

TOWN OF ANNAPOLIS ROYAL POLICY

Title: Influenza Pandemic Personnel Policy

Policy No.: 2009 - 7

Supersedes: N/A

Effective Date: December 21, 2009

Approval by Council Motion No.: 10

Purpose:

Recognizing that in the event of a declared influenza pandemic, the current sick leave policy may not address the needs of the Town's employees, the Town of Annapolis Royal has developed this Influenza Pandemic Personnel Policy. The Influenza Pandemic Personnel Policy will guide the response activities of the Town during an influenza pandemic to protect the health and safety of every Town employee and their loved ones.

It is imperative that a staff member who has been diagnosed with or suspects they may have contracted Pandemic Influenza stay at home rather than come to work and potentially infect other staff members.

Absences due to Confirmed or Suspected Pandemic Influenza

When an employee finds he/she cannot report for work, the employee, or someone else, is to notify the department head before starting time.

Unless an absence has been authorized in advance, or an absence is either unavoidable or justifiable, an employee is expected for scheduled work.

An employee must stay home and monitor his/her condition if they exhibit any of the following symptoms: fever (greater than 100°F or 37.8°C), sore throat, cough, stuffy nose, chills, headache and/or body aches, and fatigue.

Suspected case of Pandemic Influenza:

If an employee advises a department head that they have influenza like symptoms but have not been swabbed to confirm they have H1N1, they should remain at home in isolation for the period of time recommended by the Nova Scotia Department of Health at the time of their illness. It is important they do *not* return to work before the time recommended by the Nova Scotia Department of Health, since they may still be contagious and could spread the virus within the work environment.

Confirmed case of Pandemic Influenza:

If an employee has consulted with their physician and has a confirmed case of H1N1, they are *to remain at home in isolation* for the period of time recommended by the Nova

Scotia Department of Health at the time of their illness. It is important they do *not* return to work before the time recommended by the Nova Scotia Department of Health, since they may still be contagious and could spread the virus within the work environment.

Contact with Someone with a Confirmed case of Pandemic Influenza:

If an employee's spouse, partner or other person, who they are residing with, has pandemic influenza or influenza like symptoms, *unless the employee also experiences influenza like symptoms*, they are to report to work. Attend work while following proper personal hygiene (hand washing, coughing etiquette, etc.) both at work and at home. Observe the recommended guidelines for social distancing, specifically to maintain a distance of 6 feet when involved in face to face interactions with co-workers.

Caring for Family Members with Pandemic Influenza:

An employee may request time off from work to provide care for a family member with pandemic influenza symptoms. In the case of an outbreak of pandemic influenza, an employee may take up to five (5) days, in addition to their regular annual allowance of their accumulated sick leave as personal leave. This additional leave is for the purpose of providing care for an immediate family member residing in the same household.

Return to Work

If the employee is symptom free he/she can return to work and *no additional return to work clearance is required*. A cough can be expected to last for up to 2 weeks following pandemic influenza illness.

Pandemic Related Leave

In all instances of a pandemic influenza-related absence from work the employee's sick leave credits are to be used to cover the employee's absence. Up to five (5) days of sick-leave credits (*when combined with two regular days off, this constitutes seven consecutive days*) will be granted for H1N1 related absence, without written justification.

In the event an employee becomes ill with the pandemic influenza virus and is entitled to receive sick-leave credits but does not have sufficient sick leave credits to cover the period of their absence, the Town of Annapolis Royal will, upon request from the employee, provide the employee with a paid sick-leave advance of up to five (5) days. The Town of Annapolis Royal will recover these sick leave days at a rate defined in the Human Resources Manual or relevant collective agreement. The use of sick-leave credit advance is to be limited to a maximum of 5 days, even if the individual's absence from work exceeds that.

Any employee requesting a sick leave advance may be required to produce a certificate from a medical practitioner for any illness, personal or family related, requiring the advance days.

In the case of an outbreak of pandemic influenza, an employee may take up to five (5) additional days of their accumulated sick leave for the purpose of providing care for an immediate family member residing in the same household, for a total of seven (7) days in a fiscal year.

An employee who exhausts their banked sick-leave as well as their five (5) day sick leave credit advance but still requires time away from work will be required to use lieu time and vacation entitlements for additional paid days away from work or may take time off without pay.

During an outbreak of pandemic influenza, an employee may be required to produce a certificate from a medical practitioner for any illness resulting in an absence from work greater than seven (7) days.

Payroll Services

Payroll services are considered an 'essential service' of the Town of Annapolis Royal and bi-weekly pay will be maintained throughout any possible influenza pandemic outbreak.

Salaried employees will continue to receive their regular rate of pay during a pandemic.

It is the responsibility of the department head to ensure that time reports are completed accurately. If circumstances are such that a time report cannot be processed for a regular pay period, employees will be paid based on an average of the previous four (4) weeks pay. In this case, necessary retroactive adjustments to each employee's pay will be made when payroll service returns to normal.

Overtime

Overtime necessary to ensure the provision of essential Town services or to complete work backlogs due to employee absence will be at the discretion of the department head and/or supervisor.

1. Redeployment of Staff

The Town of Annapolis Royal reserves the right to redeploy staff as the need arises. This could be to a different role, function, or location. Staff may also be requested to work different hours from those in their employment contract. Requests to make these alterations to work and working patterns will be for the duration of the pandemic only. There will be no change to an individual's employment contract and normal working hours and functions will resume as quickly as possible and no later than the end of the pandemic.

It may be necessary to request that employees work outside of their normal contractual hours. Any need for work outside normal contractual hours will be at the discretion of the department head. Payment for work outside normal contractual hours will be based on the employee's employment contract, the Personnel Policies and Procedures or relevant collective agreement, including any overtime payments.

The Town of Annapolis Royal may request staff to attend training in order to prepare employees who may be redeployed to other areas.

2. Alternative Work Arrangements

In order to reduce the spread of pandemic influenza between employees of the Town of Annapolis Royal, it may be necessary to implement alternative work arrangements for employees.

Employees may be asked to work from home, where possible. The decision of whether an employee may work from home will be at the discretion of the department head. Any employee working from home must remain in contact with their department head or other immediate supervisor.

Employees may be asked to postpone non-essential meetings and other face-to-face communication.

Where possible, employees may be asked to remain in one facility or location rather than visiting many work locations and increasing the risk of spreading the pandemic influenza.

Employees may be asked to refrain from congregating with each other prior to and following their regular working hours.

3. Suspension of Town Services

Only in extreme or emergency situations will select Town of Annapolis Royal services or facilities be closed or suspended. Any such closures will be left to the discretion of the Chief Administrative Officer. If the severity of a pandemic situation is such that the closure of Town services or facilities is deemed necessary, appropriate operational and employment measures will be implemented at that time.

Town services and facilities deemed critical to the health and safety of the Town's employees and residents will not be closed or suspended.

4. Confidentiality of Information

Confidentiality protection laws apply and no personal information pertaining to individuals off work due to pandemic influenza should be released. The Town of Annapolis Royal will not be forwarding suspected or confirmed employee's names to a health authority and no personal information will be provided for internal or external inquiries. Payroll will be collecting statistical information for pandemic monitoring purposes. Influenza-specific personal information may be collected by family physicians or local health authority.

Information indicating that an employee has been diagnosed with pandemic influenza may be shared with the employees who came in contact with the employee prior to him/her exhibiting symptoms. Appropriate cleaning of work surfaces must take place immediately if another employee is required to use the same space or equipment.

Departments should maintain a record of individuals who disclose they are off work due to pandemic influenza. This information may be helpful when reconciling any service delivery and/or financial issues at a later date.


5. Additional Resources

Should an employee who, as a result of their own pandemic influenza symptoms, or caring for a family member or significant other, experience stress, anxiety or their unwanted emotional reactions, they should be directed to contact the Town of Annapolis Royal's Employee Assistance Program to receive direct support and assistance.

The Employee Assistance Program provider is Employee Assistance Services, Atlantic Region and their services may be accessed by telephone at 1-800-268-7708.

Questions


If you have additional questions, please contact your department head or supervisor.



Mayor

2009.12.23

Date



Chief Administrative Officer

Dec 22/09

Date