



The Corporation of the Township of Huron-Kinloss

Staff Report

Report Title: Pandemic Policies and Procedures Update

Prepared By: Chris Cleave, Fire Chief/CEMC

Department: Fire & Emergency Services

Date: Mar. 4, 2022

Report Number: FIRE-2022-04-12

File Number: C11-FIRE-22

Attachments:

Recommendation:

That the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report Number FIRE2022-04-12 prepared by Chris Cleave, Fire Chief / CEMC.

Background:

On March 17, 2020, the Ontario Government declared a State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

This triggered the beginning of the response by the Township of Huron-Kinloss to the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 23, 2020, the Township of Huron-Kinloss declared a local State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2021, The Township of Huron-Kinloss remained in a State of Local Emergency because of the Pandemic until such time that it was determined the State of Emergency was no longer applicable. On November 01, 2021, the Head of Council terminated the State of Local Emergency.

Initially in response to and throughout the duration of the pandemic the Township of Huron-Kinloss has had to develop and implement numerous workplace policies and procedures as response mechanisms to managing the public health emergency, reducing its impact and to protect the public and our employees.

Currently all regions in Ontario have moved into the Roadmap Exit Step of the province's Reopening Plan.

Discussion:

As part of the Roadmap Exit Step of the province's Reopening Plan, the provincial government has or is planning on lifting various restrictions in relation to the COVID-19 emergency. Even though this is happening for most public settings it is important for Council to recognize that all our approved COVID-19 policies and relevant procedures remain in effect. Including but not limited to the: Social Distancing Policy, Workplace Disinfection Policy, Visitors to Site Policy, and Self-Screening Policy.

This also includes the mandatory face covering (masking) requirements within the Consolidated PPE, Face Covering and Eye Protection Use Procedure regardless of the Province of Ontario lifting of the face covering regulations on March 21, 2022.

Although the masking requirements have been lifted in certain public spaces it was decided by the Planning and Operations Committee that our procedure should remain in effect within our workplace for a period after the mandate was revoked and all staff will still be required to continue to wear appropriate face coverings until further notice.

The purpose of these internal workplace COVID-19 pandemic policies are to allow our corporation to meet our specific obligations under Health and Safety legislation and to mitigate impacts on our ability to provide services.

It is important to understand that:

- the employer must take every reasonable precaution in the protection of a worker,
- an organization does have the option to continue to implement public health measures even after the provincial regulations are rescinded,
- the COVID-19 virus has not gone away and still poses a very real risk to the Townships Continuity of Operations and employee wellness,
- as an organization we need to establish a period of monitoring to ensure that we don't see a spike in COVID-19 cases or close contact exposures of employees because of the provincial masking regulation being lifted.
- Only Council can rescind a policy and reports with recommendations to lift our policies will be brought forward to Council at the appropriate times.

The Planning and Operations Committee is continuing to monitor the COVID-19 situation with the intention of developing a gradual plan to safely return to pre COVID-19 operations.

As a part of our monitoring, the Community Emergency Management Coordinator(s) are currently reviewing all the Pandemic related policies and procedures and will be bringing forward recommendations to Council to ensure consistency among the various policy statements and other relevant content amendments that will reflect the appropriate level of ongoing implementation through the duration of this Pandemic, its eventual transition to an endemic and for any potential future public health emergencies that may impact our

Continuity of Operations. Further reports and the appropriate by-laws will be brought forward to Council upon the completion of this review period.

Financial Impacts:

None

Strategic Alignment / Link:

We are an accessible community that offers opportunities for everyone by having services and amenities nearby.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Chris Cleave Fire Chief/CEMC

Approved By:

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer