



## AGENDA ITEM

### HR Manual Update – Sick Time

**March 26, 2020**

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#### **BACKGROUND**

During the global pandemic COVID-19 outbreak, Lacombe County wants to ensure that its employees are taken care of financially and are given adequate time-off (i.e. to properly self-isolate, take care of themselves or family members if they are sick, arrange alternate child care, etc.) during this challenging and unprecedented time.

Additionally, Lacombe County wants to provide a safe and healthy work environment for its employees and other members of the public who are on County property and/or accessing County services. This may include: providing employees alternative work arrangements (i.e. working from home, working non-standard hours, etc.); accessing their sick leave bank; accessing their vacation, flex or overtime banks; going on employment insurance; allowing employees to go into a deficit position in earned sick days, and; accessing the 14 day unpaid job protected leave (as per Employment Standards).

Administration is seeking Council's consideration and approval of the proposed revisions to the HR Manual.

#### **ANALYSIS**

The proposed revisions clarify:

1. when a doctor's certificate is typically requested for during normal sick circumstances (after 3 consecutive sick days);
2. that an employee is able to use sick time during exceptional circumstances to care for other members in their household (child or dependent adult) or arrange for child care (maximum amount to be decided upon by the County Manager);
3. that the County Manager, or designate, is able to allow an employee to use unearned sick time during exceptional circumstances (i.e. the global pandemic COVID-19 outbreak).



The chart below indicates how some of the other municipalities are paying employees during this pandemic:

Municipality	Actions Taken
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paying all employees if need to self-isolate through sick time. If they don't have sick time, paying employees through the general operating fund.</li> </ul>
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paying all employees if sick or need to self-isolate through the general operating fund.</li> </ul>
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring alternate work arrangements (working from home or changing work that does not require contact with other people).</li> <li>• Full-time permanent employees – able to use paid sick time and short term disability.</li> </ul>
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring alternate work arrangements.</li> </ul>
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring alternate work arrangements.</li> <li>• Allowing employees to go into a deficit position with earned sick days.</li> </ul>
F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing employees to go into a deficit position with earned sick days.</li> </ul>
G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring alternate work arrangements</li> <li>• Allowing employees to go into a deficit position with earned sick days.</li> </ul>

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

The policy revisions as presented have no budget implications. At this time, we are not looking at hiring additional resources to cover off COVID-19 related absences.

### **LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Section 3 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) states the purposes of a municipality are: 1) to provide good government, 2) to provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of council, are necessary or desirable for all or part of the municipality, and 3) to develop and maintain safe and viable communities.
  
2. Section 201(1) of the MGA states that a council is responsible for:

- (a) developing and evaluating the policies and programs of the municipality,  
and
- (c) carrying out the powers, duties and functions expressly given to it under this  
or any other enactment.

3. *Covid-19 support for employers and employees* section of the Government of Alberta website.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN**

The following elements of the County's Strategic Plan are relevant to this issue:

Our Mission:

"Building a safe and vibrant community through leadership, innovation and the development of healthy relationships".

Our Key Principles:

"Recognizing our history and solid foundation, we approach the role of providing the best possible level of municipal services for our citizens through a base of collaborative and supportive teamwork".

Human Resources Strategy Goal "A":

Attract, engage, and retain new and existing employees.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approve the following resolution:

*That Council approve the HR Manual as amended.*

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**PREPARED BY: Meghan Richer-Poth, Manager of Human Resources**



**REVIEWED BY: Tim Timmons, County Manager**

