



Retired Public Employees Council of WA Chapter 27 – Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan County Area

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opeiu8/aficio

Please Note: The RPEC statewide Executive Board strongly recommends against holding in-person meetings at this time. Members should consider carefully and attend meetings in-person at their own risk.

Regardless of vaccination status, people should still take steps to protect themselves and others while in public settings. This includes wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet from others, and avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces.

Chapter President's Message

Please mark your calendars and plan to join us on May 13th, the last meeting prior to our usual summer hiatus. We will resume our normal membership meeting schedule in September.

We hope that you and your loved ones will have a pleasant summer, your gardens are bountiful, and that you enjoy reasonably good health.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out if you find yourself in need of assistance. We care about our RPEC family and will do our very best to help you to find the resources you might need.

In Solidarity,

Don Boxford, RPEC Chapter 27 President

[Chapter 27 Virtual Membership Meeting](#) [Thursday ~ May 13 at 11:00 AM](#)

Please dial in or sign on 10 minutes in advance

[Speaker from Numerical Credit Union](#) [Presentation on Banking & Investing](#)

Other Agenda Items

Legislative Session Update **Chapter Business**

To join the meeting online using a computer, tablet, or smartphone, go to:

<https://zoom.us/j/96848884426?pwd=aVpYaEZ1Yn pHTVZFYkRWVDdUUTAzd09>

Or go to: www.zoom.us/join

Enter Meeting ID: **968 4888 4426**

Enter Passcode: **923592**

To join the meeting by telephone:

Dial: 1-253-215-8782

Enter Meeting ID: **968 4888 4426**

Enter Passcode: **923592**

Please Give: Pacific NW Blood Shortage Prompts “Code Red”

Seattle-based Bloodworks Northwest recently declared a “Code Red” alert in response to a now four-week-long blood shortage. The blood provider says it now has less than a 24-hour supply, far less than the four-day inventory it needs.

Only 85% of blood needed by local patients is now available, according to a news release. As of April 23rd, donations were short 700 units a week compared to the need, according to the release. About 35,000 donors would need to fill appointments by Memorial Day and 78,000 by Independence Day to meet the demand.

Due to the pandemic, Bloodworks is no longer accepting walk-ins. Residents can book appointments to donate blood every 56 days, the release says. Notably, there is no waiting period before giving blood after receiving a COVID-19 vaccination.

A related issue is contributing to the shortage: The appointment no-show rate is the worst Bloodworks has seen since shortly after the pandemic began. Appointments are required to accommodate a fixed number of donations per day, so people who fail to show up to their appointments without canceling first can really impact the ability to collect enough blood. If residents cannot make their scheduled appointments, they should cancel them so others can fill them.

Blood shortages are being felt nationwide, according to the release, meaning the Pacific Northwest cannot rely on other regions to help.

There is a vital need for blood and plasma donors right now! Use your favorite search engine or contact your medical provider to find a local blood bank near you.

Why You Should Not Post COVID-19 Vaccination Card on Social Media

Multiple government agencies and viral videos are warning about the risks of posting vaccine card images online. "Photos of COVID-19 vaccination cards should not be shared on social media. Posting content that includes your date of birth, health care details, or other personally identifiable information can be used to steal your identity," according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The cards show medically sensitive information that you do not want to float around the internet for anyone to see. All those details in one place makes you vulnerable to scams and identity theft.

REAL ID Act Enforcement Delayed to 2023

The Department of Homeland Security recently announced that they will **delay enforcing the REAL ID Act until May 3, 2023**. This decision is expected to promote social distancing in the months ahead by reducing the number of people visiting driver licensing offices to obtain compliant identification. Passed by Congress in 2005 to strengthen security standards after 9/11, the REAL ID Act had been scheduled to take effect October 1, 2020.

When enforcement of the REAL ID Act does begin, every air traveler 18 years of age or older will need a compliant form of ID in order to fly within the United States, cross a border between the US and another country, or access certain secure federal buildings including military bases.

Washington state issues 2 types of REAL ID-compliant documents: enhanced driver licenses and enhanced ID cards. These can be obtained only by visiting a driver licensing service office. Right now, driver licensing offices in Washington are by appointment-only, and are for people with urgent needs who cannot go online or get what they need some other way.

Residents with standard driver licenses and IDs who will eventually want an enhanced version can renew online now and upgrade later for only the difference in cost (\$4 per year). For further information, go to:

<https://info.dol.wa.gov/real-id-enforcement-date-delayed-again/?ref=morenews>

U.S. State Department Expected to Expand Travel Advisories Due to COVID Risks

On April 19th, the U.S. State Department announced plans to expand travel advisories urging U.S. citizens to stay home as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose "unprecedented risks" around the globe. The updated travel guidelines are intended to curb visits "to approximately 80% of countries worldwide" which are currently experiencing dramatic spikes in cases, the department said in a statement. New guidance is expected to be released later this week.

The latest recommendations come as the coronavirus "continues to pose unprecedented risks to travelers," and the new guidelines "better reflect the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's science-based Travel Health Notices," according to the notice.

To view the latest State Department Travel Advisories by country, go to:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html.html>

RPEC Executive Director's Report

Final State Budget Update: On the evening of Sunday April 25th, the Legislature voted to approve the final negotiated 2021-2023 budget.

It included a strong measure to address the capital gains tax loophole while exempting retirement accounts, residential property, and small businesses. The success of this near decade long effort to enact a capital gains tax is due in no small part to the work of members like you. Together with our allies, we have taken a big step towards fixing the state's upside-down tax code.

The budget will also keep the PEBB monthly Medicare benefit at its current level. This is a tremendous victory given there was genuine concern about losing this important benefit entirely.

Unfortunately, the proposal to provide a one-time increase to Plan 1 retirees did not survive the budget negotiation process. This is especially frustrating given the modest nature of the increase which was capped at \$22 per month and the fact that it was included in the house budget with unanimous support.

In the coming days and weeks, we will putting together more information and having discussions about where we go from here on the Plan 1 COLA issue.

Our sincerest appreciation to those who called, emailed, testified, and otherwise made their voices heard during this Legislative session.

Online Membership Application: We have updated the "Join RPEC" page on our website to provide the option for new members to sign up for dues deduction or payment via credit card. Please encourage any fellow retirees to utilize this new convenient and secure option to sign up today.

Make sure they list your name in the "Recruited By" field so you can be entered into our membership recruitment rewards program.

Monthly Post-Session Legislative Update Zoom Call: During the post-session interim, we will have a monthly update on our Legislative priorities and activities on the 1st Wednesday of the month at 2:00 pm. Please join us on June 2nd for our first update. We will send an email reminder out as the date nears.

To attend the meetings online, click on:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82866346713?pwd=NkVEY2NsL1J6Z0dmQ0xEdjQyTnFwQT09>

Important Dates – RPEC Meetings & Events

- May 6, 2021 – RPEC Executive Board Meeting
- May 24, 2021 – RPEC Treasurer's Training
- June 7, 2021 – RPEC Political Action Committee Meeting
- June 14, 2021 – RPEC Leadership Training
- June 18, 2021– RPEC Legislative Committee Meeting
- July 27, 2021 – RPEC Membership Committee Meeting
- August 16, 2021– RPEC Finance Committee Meeting
- August 25, 2021 – RPEC Executive Board Meeting
- September 9, 2021 – Chapter 27 Membership Meeting
- October 14, 2021 – Chapter 27 Membership Meeting
- October 28, 2021– RPEC Membership Committee
- November 8, 2021 – RPEC Finance Committee Meeting
- November 11, 2021 – Chapter 27 Membership Meeting
- November 15, 2021 – RPEC Executive Board Meeting

Meetings will take place virtually until such time as it is safe to meet in person

Or, go to: <https://zoom.us/join>

Meeting ID: 828 6634 6713

Passcode: 205507

To attend via telephone:

Dial: (253) 215-8782

Meeting ID: 828 6634 6713

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Sincerely,



James Cockburn
Executive Director
RPEC of WA