

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL  
Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
311 Grand Avenue, Suite #105  
Bellingham, WA 98225-4038  
(360) 778-5010



COUNCILMEMBERS  
Rud Browne  
Barry Buchanan  
Tyler Byrd  
Todd Donovan  
Ben Elenbaas  
Carol Frazey  
Kathy Kershner

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

## Homeless Strategies Workgroup

---

### MEMO

Date: May 21, 2020  
To: Homeless Strategies Workgroup (HSW) Members  
From: Councilmember Barry Buchanan  
RE: Homelessness Activities during COVID-19 Emergency

---

The following is a regular update to HSW members is also available on the [HSW Meeting Information page](#). Please email any feedback, ideas, or questions you may have to Cathy Halka at [chalka@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:chalka@co.whatcom.wa.us).

#### **Shelter at Bellingham High School (BHS)**

Lighthouse Mission Ministries (LMM) reports the highest shelter occupancy night over the last two weeks was Saturday (5/16) with 168 people and the lowest occupancy night was Saturday (5/9) with 144 people. The average total overnight stays over the last two weeks is around 160 people.

Scott McCreary with Whatcom Unified Command (WUC) reports (County Council meeting, May 19, 2020) a recognized long-term need to find an alternative to the drop-in center and now more specifically to address social distancing in the shelter. WUC is now assisting with the identification of an alternate location. There is consideration of an expansion of the LMM building in the future (with an estimate of 3-4 years until completion). In the meantime, there are efforts to identify an interim location on Port of Bellingham property until LMM can complete its building expansion. LMM anticipates moving the shelter from BHS to an interim location in late-July or early August.

For more information about LMM and the BHS Shelter, please see the FAQs at <https://www.thelighthousemission.org/news/drop-in-center-faqs/>

To learn more about the process to move the Drop-In Center to BHS, visit <https://www.facebook.com/LighthouseMissionMinistries/videos/760456307822995/>

To view a tour of the shelter at Bellingham High School, visit <https://www.facebook.com/143102002396420/videos/956532591468422/>

### **Byron Avenue Quarantine & Isolation Facility**

The Byron Avenue facility is currently serving 7 people, occupying a total of 5 rooms.

### **County Health Department Press Briefing**

The Whatcom County Health Department conducted a Press Briefing on May 18, 2020 with new information and tracking data. View the press briefing at the County's YouTube page:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5o\\_FJSXu0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5o_FJSXu0).

New data charts are also available at [www.whatcomcounty.us/Covid19](http://www.whatcomcounty.us/Covid19).