



TOWNSHIP OF NORTH HURON

REPORT

Item No. 2021-20

REPORT TO: Reeve Bailey and Members of Council
PREPARED BY: Dwayne Evans, CAO
DATE: 04/10/2021
SUBJECT: CAO-2021-20 Draft Employee Vaccination Policy
ATTACHMENTS: DRAFT Employee Vaccination Policy

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Council of the Township of North Huron hereby receives the report prepared by the CAO, dated October 4, 2021, regarding a draft Employee Vaccination Policy;

AND FURTHER, THAT Council approves of the Employee Vaccination Policy, as presented;

AND FURTHER, THAT Council directs the Clerk to prepare a by-law for the October 18, 2021 Regular meeting to adopt the Employee Vaccination Policy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To meet the Township of North Huron's obligations under Federal and Provincial law and the Occupational Health and Safety Act ("OHSA"), Council needs to adopt an employee vaccination policy for its workforce. The purpose and intent of the vaccination policy is to encourage and promote the maximization of vaccination rates and ensure that all reasonable preventative precautions and measures are in place to protect the health and safety of all employees, volunteers, and contractors.

In response to evolving data around the transmissibility of the Delta variant, the Provincial government announced mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policies for high-risk settings including licensed child care facilities. All mandated requirements for Childcare staff are being implemented at North Huron's Child Care facilities. The mandatory policy requirements included implementing a vaccination status verification process, a human rights exemption request, vaccination education, and an antigen testing protocol for unvaccinated employees. Further to this, the Recreation Complex is also considered a high-risk setting and is currently following provincially mandated screening requirements of all patrons entering the building.

As noted above and to fulfil legislative requirements, a draft Employee Vaccination Policy has been prepared. This policy, or a version thereof, would apply to all staff. To inform the development of the policy, a confidential survey was sent to all staff via email. Staff who willingly participated in the survey had the options to identify whether: (1) they are fully vaccinated; (2) have been granted an exemption by a medical professional; (3) are not fully vaccinated but plan to get vaccinated; (4) not vaccinated and do not have an approved medical exemption; or (5) not willing to disclose. The survey results revealed that North Huron does not fall under the categories of: fully vaccinated; not willing to get vaccinated and do not have an approved medical exemption; and not fully vaccinated but intend to get vaccinated.

Throughout the pandemic the Township of North Huron has diligently assessed and followed the guidance of the federal and provincial governments and public health agencies. The Township has

also followed and implemented all prescribed health and safety measures and has taken reasonable steps to safeguard: the health and well-being of employees; community members; and others who spend time in North Huron's facilities. COVID-19 vaccinations are available to all Canadians and according to public health organizations, vaccinations reduce the risk of contracting the virus and are effective at preventing hospitalization and death.

The Township's Emergency Operations Committee reviewed and discussed a draft vaccination policy. The Committee's recommendation is to: (1) encourage all staff to get vaccinated; (2) provide staff with information and education on the benefits of vaccinations; and (3) continue to monitor, implement and adhere to provincial requirements and public health agencies.

Based on the recommendation of the Emergency Operations Committee, the attached draft policy is being presented for Council's review and consideration.

DISCUSSION

The Federal government and all Provincial governments have broad powers during a public health emergency to mandate proactive measures to safeguard the population including requiring vaccination against transmissible diseases. For non-Federal and Provincial employees, the federal and provincial governments have deferred decisions regarding the vaccination of employees to employers.

The Township of North Huron is following the current mandate and continues to have workplace health and safety measures in place, including daily screening, mandatory masking, physical distancing, hand hygiene, and enhanced cleaning. Information and education sessions on the benefits of vaccination will be distributed to all employees subject to Council's approval of the attached policy.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Employees who fall under the High-risk sector setting (e.g. Child Care) have the option to provide proof of vaccination or negative test results. If an employee chooses not be vaccinated, they are required to provide proof of negative rapid antigen testing before their scheduled shift. These employees are required to have testing done on their own time and at their own cost because not getting vaccinated is a choice.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Comments received from Council, if any, will be incorporated into the final Employee Vaccination Policy. The policy will be presented at the October 18, 2021 Regular meeting for Council's approval. The Township's Joint Health and Safety Committee reviewed the attached draft policy and supports the policy in principle.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN

As this report stems from the Township of North Huron's obligations under Federal and Provincial law and the Occupational Health and Safety Act ("OHSA"), no consideration was given to the Township of North Huron's Strategic Plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dwayne Evans". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a stylized "E".

Dwayne Evans, CAO