).

Jason Pettigrew Memorial ARE Scholarship for Associate Members

This scholarship recognizes the significant contributions of emerging professionals at early stages in their careers and helps defray the costs associated with the Architect Registration Examination. Applications are open through August 14. More info [here](#).

CONGRATULATIONS...

to the winners of **AIA Central Washington's** 2020 scholarships, both studying architecture at Washington State University:

Abdi Abdirahman & Nate Kirk



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The AIA Washington Council serves as the collective voice for and a resource on state government policies that impact the practice of architecture for all architects and the profession through AIA components in Washington State.

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