

Town of Acton

Pandemic Policy

Purpose:

The Town of Acton shall establish a policy to provide regulations and procedures governing and amending practices, policies, and/or procedures when necessary during an epidemic and/or pandemic.

It is policy of the Town of Acton to provide a safe and healthy environment for all employees during threat of an epidemic or pandemic virus, as classified by the World Health Organization or the United States Center for Disease Control.

The new Coronavirus, COVID-19 being such a virus, is not a flu but a pneumonia-like infection. The CDC believes at this time that symptoms may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure.

This policy shall address impacts associated with the COVID-19 virus and any such other outbreak.

Applicability:

This policy is applicable to all Town of Acton employees, board members, and volunteers.

Objectives:

The Town's primary goal is to protect both the Employees and Citizens by limiting the cross exposures while maintaining as high a level of service continuums as possible. The policy seeks to:

- A) Reduce the spread of the disease to and among staff.
- B) Protect people at higher risk for complications from exposures.
- C) Maintain critical operations through the protection of staff- public safety and health.
- D) Minimize impacts on our community residents, customers and businesses.
- E) Be proactive in the non-pharmaceutical public health intervention measures by taking medically advised measure to minimize risk.
- F) Communicate the objectives of the policy as measures change.

This policy is subject to change pursuant to the Board of Selectmen's actions or as other advisories dictate as new evidence is made available.

Workplace Exposure:

The Town seeks to protect all staff by assessing and addressing workplace exposures as communicate by the WHO, CDC, EMA, and Maine EMS. Exposures shall be controlled as much as physically possible by following the recommendations by the CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

The Town will further seek to limit non-essential access to the facilities by making available to the greatest extent possible the action of business by electronic means, telephonic means, or the use of the mail.

All municipal services are essential to certain people at any given point in time. Therefore the preservation of services will be made in all Departments. Specific emphasis is placed on Public Safety and Administrative support for Emergency Services, maintenance of public infrastructure, and the financial support of operations.

All employees and visitors to Municipal Buildings shall wear a face covering. When an employee is in their own office that is more than 6 feet from another co-worker or customer, they may remove their face covering.

Hand sanitizer shall be available to all staff and placed at entrances and exits for visitors to use.

All closures of the Town government operations as a whole shall be at the discretion of the Board of Selectmen in consultation with the Town EMA director, Town Health Officer, and with guidance from State and Federal Emergency Management Agencies.

Absence from work and Employee Pay:

Employees may be absent from work during the time this policy is in place. The Board of Selectmen will make the final determination as to whether or not an employee's absence will be covered under this policy, or if it will be covered under the Town Personnel Policy.

Any time missed by employees due to COVID-19 shall be tracked by the Treasurer/Finance Department.

The Town reserves the right to review on a case by case basis and make adjustments to this section of the policy as needed for a specific case.

Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL)

Effective 3/18/2020 through 12/31/2020, law H.R. 3201, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) provisions are in place. Under this law, employers must provide 2 weeks of paid sick leave (up to 80 hours) to their employees under these instances where an employee:

- 1) Is subject to Federal, State or Local Quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19.
- 2) Has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
- 3) Is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking medical diagnosis.
- 4) Is caring for an individual who is subject to a quarantine order or has been advised to self-quarantine.
- 5) Is caring for a son or daughter and the child's school or place of care has been closed due to COVID-19.
- 6) Is experiencing any other substantially similar condition.

Under the law, paid sick leave is to be calculated based on the greater amount of the employee's regular rate of pay, based on a two-tiered rate

- IF the employee's sick leave is for reasons 1, 2, or 3 above, the pay is calculated based on the full amount the employee would have been paid (capped at \$511/day)
- IF the employee's sick leave is for reasons 4, 5, or 6 above, the pay rate is two-thirds of the full amount (capped at \$200/day).

The Town will pay the full amount the employee would have been paid for reasons listed above.

Anyone that must be out longer than two weeks may qualify for unpaid Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), based on the requirements of that law. Employees may utilize accrued PTO time, if approved for FMLA

Emergency Family and Medical Leave (EFML)

Effective 4/2/20 through 12/31/20, the legislation expands the reason for which FMLA leave may be taken to include where an employee is unable to work (or telework) due to a need to leave to care for a son or daughter under 18 years of age, and the child's school or place of care has been closed or a child care provider is unavailable due to a public health emergency.

Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of this emergency leave, with the first 2 weeks being unpaid (employees may substitute accrued PTO time for the first 2 weeks to be paid), and the remaining 10 weeks being paid at a rate of at least two-thirds of the employee's regular rate of pay, not to exceed \$200/day.

Other Leave:

Illness

A) Employee exhibits symptoms- no test performed

- 1) If an employee exhibits symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (fever, coughing, shortness of breath), the employee will stay home and will be paid using the Emergency Paid Sick Leave
- 2) If an employee has utilized the Emergency Paid Sick leave already, the employee can use accrued PTO
- 3) An employee may choose to utilize UNPAID leave but will be responsible for any current deductions.

B) Employee will continue to stay out of work until all the following are met:

- 1) At least 72 hours since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications,
- 2) Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath), and
- 3) At least 14 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

C) Employee exhibits symptoms- subsequently tests positive

- 1) If an employee exhibits symptoms and tests positive for COVID-19, the employee will stay home and will be paid as follows:
 - i) If eligible, the employee will be paid utilizing the EPSL, or
 - ii) The employee will be placed on paid administrative leave after the EPSL has expired
- 2) The employee will continue to stay out of work until the following are met:

- i) At least 72 hours since resolution of fever without use of fever reducing medications,
- ii) Improvement in respiratory symptoms,
- iii) At least 14 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and
- iv) Negative results on COVID-19 test

D) Employee's child and/or spouse exhibit symptoms

- i) If an employee's child or spouse exhibits symptoms, the employee will stay home and utilize paid leave (PTO).
- ii) If an employees child/spouse test positive for COVID-19, the employee will be credited all paid leave (PTO) and placed on administrative leave for a minimum of 14 calendar days. The employee will be required to provide medical documentation that he/she is cleared to return to work.

Travel outside the State of Maine:

It is strongly discouraged for Town employees to travel to non-exempt States during the pandemic. If an employee chooses to travel for personal reasons to a non-exempt state, they must quarantine for 14 days prior to returning to work, or provide a negative COVID-19 test result within 72 hours before returning to work. (At time of this policy, exempt states per the Maine Governor's executive order are: New Hampshire and Vermont,). The employee will need to utilize accrued time off (PTO) or take unpaid leave for any time off needed to quarantine or to get tested after non-essential travel.

Fire/Rescue emergency personnel will follow guidelines from Maine EMS or as outlined by the Policies of the Fire-Rescue Department.

Employee Responsibilities:

- 1) Employees must immediately notify by phone or email only, their supervisor or Department Head, if they have experienced exposure, or received a presumed or confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 or are exhibiting the symptoms associated with the virus.
- 2) If an employee feels that they have contracted COVID-19 as a result of their employment, the employee must file a First Report of Injury with their supervisor/Department Head immediately. The First Report of Injury will be filed with the Finance Department (Treasurer) as soon as it has been completed.
- 3) Department Heads and Supervisors are responsible for being vigilant and watchful for employees who appear sick. If the supervisor suspects an employee is sick, the best way to verify is to ask the employee if she/he has a fever. If the supervisor believes the employee has a fever, the employee should be sent home, seek medical attention, and must receive medical clearance prior to returning to work.

Other Important Information:

- 1) The Town will have a central "purchaser" for necessary items while this policy is active. The central purchaser for all departments (excluding Fire-Rescue) will be the Town Administrator. Items that may be included in central purchasing are: hand sanitizer, cleaning supplies, disinfectant, personal protective items (gloves, masks, gowns, etc), signs for department closures, etc. This list is not all inclusive.

- 2) Notifications of closures to the public- Departments will place signs on all entrances including the following:
 - a) Level of accessibility to the building
 - b) If no access to the public, contact information for the department
- 3) Housekeeping
 - a) Any office needing to take paperwork directly from the public shall remain behind window shields where possible, or otherwise limit proximity for those needing immediate services.
 - b) Each office shall establish a six-foot social buffer where possible
 - c) All departments should utilize approved disinfectant wipes and spray on door handles and other public surfaces to lessen exposure. Building wide cleaning will increase frequency and focus of such cleanings throughout the time of this Policy, giving first priority to public entrances and/or lobbies reducing to the least accessible areas to the Public.
- 4) Staff working in public safety such as Fire-Rescue, should follow the guidelines provided by the WHO, CDC, and Maine EMS
- 5) If an employee is diagnosed/confirmed positive with the virus, the workplace shall be shutdown and disinfected before allowing other employees to return.
- 6) Employee confidentiality is required in accordance with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Adopted 11/12/2020

Stacey - Horn, Kimberly

Winchell Jr., David

Walsh, Edward

Town of Acton Board of Selectmen

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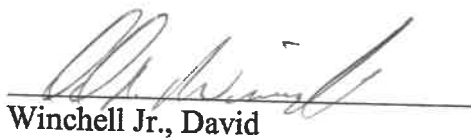
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