

City of Saskatoon COVID-19 Testing and Proof of Vaccination Requirements

ISSUE

At the August 30, 2021 Regular Business Meeting of Saskatoon City Council, Council requested Administration to report back on the following COVID-19 related motions:

- That Administration be directed to pursue a testing regimen for all employees with the possibility of adjustments for fully vaccinated staff;
- That Administration report back on how vaccine requirements for employees could be implemented with advice from health authorities about how this could be operationalized; and
- That Administration report back following updates from the Provincial Government regarding proof of vaccination tools and best advice regarding their application to civic events, events in civic facilities and other relevant gatherings.

This report provides a response to these questions.

BACKGROUND

The emergence of the SARS CoV-2 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) resulted in many adjustments to the City of Saskatoon's (City) Occupational Health and Safety and Business Continuity Plans. These adjustments followed the public health directions from the Government of Canada, the Government of Saskatchewan, and local medical health officers to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 in the workplace and community.

COVID-19 transmission, now driven by the highly infectious Delta Variant of Concern (VOC), continues to affect the delivery of City programs and services and thus requires ongoing health and safety measures to limit the transmission of COVID-19 in the workplaces and community.

CURRENT STATUS

Mandatory COVID-19 Rapid Testing Program for Employees

All employees are entitled to a safe work environment. Throughout the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, the City has worked to continually update and respond to the hazard of COVID-19. COVID-19 Exposure Control Plans are continually reviewed and updated as required. Exposure Control plans include fit for duty forms, physical distancing, when required, barriers, enhanced cleaning and sanitizing, good hygiene measures, masking, and enhanced measures for close contact work.

As part of the City's overall COVID-19 Exposure Control Plan, a Mandatory COVID-19 Rapid Testing Program was implemented in a phased in approach starting on October 11, 2021 for all staff reporting to the workplace. This program also provided an option for employees to opt out by providing proof of vaccination. This program is in place in

the City until November 14, 2021. For employees who have not opted out by providing proof of vaccination, mandatory rapid testing can be accessed through testing provided by the City.

Implementation of the Government of Saskatchewan [Employers' COVID-19 Emergency Regulations](#)

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the City has continued to follow the direction of the Government of Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Health Authority and Labour Relations and Workplace Safety to keep employees and residents safe. Often, the introduction of new direction comes quickly. The City has adapted and pivoted in response.

The Government of Saskatchewan *Employers' COVID-19 Emergency Regulations* came into effect on October 1 and provided clarity to employers regarding their ability to require employees to either show proof of being fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test result at least every seven days. The regulations identify that the cost for all proof of negative test results for asymptomatic testing is the responsibility of the individual and the individual is responsible for testing during non-work hours.

Starting on November 15, 2021, the City will require all employees to provide either proof of being fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or evidence of a negative COVID-19 test result, every seven days, at their own cost and on their own time. At that time, the City will no longer provide employees with rapid point-of-care testing services for the purpose of proving a negative COVID-19 test to the City as the employer.

Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination or Proof of Negative Test

At its' Special Council Meeting on October 8th, City Council approved that beginning October 15th proof of full COVID-19 vaccination or negative test for ages 12 and over within all Leisure Centres and City indoor rinks be implemented. This complemented the Government of Saskatchewan's Public Health Order *Proof of Vaccination or Negative Test* and helps to address the spread of COVID-19 in our community. This requirement would be in place for any civic events, or events or gatherings within City leisure centres or indoor rinks.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Throughout the pandemic, the City has continued to follow the Government of Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Health Authority and Labour Relations and Workplace Safety to keep our employees and residents safe.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No new financial implications.

NEXT STEPS

The City will continue to follow the direction of the Government of Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Health Authority, Labour Relations and Workplace Safety, and will be prepared to adapt and change as required.

Report Approval

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