



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Harlequin announces updated policies in response to COVID-19

Olympia, WA March 5, 2020 – King and Snohomish Counties have confirmed a growing number of cases of COVID-19, the illness resulting from the acquisition of the novel coronavirus. While the vast majority of cases around the world are mild, a smaller percentage of cases result in severe disease and involve pneumonia. Our hearts go out to the families of those who have died from the disease and who have suffered from severe illness.

There are currently no confirmed cases in Thurston County; however, this is an evolving situation, and updates are available from the [Thurston County Department of Public Health and Social Services](#), the [Washington State Department of Health](#), and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

Please also see the Coronavirus Preparedness page on our site for updates as this situation evolves: <https://harlequinproductions.org/2020/03/03/coronavirus-preparedness/>

While there are currently no plans to cancel performances or suspend operations, we at Harlequin are working to make sure that our organization and community is well-prepared. As of March 3, 2020, we have undertaken the following new protocols to ensure the safety of our staff, our patrons, and our community:

- we have modified our cleaning schedule to include sanitizing all seats, armrests, handrails and door handles prior to every performance;
- we will have hand sanitizer available for all patrons as they enter the theater;
- we will have sanitary wipes available for all patrons as they enter the theater;
- we will have hand sanitizer and antibacterial soap available in all bathrooms;
- we will be waiving all exchange fees for patrons during this time: if you need to change your ticket due to illness, we will be able to move you to another performance of the same production with no fee.

We request that patrons who feel ill, have any symptoms of lower respiratory illness, have a fever or have had a fever within 24 hours, to please stay at home. Again, we have no plans to cancel performances or suspend operations at this time but will follow any protocols set by state and local authorities when and if it becomes necessary.

Finally, while the risk of the new coronavirus to most individuals in our community remains low, influenza and other serious respiratory infections are already circulating, as happens every year. Thus, staying home from work and school when sick, working/learning remotely, and washing hands are the

best measures we can take to stop the spread of these viruses. We also encourage you to demonstrate compassion throughout this season and actively help to combat incidents of bias or social stigma.

We are extremely fortunate to live in a region with an outstanding public health infrastructure, and are optimistic that our significant investments in public health preparedness will enable a rapid and effective response.

More Information:

- [Thurston County Department of Public Health and Social Services coronavirus information page](#)
- [University of Washington's novel coronavirus information page](#)
- [UW School of Public Health coronavirus response page](#)
- [Washington State Department of Health coronavirus information page](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) coronavirus situation summary](#)

Harlequin Productions is a professional not-for-profit theater company in Olympia, WA. We seek to invigorate, educate, and empower our community and all people to feel more, think more, play more, and judge less through the mirror of real live theatre.

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