



For Immediate Release – March 25, 2020

Readout of Call between Governor Jay Inslee and County Executive Satpal Sidhu

County Executive Satpal Sidhu and Governor Jay Inslee spoke by phone on Wednesday morning. The conversation focused on local and state efforts to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Governor Inslee and Executive Sidhu discussed a recent cluster of cases at a skilled nursing facility (Shuksan Healthcare Center) in Bellingham, WA, as well as the need for more testing capacity, which remains very limited. Executive Sidhu requested the State's assistance in securing additional test kits until more private testing capacity comes online.

Governor Inslee and Executive Sidhu also discussed the general need for additional qualified healthcare workers, as healthcare facilities see an increase in patients even as some workers become unavailable due to self-quarantine.

During the conversation, Executive Sidhu suggested that the resources of multiple counties in Northwest Washington could be pooled to address COVID-19 response needs more effectively. They also discussed opportunities to use other public buildings and resources in innovative ways to address community needs, such as the use of Bellingham High School as a temporary shelter and food provision site.

Governor Inslee informed Executive Sidhu that his office would be providing further clarification about which services are considered essential services under the "Stay Home – Stay Healthy" proclamation. The Governor and County Executive agreed to remain in close contact to ensure coordination of local and state efforts.

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Online Informational Resources

[Whatcom Unified Command COVID-19 Response](#)
[Whatcom County Health Department](#)

[Washington State Coronavirus Response](#)
[Washington State Department of Health](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)