



R.M. of North Battleford No. 437

PANDEMIC POLICY

Policy No. 11-2009

Pandemic Policy

That the R.M. of North Battleford No. 437 acknowledge and accept the attached Pandemic Contingency Plan.

Passed by resolution of Council on November 17th, 2009.

Amended and approved by resolution of Council on March 18, 2020.

R.M. of North Battleford No. 437 Pandemic Influenza Contingency Plan

1. Introduction:

The goal of pandemic influenza contingency preparedness is to reduce illness and death and minimize the disruption of services normally expected by society.

Based upon recommendations by the World Health Organization, the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Province of Saskatchewan and incorporating recommendations from both the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Municipal Affairs as well as Prairie North Health Region Authority, this document has been created as a living plan that is continuously updated and revised as new information becomes available. The document is to be utilized as a mechanism to guide appropriate decision-making and action when it may be needed. It is not intended to be an all-encompassing strategy to manage all aspects of a pandemic outbreak, but rather a framework for decision making and managing the available resources of the municipal corporation.

Specifically, this plan is designed to address the ways and means by which the R.M. of North Battleford No. 437 will continue to deliver essential municipal services in the event that a pandemic influenza outbreak causes high absenteeism rates with municipal workers. Furthermore, it will provide guidelines for limiting the spread of influenza among workers and those accessing municipal services.

Depending on the severity of the pandemic, the R.M. of North Battleford No. 437 may be required to deliver municipal services with 30% to 50% of all employees unable to report to work due to illness themselves, or the need to provide care to sick family members or dependents. This equates to a potential absentee rate of 1 to 3 or more employees at some point during an influenza outbreak.

This influenza plan will be activated if 2 or more staff persons are off work due to influenza-like illness (ILI).

2. Information for Employees

Employees will be expected to report to work as usual unless they are ill. Any employees exhibiting influenza-like illness (ILI) symptoms will be encouraged to stay home and to self-isolate to avoid exposing co-workers and others to the illness. Employees who are calling in sick must indicate if the sick call is due to influenza-like illness. Employees reporting for work who are obviously displaying ILI symptoms will be immediately instructed to go home by their supervisor.

Information has been and will continue to be made available to all employees regarding proper etiquette for coughing and sneezing, proper hand washing techniques and safe hygiene practices as recommended by provincial and regional health agencies.

All municipal employees will be encouraged to consider getting vaccinated for prevention of influenza; however, vaccinations will not be mandatory. In cases where the costs are not covered by the Province, the municipality has health benefits coverage which will cover the costs of vaccinations for the R.M. of North Battleford No. 437 employees who are vaccinated for prevention of influenza.

Key messages to the R.M. of North Battleford No. 437 employees will be:

- Stay home if you are sick. If you report for work exhibiting flu symptoms you will be sent home
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly and use hand sanitizer frequently
- Avoid touching your mouth and eyes
- Disinfect your work station at least twice daily (telephone, door handles, keyboards and commonly touched surfaces)
- Cough or sneeze into your sleeve
- Get a flu shot

3. Information for Municipal Residents:

The R.M. of North Battleford No. 437 will make information available to residents as it is provided by the Prairie North Health Region or other competent authorities and agencies. Such information will be distributed as soon as it becomes available via brochures, posters, displays, mail outs or in the newspaper as directed by the agencies responsible and as the situation warrants.

Communication with residents will identify the essential services that will be maintained as well as those that may be suspended. Such communications will acknowledge that people may be inconvenienced in certain instances; however, for the health and safety of everyone involved, it is unavoidable. Everyone's co-operation, understanding and patience will be respectfully requested.

4. Defining "Essential Services"

In determining what services are essential during a pandemic, consideration has been given to the general public and the services that they will require, as well as those services which will be necessary in order to maintain the health, welfare, and the morale of the employees of the R.M. of North Battleford No. 437. There may be certain services that are not specifically identified as essential in this plan that the R.M. of North Battleford No. 437 could continue to provide as staff resources permit. However, the ability to provide these services will need to be addressed as requests for the services arise.

In summary, the key services that will need to be maintained to a greater or lesser degree are:

- General Government Services (i.e. revenue collection, accounts receivable, account processing and payroll)
- Transportation Services (i.e. road maintenance services such as: snow removal, rectifying icy conditions, blading, gravelling etc.) For example, sanding of intersections could be less frequent or temporarily suspended during extremely cold weather.

A more detailed analysis and plan for each of the identified essential services follows:

5. General Government Services:

Regardless of a pandemic influenza, all suppliers and vendors will continue to expect prompt payment of their accounts. Likewise, employees will also require that regular payroll continues to ensure that they are able to meet their own ongoing financial obligations. In the event of a serious influenza with a high mortality rate, the office doors will remain closed and locked to the public in order to keep staff isolated and healthy.

By far the greatest percentage of municipal revenue is collected through regular mail via Canada Post or private courier services. Combined with the fact that the R.M. of North Battleford No. 437 has a sufficient financial cash flow, the ability to fund a continuation of municipal services in the event that other forms of revenue collections are delayed for a number of days is highly probable, with the length of the delay being dependent on the time of year. In the case of a protracted event, residents will be able to drop off their payments in the Post Office mail slot to be collected at least daily by municipal employees. Those payments can then be processed behind locked doors.

Any employees handling cash during a pandemic or while the threat of influenza is high, must wash their hands frequently (approximately every 5th customer) and are expected to use alcohol-based sanitizer after every transaction. Communal pens that are generally available for clients to use in writing cheques will be removed. A supply of inexpensive pens will be available for clients that do not bring their own pen and the client will keep the pen that is provided. Face masks may be made available to front-line employees dealing with the public directly if the influenza is considered to be more dangerous than usual.

Commonly-touched surfaces in the office should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily. This includes keyboards, computer mice, telephones, drawer handles etc. All door handles and the front counter surface must also be cleaned at least twice daily and immediately after anyone exhibiting flu symptoms has been in the office.

6. Transportation Services

Regardless of a pandemic influenza, the agricultural users and all users of the municipal road infrastructure including the traveling public will continue to expect prompt maintenance of municipal roads. Road maintenance services such as snow removal, sanding, graveling and blading could be affected if the pandemic causes a reduction in the number of employees that normally perform those functions. However, existing staff that are not affected will be requested to work additional hours to ensure that the level of road maintenance services is not reduced, in extreme cases the level of service may have to be reduced in the event of a severe pandemic.

7. Other Considerations:

Meetings and appointments between the municipal employees and various stakeholders will continue. However, employees will decline face-to-face meetings with people who are exhibiting flu symptoms and will reschedule at such time as that person is healthy or arrangements will be made to conduct the appointment or exchange of information over the phone.

Essential face-to-face meetings (including council meetings) can still take place provided that appropriate social distancing measures are observed. Face masks may be used by the participants in such meetings where the influenza is thought to be particularly dangerous or at the request of the attendees. Non-essential meetings will be postponed until a later date or conducted via telephone or conference call.

An Influenza Preparedness Kit will be made ready and stored at the R.M. Office. This kit will contain a supply of disinfectant wipes for commonly-touched surfaces, hand sanitizer and nitrile gloves. The kit may be expanded to include face masks where deemed necessary by the appropriate authorities due to the degree of threat posed by the pandemic.

This Preparedness Plan will be reviewed on an on-going basis to ensure that it is in alignment with the information that is provided from health authorities including but not limited to Saskatchewan's Chief Medical Officer and to incorporate any changes from lessons learned that are necessary to make certain it continues to serve its intended purpose.

Toll Free Healthline	1-877-800-0002
Emergency Numbers	911
Hospital:	446-6600
RCMP:	446-1720
Ambulance:	911
Sask Power:	1-800-757-6937
Sask Energy:	1-888-700-0427
Sask Tel:	1-800-727-5835
Sask 1 st Call:	1-866-828-4888

Appendices:

- a) Ministry of Health; How to Differentiate: Cold, Allergy, Flu
- b) Ministry of health; H1N1 Decision Chart
- c) Ministry of Health; Vaccine Myths and Misconceptions



NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19): Interim IPAC Measures

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Screening	<p>Screen individuals with influenza-like illness with one or more of the following exposure criteria (note this may expand as situation evolves)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to an affected area (https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/latest-travel-health-advice.html) in the 14 days before onset of symptoms • OR close contact (individuals who provided care for, is a family member of, or who had similar physical contact) with a confirmed or probable case of 2019-nCoV • OR close contact with a person who has acute respiratory illness who has been to an affected area within 14 day before their onset of illness • Refer to www.saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus for the most up to day criteria. Keep current with ongoing updates from Public Health Canada or WHO for information on affected areas
Signs & Symptoms	Cough, fever, shortness of breath or other respiratory symptoms
Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations (interim)	
Individuals with signs & symptoms (Source Control)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post signs in public areas reminding symptomatic patients to alert staff • Identify separate waiting areas for a person with a potential infection, if unable to isolate immediately • Apply procedure or surgical masks on individuals and accompanying caregiver(s) immediately • Encourage patients and caregivers to perform hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
Patient Placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients who are not considered critically ill: single room (private toilet preferred) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If an aerosol generating medical procedure (AGMP) is required, move to an Airborne Infection Isolation Room (AIIR) if possible or follow facility AIIR protocol • Critically ill patients with suspected or confirmed 2019-nCoV: an AIIR is recommended due to the high likelihood of requiring AGMPs on a regular basis <p>*Consider maintaining a record of all persons entering patient's room, including all staff and visitors</p>
Hand Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform hand hygiene using alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) or soap and water, as described in your Routine Practices and when removing soiled PPE • Educate patients and visitors about how and when to use hand hygiene products
Additional Precautions & Personal Protective Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate signage is visible on entry to room • Droplet & Contact Precautions require gloves, gown, procedure or surgical mask, and facial/eye protection before entry into patient room <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prescription glasses do not meet OH&S regulations for eye protection ○ Proper wearing of masks requires a snug fit over the nose and under the chin. Change mask when it becomes moist.



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See additional PPE resources on back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airborne & Contact Precautions (during AGMP in a non-critical patient OR for the critically ill patient requiring ongoing AGMPs). All staff require gloves, gowns, facial/eye protection and a fit-tested N95 respirator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure an airtight seal on the face over the top of the nose and under the chin
Patient Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid moving or transporting patient out of isolation room unless medically necessary • Notify EMS or receiving department about additional precautions prior to transport
Patient Care Items and Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use disposable equipment when possible or dedicate reusable equipment for patient use until discharge • If reusable equipment cannot be dedicated for single patient use, clean and disinfect between patients • Used meal trays and dishes do not require special handling • Special handling of linen and waste is not required • Environmental cleaning as per existing protocols
Visitor management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize visitors to those who are essential (e.g., immediate family member or parent, guardian, or primary caregiver) • Limit visitor movement within site to visiting patient and then exiting facility directly after visit • Instruct visitors to speak with staff before entering patient's room to assess risk to visitor's health and ability to adhere to Droplet & Contact Precautions • Provide visitors with instruction on and supervision with appropriate use of required PPE
Discontinuation of Precautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with IPAC and most responsible physician

Additional Resources:

Alberta Health Services: [PPE Donning poster](#) [PPE Doffing poster](#) Guide to PPE ([narrated slide show](#))

References

World Health Organization: Infection prevention and control during health care when novel coronavirus (nCoV) infection is suspected. Interim guidance 25 January 2020. [https://www.who.int/publications-detail/infection-prevention-and-control-during-health-care-when-novel-coronavirus-\(ncov\)-infection-is-suspected-20200125](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/infection-prevention-and-control-during-health-care-when-novel-coronavirus-(ncov)-infection-is-suspected-20200125)

Infection Prevention and Control for Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV): Interim Guidance for Acute Healthcare Settings Feb 3, 2020 <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/interim-guidance-acute-healthcare-settings.html>

Winnipeg Regional Health Authority: 2019 nCoV (novel Coronavirus 2019) (personal communication)

Alberta Health Services: Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Interim IPC Recommendations. <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/hl-ipc-emerging-issues-ncov.pdf>

Ministry of Health-Kingdom Saudi Arabia: Middle East Respiratory Syndrome us; Guidelines for Healthcare Professionals. Version 5.1, May 21, 2018. <https://www.moh.gov.sa/CCC/healthp/regulations/Documents/MERS-CoV%20Guidelines%20for%20Healthcare%20Professionals%20-%20May%202018%20-%20v5.1%20%281%29.pdf>

Not Feeling Well?

If You:

Have a cough, fever, or
shortness of breath

AND

Have recently travelled

Tell a staff member immediately
about your travel history.

You may be asked further questions to provide safe care.