



PSA

Date: April 2, 2020
To: All Media
From: Stephanie Krell, PIO Unified Command Team
Subject: **Employee and small business resources in Wasco, Sherman and Gilliam counties for COVID-19 relief**

As of publication of this post, there are seven confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Wasco County and zero confirmed cases in Sherman and Gilliam counties. In Oregon, there have been 736 positive cases and 19 deaths.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact on employees and businesses. In the past week, state and federal governments have provided a range of resources, economic stimulus, relief funding and policy changes to help employees and small businesses. It can be difficult to know where to turn for the latest information.

While the information continues to change in size and scope, updated information for Wasco, Sherman and Gilliam counties can be found at <https://www.mcedd.org/ready/>. Here you will find the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District site, which has a COVID-19 resource page that is updated daily. Information includes financing, workforce, and business counseling resources.

Another critical resource for employees and businesses is the Oregon Employment Department's [COVID-19 employment page](#), with information related to layoffs, work-hour reductions and unemployment claims. With many local and state offices closed to the public, all employees are asked to file unemployment insurance applications online. That can be done at the link above.

Many small businesses in Wasco, Sherman and Gilliam counties have closed or are operating with reduced hours. The recently passed Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic

Security (CARES) Act includes resources for small businesses, non-profit groups and other employers. [This guide](#) provides information about the major programs and initiatives that will soon be available through the act. This includes the Paycheck Protection Program, Emergency Economic Injury Grants, small business debt relief programs and much more.

The Columbia Gorge Small Business Development Center can provide business counseling free of charge for businesses trying to determine the best financing resources or develop an updated business plan that incorporates online strategies and other necessary shifts in their business models to reflect needs today. Contact them at 541-506-6121 or <https://clients.bizcenter.org/reg.aspx?mode=counsel¢er=2140&subloc=0>.

For additional information on local responses to COVID-19 in Wasco, Sherman, and Gilliam Counties please visit <https://wascoshermangilliamcovid-19.com/> or follow the Facebook page.

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