

Subject: Pandemic
Approval Date: March 15, 2021
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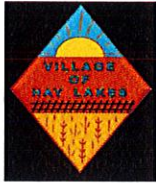
Pandemic Policy

The Village of Hay Lakes, hereon in known as the “Village” is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for all staff, volunteers, and people supported. This pandemic policy outlines our overall response to a pandemic outbreak and our Emergency Management Bylaw #01-2019. The Village will provide necessary resources to ensure staff, volunteers, and people supported aware of the risk factors and requirements associated with a pandemic while ensuring the Village’s ability to maintain essential operations and continue providing essential services to our residents, including pre, active and post-pandemic. Non-compliance with the Village’s Pandemic Policy is subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal from the Village’s employ and/or its services.

1. It is important it understand the definitions of ‘influenza’ (the flu) and ‘pandemic’; attached is a comparison chart. Briefly:
 - a) **Influenza:** is caused by a flu virus which infects the respiratory tract (nose, throat, lungs). It usually starts suddenly and may include these symptoms: fever, muscle pain and weakness, headache, tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, diarrhea and vomiting (especially in children).

Influenza is transmitted from person to person through direct contact primarily when people who are infected cough or sneeze and droplets come into contact with the eyes, nose or mouth of another person. Also, influenza is indirectly transmitted when people touch contaminated hands, surfaces or objects and then touch their face. The virus can survive on nonporous surfaces such as doorknobs, countertops or toys for up to 48 hours. People who become infected with influenza are able to transmit the virus for 24 hours before symptoms appear and for up to 5 days after symptoms appear. Children can be infectious for up to 7 days after symptoms appear.

- b) **Pandemic:** is distinguished from influenza by its scope; it becomes a worldwide epidemic, or pandemic, when a disease spreads easily and rapidly through many countries and regions of the world and affects a large percentage of the population where it spreads. An influenza pandemic occurs when a new influenza “A” virus emerges to which the population has little or no immunity. It may spread easily from person to person and may cause serious illness and death. It is not known beforehand what age group will be most affected or what the severity will be. Pandemics are unpredictable and can happen at any time of the year.



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Pandemic influenza can occur when mutating flu viruses become transmittable to humans, who generally lack any natural immunity to fight off the viruses' adverse health effects. Because infected humans are so contagious, they become the primary vehicle for pandemic influenza's spread. The more humans who become contagious, the more widespread the disease becomes and the more rapid the spread is. Generally, pandemic influenza occurs in waves, with each new group of infected people in turn infecting others. Each such wave of infections can last as long as eight weeks, resulting in steadily increasing numbers of infections, and the disease itself can take 12 months to 18 months to run its course through the population. Subsequently, the virus sparking pandemic influenza "settles" and thereafter can cause a type of seasonal flu (also known as "human flu") that produces the symptoms and illness many of us experience during annual "flu season".

Pandemic influenza poses the most serious global threats to public health and our economy. It conceivably can cost billions of dollars in productivity losses resulting from absenteeism, payouts of sick leave or workers' compensation, and lost sales; disrupt transportation and communication services on which we all depend and impede delivery of necessary goods and services. Inability to predict when such a disease might strike and with what severity makes it incumbent on the Village to consider how our business might be affected and to articulate what needs to be done to respond to an outbreak.

Seasonal Influenza

Occurs every winter between November and April.

Peaks for a few months during the winter and then declines.

Affects approximately 10 – 20% of the population each year.

Most people who get seasonal flu will get sick, but usually recover within 2 weeks.

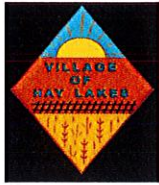
Pandemic Influenza

Occurs approximately 3 times every century

Occurs any time during the year; comes in 2-3 waves several months apart.

May affect 30% of the population over the course of the outbreak.

About 50% of the people who get pandemic flu will become ill, most will recover but it may take a long time, and some people will die.



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Some people will have immunity from previous exposure to that strain or/and from the annual flu vaccination.

Most people will have little or no immunity to the new virus, therefore, more serious illness, a greater number of deaths.

Symptoms are unpleasant, but most people do not become Seriously ill or die. Very young, the elderly and people with certain chronic illnesses are most at risk.

More serious infections and deaths will occur; people of any age will be at risk.

Annual vaccination available for protection.

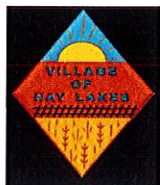
No vaccine will be available at the start of the pandemic; one may be available after 4 -5 months.

Affects mainly the young and very old and people who are immuno-compromised; does not usually affect health care delivery or other essential services.

Could affect anyone, including health care providers and their families, as well as other essential service workers.

The Village has identified and designated as essential personnel certain employees whose jobs are vitally important to our continued operation in emergencies. We expect only designated essential personnel to be available for work during an influenza pandemic. We acknowledge, however, that even essential personnel might become ill and unavailable to work or not be able to reach our worksites because of conditions beyond their own or our control.

- c) **The World Health Organization:** monitors the status of influenza around the world and declares pandemic alert phases based on the number of cases and mode of the transmission of illness. At a provincial level, the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Commission for Emergency Management will be jointly responsible. In the Village, the Medical Officer of Health will confirm when there is local pandemic activity. Also, each local municipality has an emergency plan and may activate their plan in response to a pandemic emergency to coordinate the municipal support to the community.



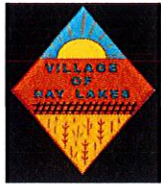
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The World Health Organization describes the alert phases as follows:

Phases	Description
1 & 2	No animal influenza virus circulating among domesticated or wild animals has been reports or known to have caused infections in humans.
3	An animal or human-animal influenza virus has caused sporadic cases or small clusters of disease in people, but no human-to human transmission sufficient to sustain community-level outbreaks.
4	Verified human to human transmission of an animal or human-animal influenza virus able to sustain community-level outbreaks.
5	The same virus as identified in phase 4 has caused sustained community-level outbreaks in two or more countries in one World Health Organization region.
6	In addition to the description in phase 5, the same virus has caused sustained community-level outbreak in a least one other country in another World Health Organization region.
Post-Peak Period	Pandemic influenza in most countries has dropped below peak levels.
Post-Pandemic Period	Influenza activity has returned to levels as seen for seasonal influenza in most countries.

2. **The objectives of this policy are to:**

- a) ensure all staff, volunteers and people supported are educated about pandemic risk factors and prevention procedures;
- b) control infection risks through the application of controls;
- c) integrate pandemic prevention strategies in day-to-day operations;



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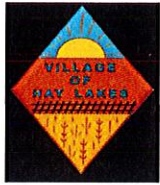
- d) encourage staff, volunteers and people supported to recognize this educational information has been provided to them to utilize in the workplace, at home and in the community.

People can lower the risk of a pandemic by usual, preventative practices against a range of illnesses that include:

- a) cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze by using a tissue or coughing into your sleeve or elbow; dispose of the tissue immediately into a garbage can;
- b) wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze; alcohol-based hand rub/sanitizer with 60 – 90% alcohol is also effective;
- c) avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, germs spread easily that way;
- d) do not share objects that have been in other people's mouths, ie. drinks, water bottles, lip products, musical instrument mouthpieces;
- e) if you get sick, stay home until you no longer have a fever and are feeling well; you should limit your contact with others during this time to keep from infecting them;
- f) if your symptoms worsen, contact your doctor;
- g) personally speak with your medical professional about getting the annual flu shot and/or vaccines.

The Village has taken a number of steps to minimize to the extent practicable exposure to and spread of infection in the workplace, which is an ideal site for contagion because of workers' close proximity to one another. As appropriate, the Village recommends measures that employees can take to protect themselves outside the workplace and encourages all workers to discuss their specific needs with a family physician or other appropriate health or wellness professional.

Ill employees: The Village expects employees who contract the flu or have been exposed to infected family member(s) or others with whom employees have been in contact to stay home and seek medical attention as necessary and appropriate. The Village expects such workers to notify the Village office as soon as possible of exposure or illness.



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How long to stay home from work:

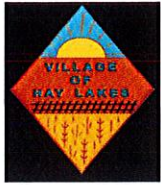
An employee, volunteer and people supported are required to isolate due to symptoms may return to work – **before 10 days** – if they test negative for the influenza pandemic and no longer have symptoms, as long as they have not been identified as a close contact of a case of influenza pandemic .

If an employee, volunteer and people supported has these symptoms:

- Fever
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Painful swallowing
- Muscle, joint aches or headache
- Feeling unwell, fatigue or severe exhaustion
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or unexplained loss of appetite
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)

What to do:

- Stuffy nose
- Can return to work before 10 days only if an influenza pandemic test is negative, symptoms are gone, and the employee, volunteer and people supported is not a close contact of someone with influenza pandemic
- If test results are positive, isolate at home for at least 10 days and follow instructions received from Alberta Health Services
- Isolate at home for a minimum of 10 days from when symptoms started or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer
- Influenza Pandemic test recommended
- Stay home from work until symptoms go away – **not** required to isolate for 10 days
- influenza Pandemic testing is recommended



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received from Alberta Health Services

- If test results are, positive, isolate at home for at least 10 days and follow instructions

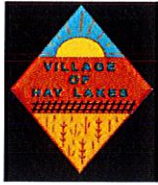
3. **Responsibilities:**

CAO

- a) Obtain and maintain a daily update regarding the number employees, volunteers and people supported who have been diagnosed with the influenza pandemic.
- b) Maintain ongoing contact with relevant, qualified health professionals, such as Alberta Health Services and share important information with employees, volunteers and people supported.
- c) Encourage employees, volunteers and people supported to report symptoms associated with the influenza pandemic and that they should seek advice from their health care provider regarding such.
- d) Provide necessary equipment and resources in pandemic procedures to reduce the spread of infection for employee, volunteers and people supported; evaluate and update monthly. Equipment to include facial masks, gloves, antiseptic hand wash, cleaning supplies and any other equipment recommend by Alberta Health Services.
- e) Provide "Help Prevent the Spread", "Help Relaunch, Safely", "Practice Physical Distancing" posters, pamphlets and memos.
- f) Establish cleaning practices and infection control of work location, in consultation with Alberta Health Services.
- g) Encourage safe food handling practices, proper storage of foods, handling of eating utensils, in consultation with Alberta Health Services.

Employees, Volunteers and People Supported

- a) Comply with any requirements, procedures and/or protocols at all times and seek clarification as required. Employees, volunteers and people supported are expected to work their scheduled shifts unless otherwise directed by the CAO. If there are extenuating and/or changed circumstances relating to the employees, volunteers and people supported health (asthma, pregnancy, illness, etc.) they must inform the CAO



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immediately. A medical note may be requested when employees, volunteers and people supported are unable to work.

- b) Employees, volunteers and people supported may be required to work additional shifts during an influenza pandemic and while every effort will be made to comply with the Employment Standards Act (ESA) related to hours free from work/hours of work, it may be necessary to rely on the exception in the ESA for Emergency and Exceptional circumstances.
- c) Report any unsafe acts, hazards, equipment shortages and/or problems or any unsafe conditions immediately to the CAO.
- d) Report any influenza pandemic symptoms to the CAO immediately and participate in procedures as determined by the CAO.
- e) Stay home from work if sick and seek necessary medical attention.

4. **Post-Pandemic:**

- a) Communication and sharing of information with employees, volunteers, people supported, CAO, council, Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee, Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Ministry of Health.
- b) Continued monitoring of pandemic activity of employees, volunteers and people supported.
- c) Monitoring of any potential after effects of the pandemic.
- d) Evaluation of pandemic response, plan and procedures; revisions to be incorporated as necessary.