

City of Edmonton

The logo for the City of Edmonton, featuring the word "Edmonton" in white text on a dark blue rectangular background.

**COVID-19
Employee Guide**

Version 53 - November 1, 2021
oncity.edmonton.ca/COVID-19

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WHAT'S NEW IN THE GUIDE:

COVID-19 Vaccination

Effective November 1, employees who have not provided proof they are fully vaccinated and who decline to participate in the Rapid Testing Program will be placed on leave without pay as of the start of their scheduled shift through to November 30, 2021.

Employees on a Temporary Work from Home Arrangement who may be required to attend the workplace are required to comply with Rapid Testing.

The [COVID-19 Rapid Testing Program](#) begins November 1. This program applies to all employees who have:

- not provided proof by October 31 that they will be fully vaccinated by November 15; and
- to employees with an approved medical or religious exemption.
- Employees must receive a negative rapid test result in the 72 hours prior to their shift start on November 1 in order to report for work on that date.
- Employees who are participating in the Rapid Testing Program are required to fill out the designated [COVID-19 Rapid Testing Program Pre-Shift Screening Checklist](#) (“Checklist”) before each shift.

Supervisors should contact their Labour Relations Consultant after the first and second instances of an employee failing to provide the required proof of any rapid test so that the appropriate documentation may be issued.

- Employees with a positive rapid test result need to stay home, notify their supervisor, go for a PCR test through AHS and be coded as IWP until they receive their results.

Temporary Work from Home

All employees who are able to work from home must do so until January 4, 2022, assuming the Public Health Order is lifted by that date.

Employees on hybrid work arrangements should come in the days of the week as per their hybrid schedule starting the week of January 4.

If the Public Health Order is lifted before January 4, leaders and employees will be strongly encouraged to return in advance of that date in order to re-familiarize themselves with their workplace.

RESOURCES FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

Working During COVID-19

COVID-19 Workplace Control Measures

Face coverings are required for all employees in all indoor City of Edmonton owned and operated facilities and workspaces (including City vehicles). Please review the [COVID-19 & Respiratory Illness - Face Mask Quick Reference Guide](#) for more information.

Employees must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by November 15, 2021 and provide proof of vaccination. [Administrative Policy A 1701: COVID-19 Vaccination](#), and its related [Procedure](#), outline the requirement for employees to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, unless exempt on the basis of a protected legal ground.

Compensation and Leave

The City put together a compensation and leave program with benefits specific to COVID-19. This program will help protect you, our community and our organization. If you are sick, self-isolating or require accommodation relating to COVID-19, this program will provide the benefits available to you. These benefits will be made available for all employees to ensure that no one feels compelled to come to work when they are sick or self-isolating.

Review the [Compensation and Leave FAQs](#) for information. Additional information is provided within the FAQs for supervisors to clarify time reporting and how to support employees in various situations. As the situation continues to evolve, any changes to this program will be updated and communicated to employees.

Inside Information Service - COVID-19

The City is offering access to COVID-19 health and safety information through Inside Information (by phone only at this time). By calling 780-944-4311, you are able to access existing online COVID-19 resources and ask COVID-19 health and safety-related inquiries in a more comfortable and interactive way.

Training

All non-essential in-person training, including any class offered centrally through the Learning Centre, is still suspended. Where possible, options for virtual training are being explored, however in some circumstances, there may be a requirement for essential in-person training to ensure you are able to meet your work requirements in a safe and effective manner. If this is the case, your supervisor will ensure that your physical training environment is safe, AHS directives are being followed, and physical distancing measures are in place. Read the [Training FAQ](#) for more information.

Workplace Safety and Employee Health

Face Coverings

Face coverings are required for all employees in all indoor City of Edmonton owned and operated facilities and workspaces (including City vehicles).

Limited exceptions exist to allow for the temporary removal of a face covering including when:

- the person is alone at a workstation separated from all others, separated by a physical barrier that prevents droplet transmission, consuming food or drink, or unable to wear a face mask due to a mental or physical health concern or limitation [this must be confirmed with Disability Management], lifeguards on active duty, aquatic instructors in water during lessons, or

- a hazard assessment determined the person's safety will be at risk if they wear a mask while working.

Physical Distancing

Physical Distancing is required on all worksites effective September 16, 2021. All employees are required to stay at least 2 metres (6 feet) apart, whenever possible, even when masked.

- Hold toolbox and tailgate meetings virtually or in a space large enough to accommodate physical distancing.
- Space as much as possible within vehicles, or travel in separate vehicles where possible.
 - The [Vehicle Travel during COVID-19 Safe Work Practice](#) offers guidance on distancing and other controls when possible and while travelling in a vehicle for city purposes.
- Leaders are encouraged to continue staggering start times and breaks, as operationally feasible, to reduce the number of people in lunchrooms or other common areas.
- The [Physical Distancing Checklist](#) is an excellent tool to ensure or double check that your facility is aligned with these requirements.
- Physical distancing requires monitoring. [COVID-19 Inspection Checklist](#) is the tool to follow up and demonstrate our due diligence.

Temporary Work from Home

All employees who are able to work from home must do so. Employees should only attend the workplace if their physical presence is required for operational effectiveness.

Employee Reorientation to the Workplace

The [Employee Reorientation to the Workplace](#) is a guide for everyone. It reintroduces you to your workplace and the new safety controls and expectations for you. This includes direction on:

- face coverings,

- cleaning and sanitization,
- maximum occupancy thresholds, and
- other safety requirements.

All employees, whether currently working in City workplaces or not, must review the guide.

To assist with the reorientation of employees back into City workspaces and navigate any changes to remote work practices, we will use a network of change champions called the Reorientation Ambassadors. A list of the Reorientation Ambassadors for your area can be found [here](#).

Vaccination

Vaccinations continue to offer the greatest protection for employees in the workplace. All employees who are able to be vaccinated are strongly encouraged to do so now.

The purpose of the [COVID-19 Vaccine Education & Awareness FAQ](#) document is to provide key messages and frequently asked questions about the workplace considerations and impacts of the COVID-19 vaccines.

The City of Edmonton strives to share the most up to date information on the COVID-19 vaccine. However, as the details about the vaccine roll out are rapidly evolving and changing, employees are encouraged to visit [Alberta Health](#) and [Alberta Health Services](#) for the most up to date and accurate information.

For answers to workplace-related vaccine questions not currently found in this document, email safety@edmonton.ca. This FAQ will be updated with new questions and answers as they arise.

Vaccination Time Codes

Employees may take up to three hours for vaccine appointments pre-approved by their leader:

- use time code MDL (for permanent employees); or
- use time code LWP (for non-permanent employees).

If you have side effects after receiving a vaccine shot that are the same as COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, trouble breathing, sore throat or runny nose), you must stay home and away from others (isolate).

- Use time code IWP for this period that you are unable to come to work.
- If your side effects start within 24 hours and go away within 48 hours after the side effects start, you don't have to keep isolating and you can go back to your normal activities.

For further information related to vaccinations, please see the revised [COVID-19 Vaccine Education & Awareness FAQ](#).

Ergonomics at Home Guidelines

Working from home may present some challenges such as using unfamiliar equipment and having new and different distractions. Watch this [video](#) to learn some tips about creating an ergonomic workspace to support your overall health, safety and wellness. Read this list of [tips and tools](#) for additional information.

Rights and Responsibilities

The City remains committed to protecting the health and safety of employees and the public. We all have the responsibility to maintain safety in the workplace. Please read the [Employee Rights and Responsibilities FAQ](#) for more information.

Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations

Everyone plays an important role in reporting and investigating near misses, unsafe work observations and incidents. Knowing your role and participating in the reporting and investigations processes builds a stronger safety culture.

Role	Responsibilities and Expectations
Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be familiar with the COVID-19 Hazard Assessment for your job and worksite.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wear a face covering or non-medical mask when indoors or in a City vehicle. ● Maintain 2 metres from others, whenever possible, even when masked. ● Inform supervisors if you are unable to attend work. ● Inform your immediate supervisor if you are directed by AHS to take a COVID-19 test and then report the result of the test. Follow the directions provided by AHS. ● Attend work if you are healthy unless you are on approved leave or have a work from home arrangement. ● Follow appropriate hand and respiratory hygiene practices to prevent the spread of illness. ● Treat everyone with respect as per the Respectful Workplace Policy. ● Alberta Health Services will only notify close contacts of cases of COVID-19 if you are a health care worker, minor, or live or work within congregate or communal facilities. If you have been notified that you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are asked to notify your own close contacts of exposure. More information on the new Contact Tracing Notification Process and close contacts can be found on the AHS website. ● To align with the AHS' Public Health Order for self isolation, submit an Application for Short Term Disability for absences related to symptoms of COVID-19 (including fever, cold and flu-like symptoms) that last for more than 5 working days. Reach out directly to the Disability Management Consultant in your area for questions and support if you experience symptoms beyond this time period. They will support you with the documentation and review further time off needed for your recovery. ● Complete the COVID-19 Pre-Shift Screening Checklist (printable version) as per the following toolbox talk. ● If you are a first responder, you must complete the First Responder self-assessment before reporting to work each shift.
<p>Managers & Supervisors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be familiar with the content of the Employee Guide and check back regularly for updates. ● Complete the COVID-19 Employee Intake Form for employees who are or will be tested for COVID-19. ● Be familiar with the Rapid Response to Symptomatic

	<p>Person at the Worksite process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be available to employees. Ensure that employee concerns and questions are being answered. Seek answers by contacting one of the Occupational Health Nurses. If you will be absent, ensure a designate is available to carry out these responsibilities. ● Continue to monitor attendance levels of staff and assess the impact of absences on the provision of service. If services are impacted or are likely to be impacted, be sure to immediately inform your Director/Branch Manager. ● Consider operational impacts of employee requests but exercise flexibility when considering requests for leaves, particularly if the employee has a person in care who is ill or immunocompromised. ● Maintain confidentiality of medical information. Avoid sending emails to various persons discussing details of an employee's absence/travel history. ● Communicate information to staff as it becomes available. ● Maintain a calm work environment and a respectful workplace. ● Continue to record employee absences. Refer to this flowchart for steps required in managing the employee absence and testing processes. ● Complete COVID-19 Pre-Shift Screening Checklist as outlined in the COVID-19 Supervisor's Toolkit for Pre-Shift Screening & Rapid Response
<p>Joint Worksite Health & Safety Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To ensure you and your staff have the latest information, you need to go to, and direct your staff to onacity.edmonton.ca/covid-19. This page is updated as needed. ● Respond to workers' questions and direct questions to the appropriate resources. Refer to the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ City Resources and Contacts and ○ External Resources and Information

Mental Health

Caring for yourself and others in times of uncertainty can be challenging. In times like this, it is normal to feel anxious and worried, and not know what to do. If you are feeling overwhelmed, taking a moment to acknowledge you are having a normal reaction to an abnormal situation

can be a helpful first step. Whatever you are feeling is OK, but know there is help available.

Often when we face stress, our wellness practices and healthy habits may give way to other priorities or concerns. Maintaining your wellness physically, mentally and spiritually during times of stress is one of the most important things you can do both for yourself and those around you.

There are steps that you can take to recharge your own battery and prepare for life's changes. Check out the resources on the [Employee Wellness and Supports](#) page. Another great tool is the [Personal Resilience Employee Plan](#) you can use to help build resilience and support your wellbeing. Also consider these [tips and resources](#) to help you maintain your wellness.

The City offers free and confidential counselling services to all employees (permanent/provisional/temporary/probationary) and their families (e.g. spouses, children, and/or dependents). You can access these services by calling our Employee Assistance Program provider, LifeWorks at 1-855-789-7289.

If you have additional questions or are experiencing difficulty in accessing these supports, please contact Jessica Culling at 780-508-9272 or John Dowds at 780-496-7863.

Grief

The changes you may be feeling as a result of COVID-19 can cause anxiety, confusion and fear. Whether you are dealing with your own grief or helping other people manage theirs, many supports are available to City employees. The City put together a [Dealing with Change and Grief](#) document with information about the impact grief can have.

Understanding the stages of grief may help you understand what you are feeling. Read more about the [Stages of Grief](#) and learn some helpful strategies for coping.

Domestic Violence

In many ways we are in unprecedented times, and with this can bring many challenges from financial restraints, shifts in routine, to isolation from social networks and support services. These conditions can accelerate or exacerbate domestic violence situations and may lead to increased rates of domestic violence. To ensure supports are in place, the City of Edmonton enhanced services.

Employees who are experiencing domestic violence, will be provided a paid leave up to 10 days to seek assistance and support from a domestic violence situation. Should additional time be required, Disability Management will review options, including putting additional support and care in place. This leave can be arranged through your supervisor and/or Disability Management team (all private information will be held in confidence). If you have questions regarding how to support an employee experiencing domestic violence or if you would like support personally, you can access a City of Edmonton Social Worker experienced in the area of domestic violence by calling 780-496-4777. Please review [Domestic Violence Supports in Times of Stress](#) for more information.

Online Supports and Resources

LifeWorks, the City's Employee and Family Assistance Plan provider, is available to all City of Edmonton employees (permanent/provisional/temporary/probationary) and their families (e.g. spouses, children, and/or dependents). The LifeWorks online platform that offers instant access to live chats, personalized health and wellness tools from your phone, tablet or desktop. You can read about the LifeWorks online platform on our [onecity page](#) or their [brochure](#).

Supporting Local Business and Organizations

You may experience a need to reach out and help others but may not know where or how to start. Helping community organizations and supporting older people and other vulnerable groups during the COVID-19 pandemic may give you an opportunity to feel inspired. Read the list of things you can do to help [Support Local Business](#) and organizations such as the United Way.

Parenting During COVID-19

Parenting while schools and some childcare facilities are closed, as well as providing adequate and sometimes constant care with educational support, can be challenging. A good plan built around structure that allows for creativity and flexibility can help create an environment where everyone in the household can continue to have their needs met.

Working in a Virtual Environment

Inclusion

The City's Corporate Promise is "Working together, aligned with City Council, we enable a better life for all Edmontonians." A key piece of this promise is *working together*, especially in the current virtual environment. The City defines inclusion as creating an environment in which all individuals feel like they belong and valued for their unique perspectives and skills. You should continue to feel like you belong - even when working from home. The five ideas outlined in the [Inclusion in a Virtual Environment Guide](#) can help you feel like you are still *working together* with your coworkers.

Respectful Workplace

As you continue to work from home and interact with colleagues virtually, it is important to remember the importance of sustaining and maintaining a respectful workplace and continuing to follow the City's [Respectful Workplace Administrative Policy](#). Adapting to a temporary normal can be challenging, especially if you are used to having in-person meetings and conversations with colleagues and supervisors. Here are some [tips and reminders](#) on how to keep a respectful workplace. If you have a concern regarding any Respectful Workplace concerns, the Safe Disclosure Office remains open. For additional resources, please see the Safe [Disclosure Office](#).

Safe Disclosure Office

The Safe Disclosure Office is a place where you can talk about work-related matters that have to do with harassment, discrimination, or respectful workplace concerns, if you are unable to bring forward to your supervisor.

A Safe Disclosure Office Advisor will listen to your workplace concern, provide information about what to do and what the next steps are, and identify other resources that may be available to help.

To make an appointment to speak with the Safe Disclosure Office please email questions@safedisclosure.ca or call 1-844-298-6782. While in-person meetings are not being conducted at this time, you may still schedule an appointment and speak with an adviser over the phone.

Watch this short [video](#) from Kezia Pendleton, Safe Disclosure Lead, City of Edmonton for additional information.

Managing Conflict

Working in a virtual environment can be challenging and the risk of misinterpreting communication from a colleague can increase. Please read the tips on [Managing and Preventing Conflict in a Virtual Environment](#) to avoid conflict.

Using Your Phone in Google Meet

There are a couple of options you can use to join meetings if you'd like to use a phone for audio in Google Meet. Here are step-by-step instructions on how to [use a phone for a Google Meet](#).

Cyber Security

With a lot of staff working from home, it is important to continue efforts to maintain online security. The Corporate Information Security Office has observed criminals are seeking to take advantage of these challenging times and people's eagerness to help each other. Please continue to do your part to protect the City's information and technology by following [these](#) practices.

Privacy at Home

It is important for you to think about privacy and keeping information secure when working from home. Here are [Privacy FAQs](#) to keep in mind.

Changing Passwords

One important security consideration is to ensure you continue to have a strong, regularly updated password. The process for changing passwords

when working from home can be different compared to when working in the office. Read the instructions on how to [change your password](#).

Cisco Jabber

The Voice & Mobility team has acquired an application called Cisco Jabber, which lets an employee call from their personal or home phone, and the call display appears as if they are calling from their desk phone at work. This helps to increase security for employees so they won't have to release their personal numbers. Information for setting up Jabber can be found [here](#).

Employee Taxable Parking Benefit

As a result of COVID-19, the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) announced changes to [employer paid parking](#). The CRA determined that if an employee's regular place of employment is closed or they were sent home due to COVID-19 and they are working from home full time for this reason, their parking will not result in a taxable benefit.

Taxable parking benefit adjustments were made for 2020 for those employees whose supervisors confirmed their regular place of employment was closed or they were sent home due to COVID-19 and they did not make use of their employer provided parking stall during that time.

Furthermore, the taxable benefit was paused for 2021 due to COVID-19 for employees who continue to work from home on a full time basis. It will recommence once they return to their regular place of employment to perform their duties.

Employees and their supervisors must inform the employeeservicecentre@edmonton.ca of their return to their regular place of employment.

Further information can be found in this [CRA backgrounder](#), published in December, 2020.

Records Management While Working from Home

While working from home, it's important to continue to practice approved records management processes. Here's an [FAQ](#) with information on how

to create, store and dispose of City records like emails, files and documents.

Temporary Employee Layoffs

As a result of COVID-19, the City is facing lower revenues and decline in demand for services in some business areas, which has led to a difficult decision to proceed with temporary workforce reductions or layoffs. A temporary layoff is not a permanent termination of employment. Employees may be subject to layoff in areas where there is a slowdown of work, a facility closure or the reduction in services. The [Employee Temporary Layoff FAQ](#) has answers to common questions you may have.

Support for Employees

Being laid off can be very traumatic. Receiving news of a lay-off can cause an individual to experience unusually strong emotional reactions. Everyone will have their own response to hearing they are laid off. Whatever your response is, know that it is a normal reaction to an abnormal situation.

The City put together a summary of free and confidential resources that can help support your mental wellness. Refer to this document for [available supports](#) to help you through this stressful event.

Income Support

The Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) transitioned to an Employment Insurance (EI) program in September 27, 2020, to provide income support to those who remain unable to work and are eligible. The Federal Government introduced a suite of temporary and taxable recovery benefits to further support workers.

Here is a list of [supports and resources](#) for employees that may need financial assistance.

The City also put together an FAQ document providing additional clarity on the current process for accessing federal income support for employees whose income has been impacted by the response to

COVID-19. Refer to the update on [Accessing Federal Income](#) for information.

City Resources and Contacts

The table below identifies important City resources and contacts for concerns and questions related to seasonal influenza and COVID-19.

Resource	Purpose/Use	Contact
Occupational Health Nurse	Information related to Occupational Health.	JoAnne Seglie 780-496-7852 joanne.seglie@edmonton.ca Melissa Frame 780-496-7853 melissa.frame@edmonton.ca
Safety Engagement Lead	Information related to Occupational Safety.	Safety Engagement Lead Directory
Disability Management	Information related to sick leave.	Disability Management Consultants
OneCity	Articles and updates related to seasonal influenza and COVID-19.	Seasonal Influenza & COVID-19 OneCity web page
LifeWorks by Morneau Shepell	Information related to the Employee and Family Assistance Program.	LifeWorks
City Chaplain	Support and information to City employees and their families during challenging times.	John Dowds 780-496-7863 john.dowds@edmonton.ca
Mental Health/ Healthy Living Team	Resources and information for your well being.	employeeewellness@edmonton.ca 780-944-0724
Labour Relations	Questions and information	Michelle Dorval michelle.dorval@edmonton.ca

	regarding unions or collective agreements.	
Compensation	Information about time coding, overtime, seasonal/temporary staff.	Michelle.Dorval michelle.dorval@edmonton.ca
Working from Home	Information and questions about our work from home policy.	Dayle Pett dayle.pett@edmonton.ca
Physical Distancing	Information and questions on how you can physically distance while at work.	City safety professional

RESOURCES FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

Working During COVID-19

Effective November 1, if you are a first responder, you must complete the this [pre-screening form](#) and may only proceed to your workplace if you are deemed fit.

RESOURCES FOR SUPERVISORS

Information for Supervisors

During the COVID-19 response it will be common to see work environments and employee job duties change.

Instructions for Testing and Results

AHS has made several changes to their COVID-19 testing strategies in order to streamline requests and reduce wait times. Currently, all individuals experiencing symptoms will be prioritized for a test upon

completing the online [COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool](#). Complete the [COVID-19 Employee Intake Form](#) for employees who are or will be tested for COVID-19.

Responsibilities for Maintaining a Safe Workplace

It is important supervisors maintain awareness of the impact of existing safeguards such as having an adequate number of trained fire wardens and first aiders. Supervisors also need to use the existing hazard assessment process to determine how employees may be impacted by changes and continue to ensure safety in the workplace. Employees and supervisors should review the Site and Job Specific Hazard Assessments and ensure all controls are still in place and no further actions are needed to address the changes.

It is the responsibility of a supervisor to ensure workers are informed of the hazards of the work environment and are adequately trained in all matters necessary to protect their health and safety, including before the worker performs a new work activity, uses new equipment or performs new processes, or is moved to another area or work site. Where respiratory protective equipment is required for regular operations or new tasks, please read the [Face Covering Guidelines](#) and [Respiratory Protection Equipment Guidelines](#) for more information.

Training has to include explaining and giving information to workers about any new work activity, equipment, processes or work sites and the training requires a practical demonstration that the worker has acquired the knowledge or skill related to the subject matter.

Tips on Handling Tough Conversations

As a people leader, employees are looking to you to guide them through this difficult time, which will often include them bringing questions and concerns to you. Your behaviour and how you react can have a big influence on how people respond, and can help reduce the negative impact of these unprecedented times. Read the [Tips on Handling Tough Conversations](#) for information and guidance.

Reporting of Safety Concerns

While you have specific responsibilities for safety in the workplace, employees are also vitally important in keeping themselves and their coworkers safe. Engaged employees will see opportunities to make the workplace safer and should be encouraged to look for ways to make the workplace even safer.

Workers should raise any safety concern they may have directly to their supervisor, as per the normal processes. Unsafe work observations and near misses should continue to be reported through the [Incident Data Collection Form](#).

Working in a Virtual Environment

Respectful Workplace

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Inclusion

The City's Corporate Promise is "Working together, we enable a better life for all Edmontonians." A key piece of this promise is *working together*, especially in the current virtual environment. The City defines inclusion as creating an environment in which all individuals feel like they belong and valued for their unique perspectives and skills. You should continue to feel like you belong - even when working from home. The five ideas outlined in the [Inclusion in a Virtual Environment Guide](#) can help you feel like you are still *working together* with your coworkers.

Recruitment

The City is continuing to recruit for positions associated with essential services.

In light of physical distancing measures and the interest of the health and safety of employees and candidates, interviews will be conducted virtually (e.g. online or over the phone). Talent Acquisition Consultants are set up and working from home and continue to support Hiring Managers as needed. Your Talent Acquisition Consultant is your point of contact and can help walk you through options suitable for your business area needs and candidates. Read the [FAQs](#) related to recruitment for more information.

Inside Information

In order to protect all City of Edmonton employees and prevent the spread of COVID-19, the City is asking that employees DO NOT visit Inside Information to get photos taken for Corporate ID Cards. Requests for new hire ID cards or replacement cards for current employees need to be emailed to insideinformation.frontcounter@edmonton.ca and accompanied with a photo. Once a request is received, Inside Information will send an email with full instructions.

The mail out option should be used for City employee renewals, while contractors will be emailed instructions for pick up. Additional information can be found on the [Inside Information page](#) on OneCity, or you can [email](#) or call 780-944-4311.

*NOTE: This is a temporary change in process. There has been interest in having a process like this available for many employees, so hopefully everyone can work together in making this work during this time.

COVID-19 BACKGROUND

The virus first appeared in the winter of 2019 and, due to the rapid manner in which it spread around the world, was declared a public health emergency of international concern by the World Health Organization in February 2020. The virus was then characterized as a pandemic on March 11, 2020 because of the speed and scale of transmission. In most cases COVID-19 presents as a relatively mild flu with most people recovering within a few days. More severe symptoms may occur in some people, particularly those with certain underlying medical conditions.

As with the seasonal flu, symptoms include a sudden onset of respiratory illness with a fever (temperature greater than 38 degrees C or 100.4 degrees F), dry cough and difficulty breathing.

What Steps Can You Take to Protect Yourself and Others?

The most effective way to eliminate virus transmission in the workplace is for you to [self-screen](#) before work and self-isolate at home if you meet criteria outlined below. However, if you develop symptoms while at a worksite, it is important to respond quickly and appropriately. Refer to the [Supervisor Toolkit for Pre-Shift Screening and Rapid Response](#).

All employees are required to perform Pre-Shift Screening before reporting to work. This form has only a few simple questions and can be easily completed on paper or from a mobile device.

If you have symptoms such as fever, cough and difficulty breathing and have traveled outside Canada or have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19, stay home and use the AHS [COVID-19 Self Assessment](#) tool to determine if you need to be tested for COVID-19. In this situation you will be required to self-isolate for 10 days. This Self Assessment tool includes a few short questions and can be done from a computer or a mobile device. For more information about what to do after a COVID-19 test is complete, see the [COVID-19 Positive & Negative Test FAQ](#).

Upon completion of the online COVID-19 Self Assessment tool, you will be given further instructions, which may include calling Health Link 811 to arrange testing. You will need to follow the directions provided by AHS to identify close contacts, see AHS [Close Contact Tracing Notification Process](#).

If you have chronic health conditions that may resemble symptoms of COVID, such as allergies, chronic cough, bronchitis etc., it is important to complete the AHS [COVID-19 Self Assessment](#) tool. You may be advised to be tested for COVID, if the result is negative you will be able to return to work once you are asymptomatic

If you are not seriously ill, do not go to a physician's office, a health care facility or a lab without consulting with Health Link 811 first. Only call 911

if you are seriously ill and need immediate medical attention. The average AHS Health Link response time has been affected due to volume of calls. Please remain on the line to keep your space in the queue. They are advising to try and call before 8:00 am or after 11:00 pm.

A COVID-19 test should be booked as soon as you receive confirmation that you are a close contact of someone who tested positive for the original or a variant COVID-19.

Self-Isolation Instructions

Follow these [guidelines](#) when Health Link or the [COVID-19 Self Assessment](#) tool asks you to self isolate.

Testing Recommendations

COVID-19 testing for those with symptoms or who have a positive rapid antigen test result remains available at assessment centres. Close contacts of positive cases are no longer required to quarantine for 14 days, as of July 29 unless directed by local public health officials. However Albertans are legally required to isolate for 10 days if they test positive or have any core symptoms.

If you are not fully immunized and are a household contact of someone who tested positive for COVID-19, the City of Edmonton requires that you stay home from work for 14 days and monitor yourself for symptoms. If you develop symptoms, you must isolate and should get tested. See the [COVID-19 Self Isolation Placemat](#) for more information on household contacts of variant cases.

Infection Prevention Control Guide

It is important to take steps, both at home and at work, to help prevent the spread of influenza and other viruses to co-workers, friends, family and the public. The most effective actions you can take to prevent the spread of infection are listed in the table below, along with the corresponding health rationale.

Activity	Action
Self-Isolation	Use the Pre-Shift Screening checklist to confirm you

	are safe to attend work onsite. Stay away from work and avoid public places when experiencing symptoms.
Physical Distancing	Stay at least 2 metres (6 feet) away from others as often as reasonably possible.
Hand Hygiene	Wash your hands often with soap and water. If hand washing facilities are not available, clean your hands using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Refrain from shaking hands or hugging.
Cough Etiquette	Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough/sneeze or cough/sneeze into your arm/elbow. Discard the tissue into the regular garbage. Avoid coughing/sneezing into your hand (be sure to wash your hands immediately if you do).
General Hygiene Practice	Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth after shaking hands or touching hard surfaces like door handles. After touching these surfaces disinfect your hands with hand sanitizer or wash with soap and water.
Environmental Decontamination	Disinfectant wipes can be used on items such as telephones and computer keyboards.

Information sources: Alberta Health Services, Public Health Agency of Canada and the World Health Organization.

What can you do to stop the spread of infection?

Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, you can use an alcohol-based (60%) hand sanitizer if your hands are not visibly dirty.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or cough or sneeze into your sleeve.

Throw used tissues in the garbage, and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, making sure you dry them thoroughly, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Avoid sharing workplace and household items such as pens, dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, pillows, or other items with other people in your home. After using these items, you should wash

them thoroughly with soap and water, place in the dishwasher for cleaning, or wash in the washing machine.

Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched and shared surfaces such as doorknobs and counters.

ABTraceTogether App

Quickly identifying positive cases and tracing close contacts to contain outbreaks is an important part of Alberta’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and preventing the spread. The Government of Alberta recently launched the ABTraceTogether App that speeds up AHS’ manual tracing of potential contacts of confirmed cases. For more information about this COVID-19 contact tracing App and how to download it, click [here](#).

Travel Restrictions

Travel restrictions are in place for business related travel and there are also impacts on personal travel. These restrictions and impacts apply to all City of Edmonton employees, consultants, contracted employees, and those whose travel is funded by the City of Edmonton. See the [Travel Restrictions and Considerations FAQs](#) for more information.

External Resources and Information

The table below identifies important external resources and information related to seasonal influenza and COVID-19.

Resource	Purpose/Use	Contact
Alberta Health Services (AHS)	COVID-19 and Infection Prevention Control	AHS COVID-19
Public Health Agency of Canada	COVID-19	Public Health Agency of Canada
World Health Organization (WHO)	COVID-19	WHO COVID-19