

# **Municipality of West Elgin**

## **Policy 2020-08 COVID-19 Pandemic Staff Health and Safety**

**Effective Date:** , 2020

**Review Date:**

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that the risk of exposure to COVID-19 is minimized for staff who are required to work during a pandemic.

### **2. Scope**

This procedure applies to all West Elgin staff.

### **3. References**

- Occupational Health & Safety Act
- Regulations for Industrial Establishments
- Risk-informed Decision-making Guidelines for Workplaces and Businesses During the COVID- 19 Pandemic, Public Health Agency of Canada
- COVID-19 Guidance for Industry Operators, Ministry of Health Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings, Public Health Ontario
- COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Public Health Agency of Canada

### **4. Procedures**

#### **4.1 General**

- a) Workplaces, work sites, and work activities can contribute to the transmission of respiratory pathogens, such as the virus causing COVID-19.
- b) Appropriate public health measures will be implemented to prevent and reduce the spread of COVID-19 among staff, contractors, and the public.
- c) Specific policies, procedures, and standard operating guidelines are developed and implemented based on conducting a comprehensive risk assessment of the likelihood of exposure of staff. The risk assessment will determine the appropriate risk mitigation strategies required.
- d) COVID-19 is readily transmitted by respiratory droplets and contact.
- e) Transmission at work can occur either directly via close contact or indirectly

- via contaminated surfaces and/or objects (fomites.)
- f) The risk of transmission may be greater if staff share workstations and equipment.
  - g) Transmission of the virus can occur in the early phase of illness, when symptoms may be absent, non-specific, or mild.
  - h) Risk assessment and risk mitigation are based on advice provided by the following sources:
    - Public Health Agency of Canada
    - Ontario Ministry of Health
    - Ontario Ministry of Labour
    - Work Health Organization
    - Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  - i) Risk assessment and risk mitigation measures are subject to change and revision as new information on transmission and epidemiology becomes available.
  - j) If it appears that a worker has been exposed to direct transmission of COVID-19 in the course of work, or at the workplace, the CAO/Treasurer or designate will investigate. Required reporting to the WSIB and Ministry of Labour in relation to an occupational illness or occupational disease will be completed. Further investigation and contact tracing will be initiated in accordance with Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Health requirements. Exposed staff will be notified as needed, and will be isolated for 14 days or as per the direction of the Ministry of Health and/or Ministry of Labour.

## **4.2 Hygiene Practices, Equipment & Facilities**

- a) Adequate supplies for handwashing and hand sanitizing shall be provided and used. These supplies include soap, towels or hot air dryer, sinks, running water, etc.
- b) Approved alcohol-based hand sanitizer or equivalent will be provided for staff who do not have access to handwashing facilities.
- c) Hand hygiene posters and information will be posted throughout the workplace locations.
- d) Respiratory etiquette instructions will be communicated to all employees through posting, email, discussion, or other effective methods.
- e) Enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfecting schedules will be increased and established. Adequate supplies of Health Canada-approved cleaning and disinfecting products will be provided.
- f) Adequate time in scheduling will be provided to allow staff to perform the necessary hygiene practices and measures.

## **4.3 Physical Distancing**

- a) National, provincial, and municipal pandemic emergency response procedures will establish whether and which facilities will be closed to the public.

- b) These response procedures will also establish which essential municipal services will continue and which services will be modified or suspended.
- c) As much as possible, staff will be assigned work activities and work locations with a view to maintaining a spatial distance of at least 2 metres from others. This may be achieved through separate offices, physical partitions/separations, and administrative controls.
- d) Vehicles and equipment used as workplaces will be assigned to individual employees where possible to avoid sharing and possible transmission from operator to operator.
- e) Where possible, employees will not be required to travel together in a vehicle used for work purposes. If employees are required to travel together, masks will be provided.
- f) Dedicated work stations and equipment, tools, etc. will be provided to individual employees to reduce sharing of communal equipment. If communal equipment and devices are used, increased cleaning and sanitizing procedures will be used.
- g) Shifts may be staggered or rotated allowing for working independently.
- h) Where possible, full or periodic working from home measures will be implemented.
- i) Information and procedures will be communicated to all affected employees on a regular basis.
- j) If physical distancing cannot be maintained, appropriate personal protective equipment, measures, and procedures will be provided and implemented.
- k) If an employee becomes ill at work, rapid isolation of the ill employee will occur. The employee will be isolated from other staff.

#### **4.4 Screening**

- a) Passive screening measures will include visitor signage.
- b) Signage will be clear and visible. It will warn individuals to not enter the facility if experiencing respiratory symptoms; to practice hand hygiene; and to follow proper respiratory etiquette.
- c) Active screening measures are directed at employees, and include the following:
  - Instructing staff to self-monitor for symptoms such as fever, cough, or difficulty breathing
  - Consideration of employees who are at higher risk because of age, immune compromising conditions, chronic diseases, etc. Employees will be encouraged to self-declare these conditions and situations to the supervisor. Effort will be made to accommodate the employee where possible.
  - Completion of the Active Screen Questionnaire” on a daily basis. The completed questionnaire will be retained by CAO/Treasurer or designate.

## **4.5 Communication**

- a) Staff will receive regular updates on pandemic and business continuity plans, measures and procedures.
- b) Staff training on measures and procedures will be provided and documented.
- c) Staff will immediately report any concerns, issues, or hazards to the supervisor.
- d) Staff contact information will be updated regularly to reflect absenteeism and staff availability to ensure routine information, and related emergency contact information is current.
- e) Contractors will be provided with information and updated as needed as revised measures, procedures and staff contact information become available.

## **4.6 Mental Health**

- a) Measures, procedures and practices will be implemented that support and promote psychological health and safety in the workplace.
- b) Staff are encouraged to report concerns relating to mental stress to the supervisor.
- c) Regular debriefing and communication strategies will target situations and work demands with a high risk of causing mental stress.
- d) Employee assistance and community resources will be used to assist in maintaining a mentally healthy and safe workplace.

## **4.7 Personal Protective Equipment & Clothing**

Please refer to Personal Protective Equipment & Clothing procedure

## **5. Documentation**

Active Screening Questionnaire

COVID-19 Employee Screening		
Municipality of West Elgin Staff Only		
Date of Screening:		
Employee Name:		
<p>As part of our ongoing efforts to keep all staff safe, we are initiating an active screening process. This will help us protect all Town personnel during the course of their duties from the potential risks of COVID-19. All staff entering Town facilities will be asked to complete the checklist to ensure the well-being of all individuals. Please answer the following questions as part of the screening process:</p>		
<b>Do you have any of these symptoms?</b>		
<b>Symptoms</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
New or existing Cough		
Fever of 100.4F or higher		
Chills		
Runny/Stuffy Nose		
Shortness of Breath/Difficulty Breathing		
Sore Throat		
1. Have you returned from International travel in the last 14 days and symptom free?		
2. Have you had exposure to someone with, or under, investigation for COVID-19?		
3. Have you been tested for COVID-19 and what are the results?	Positive _ Negative _	
4. Are you an unconfirmed COVID-19 case?		

If a staff member screens positive (for example, answers “yes” to any of the Symptoms and Q1 or Q2 or Q3 or Q4) the CAO, Director or Manager should encourage the staff member to wear a mask and self-distance from all staff in order to wait for further instruction.

**Please complete the Screening form each Monday** (or your first scheduled shift of the week) and notify us immediately if any conditions change during the week.

At all times, Managers and Supervisors should ensure the continued safety and security of all individuals, whether or not they exhibit signs of COVID-19.