



## **TOWN OF WELLS**

### **PANDEMIC POLICY**

#### **PURPOSE**

It is the policy of the Town of Wells (the “Town”) to provide a safe and healthy environment for all employees and the public during the threat of seasonal and other viruses with the potential for regional or world outbreak or pandemic, as classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) or United States Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

**Every** employee should be familiar with this plan and be prepared to act immediately if an employee illness or event occurs.

#### **APPLICABILITY**

This Policy (the “Policy”) is applicable to all Town of Wells employees, including regular full-time, regular part-time, temporary, and seasonal employees. The Policy is also applicable to board/committee members and volunteers. Individual departments within the Town may issue guidance that may be more (but not less) protective of employee and public health than this Policy, based on the department’s specific needs.

#### **GOVERNANCE**

This Policy is based on information obtained from the Maine Center for Disease Control, CDC, WHO, Emergency Management Agencies and Executive Order or Proclamations. Information is subject to change rapidly.

This plan will be utilized in conjunction with the Town of Wells Communicable Disease Exposure Control Plan, Human Resources Policies, Procedures and Benefits Manual and Collective Bargaining Agreements and all other Town/Departmental Standard Operating Procedures (SOP’s).

This policy is subject to change as events and information changes.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

The Town’s primary goal is to protect Employees and Citizens by:

1. Reducing and preventing the spread of COVID-19 among staff.
2. Protecting people at higher risk for complications.
3. Maintaining critical operations, public safety and health.
4. Minimizing the impact on residents, customers and businesses.
5. Being proactive by taking measures to minimize risk.

#### **KEY MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS**

The Town’s primary goal is to provide services at the highest possible operational level, while protecting the health and safety of our community. Town operations may be reduced as the Town is required to reduce staffing levels in order to achieve that goal. Essential and non-essential employees will be identified to ensure that services and operational support is maintained for the Town and Citizens.

All employees are subject to be called back to work during a government shutdown, depending on the need and circumstances.

### **LIMITING TRANSMISSION IN THE WORKPLACE – EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY**

The Town will take all practical measures to reduce the risk of exposure to coronavirus, or transmission of the virus, within Town workplaces. Town employees, volunteers, and board/committee members must therefore comply with the following guidelines:

Employees who report to work having a fever or flu-like symptoms, or who become sick during the workday, should be separated from others and immediately sent home. Any employee experiencing such symptoms should seek treatment, through telemedicine if possible. Individuals should **NOT** go directly to the hospital or urgent care unless directed by a physician. This will minimize the risk of exposure. *If the employee has underlying health conditions or is otherwise considered high risk, that information should be disclosed to the Telehealth Online physician and/or the employee's medical provider.*

Physical contact between individuals, including handshaking, is prohibited in the workplace.

Face-to-face contact should be limited to that which is absolutely necessary in order to conduct official business. In person meetings should be limited to the smallest number of individuals possible, and to the shortest duration possible. Wherever at all possible, employees, volunteers, and board/committee members should replace in-person meetings or communication with email, phones, and/or teleconferencing.

Personal Protective Equipment (“PPE”) must be used appropriately at all times, as required by a specific position.

Any material that has come into contact with any customer, patient, or member of the public must be washed, or disposed of appropriately.

All employees, volunteers, and board/committee members must practice other sanitary measures to prevent the spread of germs. This includes frequent handwashing with soap and water for at least twenty seconds; covering their mouths and noses with tissues when they cough or sneeze, and immediately discarding the tissue (and washing hands); and sanitizing all workspace areas frequently.

If an employee is diagnosed/confirmed positive with the virus, the workplace will be shut down and disinfected before allowing other employees to return. The workplace will be re-opened based on CDC guidance at that time.

Employee CONFIDENTIALITY is REQUIRED in accordance with Town policy and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

### **LIMITING TRANSMISSION IN THE WORKPLACE – TOWN RESPONSIBILITY**

The Town will take the following measures to reduce the risk of virus transmission in the workplace:

COORDINATION The Town Manager will coordinate cases/events with Select Board, Emergency Management Team and staff.

NOTIFICATION Employees must immediately notify their supervisor or the Director of Human Resources if they have been in contact with any individual who has received a presumed or confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, or if they have received a presumed or confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.

EXISTING LEAVE POLICIES Use of Family Medical Leave, sick time and sick bank will remain in effect in accordance with state and federal law, and with collective bargaining agreements and Human Resources Policies and Procedures. Individual requests will be reviewed and modifications to policies implemented on a case by case basis with non-precedent setting actions.

UNPAID LEAVE If an Employee does not have or has utilized all accrued sick and/or vacation time, the employee may request unpaid leave consistent with the Town's current leave policies and procedures. Such requests will be approved or denied at the discretion of the Town Manager, in consultation with the employee's supervisor.

WORKERS COMPENSATION Workers Compensation/Risk Management will be contacted for any employee exposed while on duty to determine current policy and procedure for coverage requirements. Workers' Compensation provider guidance is subject to change. – In the event that an employee is presumed or confirmed to be COVID positive, and the employee receives workers' compensation due to the employee's inability to work as a result of being COVID positive, the Town will cover the difference between the amount paid to the employee through worker's compensation and the employee's normal pay, for up to three weeks.

STAGGERED SHIFTS The Town Manager may schedule shifts so as to reduce population density at any worksite at any given time. Any reassignment of shifts will be done in order to minimize the risk of virus transmission, and maximize the operational effectiveness of the department.

HYGIENE The Town will conduct enhanced frequent cleanings of commonly touched surfaces, like door knobs and handrails. Employees are responsible for frequently cleaning their own office areas (desk, phone, computer keyboard, etc.) Reminder posters will be placed in visible areas throughout each facility that encourage staying home when sick and cough, sneeze and hand hygiene etiquette.

RETURN TO WORK Employees must provide documentation from their health care provider of COVID-19 diagnosis and/or quarantine. If the employee was quarantined due to exposure, then the employee must be symptom free for 14 days before returning to work. This requirement may be updated based on guidance from the CDC.

Employees should stay home until 72 hours after a fever (99.0 or higher) has subsided. This means no fever without the use of medications such as Tylenol or Motrin.

Supervisors are responsible for being vigilant and watching for employees who appear to be sick. If a supervisor suspects an employee has an Influenza-like illness, the best way to verify this is to ask the employee whether they have a fever. If the supervisor believes the employee has a fever, the employee should be sent home and should receive medical clearance prior to returning to workplace.

The Town Manager and Board of Selectmen will have the ability to make decisions which impact the Town's services during a pandemic.

#### **FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT (FFCRA) - PAY FOR LEAVE DUE TO COVID-19**

**The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) requires certain employers to provide their employees with paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to Covid-19 (See 1-6 below). Those provisions, as outlined below, apply from April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.**

**The Town reserves the right to make changes to the contents of this policy as deemed appropriate by State and/or Federal law.**

PAID LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS Generally, employers covered under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act must provide employees: Up to two weeks (80 hours, or a part-time employee's two-week equivalent) of paid sick leave based on the higher of their regular rate of pay, or the applicable state or Federal minimum wage, paid at: • 100% for qualifying reasons #1-3 below, up to \$511 daily and \$5,110 total; • 2/3 for qualifying reasons #4 and 6 below, up to \$200 daily and \$2,000 total; and • Up to 12 weeks of paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave paid at 2/3 for qualifying reason #5 below for up to \$200 daily and \$12,000 total. A part-time employee is eligible for leave for the number of hours that the employee is normally scheduled to work over that period.

ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES In general, employees of private sector employers with fewer than 500 employees, and certain public sector employers, are eligible for up to two weeks of fully or partially paid sick leave for COVID-19 related reasons (see below). Employees who have been employed for at least 30 days prior to their leave request

may be eligible for up to an additional 10 weeks of partially paid expanded family and medical leave for reason #5 below.

QUALIFYING REASONS FOR LEAVE RELATED TO COVID-19 An employee is entitled to take leave related to COVID-19 if the employee is unable to work, including unable to telework, because the employee:

1. Is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19;
2. Has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19;
3. Is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;
4. Is caring for an individual subject to an order described in (1) or self-quarantine as described in (2);
5. Is caring for his or her child whose school or place of care is closed (or child care provider is unavailable) due to COVID-19 related reasons; or
6. Is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services related to Covid-19.

SUPPLEMENTING ACCRUED LEAVE In some cases; paid leave pursuant to the FFCRA is equal to 2/3 of your regular rate of pay. You may opt to supplement your paid leave with accrued time to receive 100% pay.

#### **REFERENCES**

World Health Organization  
United States Center for Disease Control  
Maine Center for Disease Control  
United States Department of Labor – Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Maine Emergency Management Agency  
York County Emergency Management Agency  
United States Presidential Executive Order or Proclamation  
State of Maine Governor Executive Order or Proclamation

**Effective: May 19, 2020**  
**Approved BOS: May 19, 2020**