Inslee extends proclamation protecting high-risk workers

June 9, 2020

Gov. Jay Inslee announced the extension of a proclamation today giving high-risk workers the right to protect themselves from COVID-19 without jeopardizing their employment status or loss of income.

The proclamation provides older workers and those with underlying health conditions a series of rights and protections, including:

- The choice of an alternative work assignment, including telework, alternative or remote work locations if feasible, and social distancing measures.
- The ability to use any accrued leave or unemployment benefits if an alternative work assignment is not feasible and the employee is unable to safely work. Employers must maintain health insurance benefits while high risk employees are off the job.
- Employers are prohibited from permanently replacing high-risk employees.

High-risk individuals are defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and specifically include:

- 65 years of age or older; and
- People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled.

The proclamation was extended through August 1, 2020.

Read the governor’s proclamation here.

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