

# Fitness to Work Policy



## 1. **POLICY**

- Employees who are exhibiting symptoms of an infectious illness or influenza during a pandemic period must not come to work. They must be sent home to effectively limit the spread of infectious illnesses.
- Employee's fitness to work is determined by their responses to the infection from as shown in ATTACHMENT A.
- In addition to regular Short-Term Disability/Sick Pay Benefits, leave provisions will be affected as follows:
- Leave provisions will be in accordance with the provisions of the Employment Standards Act, or any other legislation; or
- Any other legislation issued in response to an outbreak or pandemic if applicable, whichever is greater.

## 2. **PURPOSE**

- To prevent the spread of pandemic influenza and all other infectious illnesses in the workplace and within the population in general is the stated purpose of this Policy and Procedure.

## 3. **SCOPE**

- This Statement of Policy and Procedure applies to all employees.

## 4. **RESPONSIBILITY**

- Managing the overall administration of this policy including overseeing the absences of employees who are ill with pandemic influenza or an infectious illness, or those employees who have been in close contact with ill employees, and managing their return to work is the responsibility of the **Infectious Illness Liaison**.
- Employees who believe that fellow worker(s) exhibit symptoms of an infectious illness or pandemic influenza have the responsibility to immediately report their belief to the **Liaison**.
- If an employee has been in close contact with a coworker who is or is suspected

of being ill with an infectious illness or pandemic influenza, then that employee has the responsibility for notifying the **Liaison** or a designated appointee.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

- A “**Close Contact**” is defined as an individual who has cared for or lived with a person known to have an infectious disease or who has a high likelihood of direct contact with respiratory secretions and/or body fluids of a patient known to have an infectious disease. This direct contact would include sharing eating or drinking utensils, and close conversation (within one metre).
- “**Infectious Illness**” (or “**Infectious Disease**”) is defined as an illness due to a pathogen or its toxic product, which arises through transmission from an infected person, an infected animal, or a contaminated inanimate object to a susceptible host.
- “**Pandemic**” is defined as a worldwide epidemic that has been declared as such by the World Health Organization.

## 6. REFERENCES and RELATED STATEMENTS of POLICY and PROCEDURE

Emergency Program Act (British Columbia)

Employment Standards Act (British Columbia) Public

Health Act (British Columbia)

HR 5.07 BC – Personal Information Protection

HR 6.10 BC-Civil Emergencies and Business Interruptions HR 6.52

BC – Restricted Access

HR 6.53 BC – Work From Home

HR 6.54 BC – Declared Emergencies

## 7. PROCEDURE

- Reports of illness from an employee by phone or email.
- The employee should be contacted by telephone by the designated **Liaison** and questioned if that employee is exhibiting any of the symptoms listed on the questionnaire.
- The **Infectious Illness or Pandemic Liaison** should reassure the employee if the employee’s symptoms do not correspond with those on the questionnaire and further advise the employee to stay in contact and to see a physician if needed.
- On inquiry with the **Liaison** if some or all of the employee’s symptoms correspond with those on the questionnaire, the **Liaison** should advise as follows:
  - Until the symptoms abate, the employee should stay at home.
  - Compile a report particularizing the telephone interview including noting any staff and/or visitors the employer has had contact.
  - Ensure that the workstation of the employee is cleaned and disinfected.
  - In the event an employee reports to work exhibiting symptoms of illness:
  - The employee’s condition will be identified by their responses to the

questionnaire.

- An approved surgical mask or other appropriate PPE should immediately be provided to the employee.
- Work for the employer must immediately cease and the employee must contact a health professional. When leaving work, the employee should avoid any form of public transport.
- When the employee leaves work, the employee's manager must be informed of the departure.
- The workstation of the employee must be cleaned and disinfected.
- If an employee exhibits symptom while working on the job:
- The **Infectious Illness Liaison** must be contacted by fellow employees or anyone in the workplace who observes that an employee is exhibiting symptoms of illness.
- An approved surgical mask or any other appropriate PPE must be immediately provided to the employee and they must put it on.
- Immediately, the employee must leave work and contact a health professional. When leaving work, the employee must avoid any form of public transport.
- Contacts of the employee should be dealt with as follows:
  - Be advised that they may have been infected.
  - Asked to go home.
  - Await further instructions.
- When the employee leaves work, the manager of the employee must be informed.
- The workstation of the employee must be cleaned and disinfected.
- Any information collected regarding an employee's symptoms, health, treatment, recovery, or any other personal medical information shall be governed in accordance with SPP E5.07 – Personal Information Protection.

## 8. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A- Influenza-Like Infection Assessment Form

### ATTACHMENT A

#### INFLUENZA-LIKE INFECTION ASSESSMENT FORM

If you have experienced the following:

Sudden onset of respiratory illness (e.g., shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, coughing up bloody sputum, wheezing),

**AND**

Fever greater than 38 degrees Celsius,

**AND**

Any of the following: Sore throat Aching joints

Muscle aches or weakness Extreme drowsiness

Feeling disoriented and confused Extreme pain in the ear

**FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY AND THAT OF OTHERS, YOU SHOULD GO HOME IMMEDIATELY AND CONTACT YOUR FAMILY DOCTOR.**