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Vaccination Policy Staff Report to Council

Report Number: 2021-63

Department(s): Human Resources; Office of the CAO

Author(s): Director, Human Resources

Meeting Date: September 13, 2021

Recommendations

1. That the report entitled Vaccination Policy dated September 13, 2021 be received; and,
2. That the Vaccination Policy be approved; and,
3. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Purpose

This report is intended to provide Council with a high level overview of a proposed employee Vaccination Policy.

Background

On August 30, 2021 Council directed staff to prepare an employee vaccination policy for review by Council at its September 13, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting. Given this is a highly evolving issue being addressed by many municipalities at this time, direction was given to align with the Toronto and York Region approaches.

Discussion

At the time of preparing this report it should be noted that York Region has not finalized its policy but there has been a significant amount of collaboration with York Region and the nine municipalities within York Region. The City of Toronto has also been very

collaborative in terms of speaking to the intent of their policy and the additional matters they must address with it being such a large organization with multiple union partners.

The policy reflects a requirement for employees to disclose their vaccination status to the Town, have secured a 1st dose by October 1 and a 2nd dose by November 1, 2021. There are exemptions provided for in relation to protected grounds under the Human Rights Code and forms being developed for use should an employee wish to request an exemption.

Unvaccinated employees will be asked to complete a mandatory COVID19 education course, provide proof they have completed the course, and then confirm their plans for vaccination, or apply for an exemption. Anyone who does not provide evidence of vaccination or proof of an exemption prior to November 1, 2021 will be treated as an individual in non-compliance with this policy. It is important to note that philosophical differences relative to vaccination are not grounds for an exemption.

Efforts will be undertaken with employees prior to November 1, 2021 to support compliance with the Policy.

At this point in time, it is anticipated that exempt employees may be required to undertake additional precautions.

Operational details will be further developed through a Health and Safety Standard and communication with staff will include a full set of questions and answers.

Conclusion

This Vaccination Policy is reflective of a particular point in time and there is a need to create a health and safety standard to support the various processes that will be required. This will also enable the organization to respond effectively to the changing dynamics of the pandemic.

Business Plan and Strategic Plan Linkages

The implementation of a Vaccine Policy reflects Council's commitment to providing a safe workplace for its employees and upholds the obligation under health and safety legislation to take all precautions reasonable in the circumstances.

It also reflects alignment with not only the Community Vision and the Corporate Mission, it is reflective of the core values of Courage and Accountability.

Consultation

The Strategic Leadership Team, Legal Services, EOC Recovery Team, Health & Safety Specialist, Healthy Workplace Program Specialist and Total Rewards Program Specialist were all consulted relative to the creation of this policy and the draft policy was recently shared more broadly with the Operational Leadership Team. Advance

discussions were also undertaken with representatives from both the Fire Fighters Association and SEIU.

Human Resource Considerations

A vaccination policy reaches into an area that often times is considered a private or personal matter. As a result, it is difficult to know how employees will react especially where philosophical differences exist relative to a policy of this nature. We will undertake to respond to concerns through a supportive approach during implementation while recognizing the need for compliance.

Budget Impact

It is difficult to ascertain at this time what the impact might be on budget. Expenses could be incurred as a result of addressing non-compliance, challenges through the Union, or actions taken by individual employees against the Corporation.

Attachments

Vaccination Policy

Approval

K. Lynn Georgeff, Director, Human Resources

Ian McDougall, Chief Administrative Officer

Contact

Please feel free to contact the Chief Administrative Officer or the Director, Human Resources with regard to this report.