

Council Policy

Policy Number: ply_Council_COVID-19

Council COVID-19 Policy

Date Approved by Council:

Resolution No.:

Mayor:

County Commissioner:

1. Purpose

This policy implements COVID-19 related health and safety protocols to provide a safe and healthy work environment for Councillors, County staff, and the public, by decreasing the potential exposure to, transmission of, and infection with COVID-19 at or within County work sites.

2. Revision History

Approval Date	Revision Number	Modification
<i>Year/Month/Date</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>New Document</i>

3. Persons/Areas Affected

County Council
County Administration
Public Stakeholders

4. Definitions

The following definitions and interpretations apply to this policy:

Administration means the County Commissioner or his delegates.

authorizing health professional means a nurse practitioner, physician, or psychologist who holds a practice permit under the *Health Professions Act*.

Council means the Council of Sturgeon County.

Councillor means a member of the Council of Sturgeon County, including the Mayor.

County means the Municipality of Sturgeon County.

County Commissioner means the Chief Administrative Officer of Sturgeon County.

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COVID-19 rapid testing means a screening and testing process that identifies pre-symptomatic and asymptomatic COVID-19 cases. COVID-19 rapid testing must be performed on Health Canada approved testing devices and must be used in compliance with testing guidelines issued by Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health and in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance. For the purposes of this Policy, COVID-19 rapid testing does not include self-testing at home.

COVID-19 symptoms mean symptoms of COVID-19 identified by Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health, including fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, runny nose, and/or sore throat.

COVID-19 vaccine means a COVID-19 vaccination authorized by Health Canada. The following vaccines are currently approved:

- (a) Pfizer- BioNTech/Comirnaty
- (b) Moderna/Spikevax
- (c) AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD/Vaxzevria
- (d) Janssen (Johnson & Johnson)

face covering means a medical or non-medical mask or other face covering that fully covers the nose, mouth, and chin.

fully vaccinated means a person who has received all required doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, including having observed any required waiting period (typically a two-week period following a second or single dose). If Health Canada requires additional measures or doses to meet their definition of "fully vaccinated" (such as "booster" vaccine doses), a person must complete those additional measures or receive those additional doses to be considered fully vaccinated.

Mayor means the chief elected official of Sturgeon County.

medical exception letter means written confirmation provided to a Councillor by an authorizing health professional which verifies that the Councillor has a health condition that prevents the Councillor from wearing a face covering while attending an indoor, enclosed, or substantially enclosed County work site and clearly sets out the information required by section 7.2.1.1 of this Policy.

proof of vaccination means a copy of a person's Alberta Health Services issued COVID-19 immunization record or equivalent proof of vaccination documents from another Canadian province.

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Public Health Order means any current order issued by the Alberta Chief Medical Officer of Health related to COVID-19.

work site means a location where a Councillor is, or is likely to be, engaged in the business of Council, including a County vehicle.

5. Policy Statement

- 5.1. COVID-19 is a recognized workplace hazard. Sturgeon County has a legal obligation to protect and maintain the health and safety of employees and visitors at its work sites and Council has a role in showing leadership and modelling the way. Council is committed to taking necessary steps to protect the health, safety, and welfare of Councillors, County employees, and members of the public from the hazard of COVID-19.
- 5.2. Council recognizes that Sturgeon County manages the risks related to COVID-19 through the hierarchy of hazard controls (engineering controls, administrative controls, and personal protective equipment). When a hazard cannot be managed by a single method, a combination of controls must be used.
- 5.3. The World Health Organization, Health Canada, Alberta Health, and other health authorities have consistently advised that immunization against COVID-19 (an engineering control) is safe and is the most effective way to prevent or minimize transmission of COVID-19, and in connection, ultimately protect County Councillors, employees, and members of the public.
- 5.4. Council has determined that it is necessary for the protection of the workplace and the community to maximize COVID-19 vaccination rates of Councillors as a further control measure in mitigating the hazard of COVID-19.
- 5.5. Sturgeon County Administration has closely monitored the hazard of COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic and has continued to review, revise, and adjust its hazard controls in response to emerging science and Public Health Orders. Despite the numerous past, present, and ongoing COVID-19 risk mitigation and health and safety measures in place, both at Sturgeon County work sites and within the broader community, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to present a serious occupational health and safety risk and puts significant strain on the health care system and the entire community.
- 5.6. The Government of Alberta has declared a state of public health emergency because of COVID-19 cases and high hospitalization rates, largely in unvaccinated Albertans. Given

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the data and current circumstances in Alberta, Council has determined that it is necessary to implement this Policy as another layer to mitigate the hazard of COVID-19.

6. Suspected COVID-19 Reporting and Response

- 6.1. Councillors experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or who test positive for COVID-19 on a PCR or rapid antigen test administered at a pharmacy or at home, shall:
- (a) Not attend any County work site,
 - (b) Notify the Mayor of their symptoms and/or positive test result, or in the case of the Mayor, notify the Deputy Mayor, and
 - (c) [Follow Public Health Orders.](#)
- 6.2. Councillors who develop symptoms while at a County work site shall:
- (a) Immediately isolate themselves from other persons at the work site,
 - (b) Immediately notify the Mayor, or in the case of the Mayor, notify the Deputy Mayor,
 - (c) Return home if they are well enough to do so, using a personal vehicle or private transportation, and
 - (d) [Follow Public Health Orders.](#)

7. Face Coverings

- 7.1. Councillors must wear a face covering at all times while in an indoor, enclosed, or substantially enclosed County work site unless section 7.2 of this Policy applies.
- 7.2. Section 7.1 does not apply to:
- 7.2.1. Councillors who are unable to wear a face covering due to a health condition as determined by an authorizing health professional.
 - 7.2.1.1. For the purpose of section 7.2.1, the health condition must be verified by a medical exception letter that includes the name of the Councillor, the name, phone number, email address, professional registration number, and signature of the authorizing health professional, and the date on which the written confirmation was provided.
 - 7.2.1.2. Although the medical exception letter must verify that a health condition applies, it must not include specific information about the Councillor's health condition.
 - 7.2.1.3. The medical exception letter must be provided to the Mayor.
 - 7.2.1.4. A medical exception letter is valid for a period of one year from the date on which it is made;
 - 7.2.2. Councillors seated while consuming food or drink in designated seating areas;

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- 7.2.3. Councillors alone at a workstation and separated by at least two metres distance from all other persons; or
- 7.2.4. Councillors separated by every other person by a physical barrier that prevents droplet transmission.

8. Vaccination and COVID-19 Rapid Testing Requirements

- 8.1. Effective January 31, 2022, Councillors attending County work sites must comply with one of the following:
 - 8.1.1. Be fully vaccinated and provide related proof of vaccination to the Mayor, or in the case of the Mayor, to the Deputy Mayor; or
 - 8.1.2. Participate in COVID-19 rapid testing.
- 8.2. Councillors shall submit proof of vaccination to the Mayor by providing or displaying their [Alberta Health Services issued COVID-19 vaccination record](#). For consistency, other types of vaccination records, including pharmacy vaccination records, will not be accepted.
- 8.3. COVID-19 rapid test results must clearly indicate the type of test used, time of sample collection, a negative result, and the laboratory or pharmacy that completed the test (if applicable). Negative COVID-19 rapid testing results must be submitted to the County within 72 hours of the Councillor attending a County work site. A negative COVID-19 rapid test result is valid for 72 hours. Councillors are solely responsible for completing COVID-19 rapid testing at their own personal cost and on their own personal time.
- 8.4. This Policy is purposely designed to provide alternatives to Councillors unable, or personally choosing not, to become fully vaccinated; namely, participating in COVID-19 rapid testing.
- 8.5. Any Councillor who does not comply with Section 8.1 of this Policy shall be considered non-compliant and may be subject to a complaint pursuant to the Council Code of Conduct Bylaw (the Code). If a complaint is made, investigated, and substantiated, Council may impose sanctions as prescribed in the Code.

9. Protection of Privacy

- 9.1. Information disclosed by individuals and collected by the County pursuant to this Policy is personal information as defined by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Such information has been collected pursuant to section 33(c) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and will only be

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used by the County for the purpose of compliance with and enforcement of this Policy.

- 9.2. Information regarding any Councillor's vaccination status will be kept confidential, stored in a secure location, and access and disclosure limited to that permissible by *FOIP*. Such information will only be retained to achieve the purposes of this Policy and will be securely destroyed in accordance with retention and disposition schedules once complete.

10. Review of this Policy

- 10.1. Pursuant to the current background and context outlined at the beginning of this Policy, this Policy is considered temporary due to the evolving and dynamic nature of this public health matter, and ongoing direction, recommendations, and advice from public health officials. For these reasons, this Policy will be periodically reviewed at least every 6 months and amended as the circumstances warrant. This Policy will remain in place only for as long as required to achieve its purpose.