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Report 2024-076

Report Title: New and Updated Health and Safety Policies

Committee Name: Corporate Support

Committee Meeting Date: June 4, 2024

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Corporate Services

Reviewed by: Lisa Ainsworth
Director, Corporate Services
Corporate Services

Approved by: Jennifer Moore, CAO

Council Meeting Date: June 19, 2024

Strategic Plan Priorities: Innovate for Service Excellence
 Ignite Economic Opportunity
 Foster a Thriving Community
 Propel Sustainable Growth
 Champion a Vibrant Future

Recommendation

That the Corporate Support Committee, having considered Report 2024-076, Corporate Services 'New and Updated Health and Safety Policies', recommend that County Council adopt the following updated policies at the June 19, 2024 County Council meeting:

- HS 1.4 Health & Safety Program – General Responsibilities;
- HS 12.1 Communicable Illness Infection Control; and

Further That the Committee recommend that County Council adopt the following new policy at the June 19, 2024 County Council meeting :

- HS 13.7 Respirator Program; and

Further That the Committee recommend that County Council direct staff to update the formal Health and Safety policy and procedure manual.”

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to outline new and updated health and safety policies and procedures for all workers at the County and to seek Council's approval to adopt these policies.

Background

The County of Northumberland is committed to providing a healthy and safe work environment through compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations. The County of Northumberland believes that all services provided are of extreme importance, however, no job is so urgent that time and care cannot be taken to conduct work safely. Protecting employees from all workplace hazards is a top priority.

Consultations

The Health, Safety, Emergency Risk Manager is a member of the Ontario Municipal Health and Safety Professionals Association (OMHSPA) and networks to share best municipal practices for policies and procedures.

All County Joint Health and Safety Committees and the Management Operating Committee have reviewed, provided comments and approved the policies.

Legislative Authority / Risk Considerations

Implementation and authority of these policies shall follow the Internal Responsibility System within the County whereby all workers, supervisors, managers, directors, and County Council have a responsibility for a safe work environment complying with the following legislation:

- Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development
- Occupational Health and Safety Act R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1 and Regulations
- Ontario Regulation 67/93 Health Care
- Canadian Standard CSA Z94.4-18
- Golden Plough Infection Control Manual
- HS 1.2 Northumberland County Corporate Health and Safety Policy
- HS 20.1 WHMIS 2015 Policy
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIA)

Discussion / Options

HS 1.4 Health & Safety Program – General Responsibilities

This policy was updated to remove the requirement for workers to complete the Self Declaration Form HS 1.4A. The form was a pre-screening health declaration specific to COVID-19.

The Province of Ontario eliminated the regulatory requirement for active screening of COVID-19 effective March 1, 2022 and the requirement for passive screening was eliminated effective March 21, 2022.

HS 12.1 Communicable Illness Infection Control

This policy was updated to align with the new WSIB policy 15-03-15 "Communicable Illnesses" which came into effect in December 2023. The WSIB policy entitles workers to benefits for a communicable illness arising out of and in the course of the worker's employment.

Updates to this policy include minor formatting, heading reorganization and grammatical changes, with more substantial changes being:

- Policy name change from “Communicable Disease Infection Control” to “Communicable Illness Infection Control”;
- Added definition of “Communicable Illness” to align with WSIB policy;
- Removed specific references to COVID-19; and
- Updating policy procedures to align with WSIB policy guidelines.

HS 13.7 Respirator Program

In 2020, O. Reg. 833 Control of Exposure to Biological or Chemical Agents and O. Reg. 490/09 Designated Substances were revised to include requirements for Respiratory Protection Programs:

- Written measures and procedures;
- Training;
- Fit testing; and
- Breathing air purity.

In accordance with the above requirements and Canadian Standard CSA Z94.4-18, this new policy addresses roles and responsibilities, exposure hazards and injury processes, respirator selection and fit testing and outlines training requirements for the County’s Respirator Program.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact implementing these health and safety policies. A comprehensive health and safety program with appropriate policies, procedures and well-trained workers can contribute to indirect financial savings from a reduction in worker absenteeism due to injury or illness and reduced WSIB costs.

Member Municipality Impacts

This policy is internal to the operations of the Corporation of the County of Northumberland. The Policy can be shared as best practice with our member municipalities upon their request.

Conclusion / Outcomes

Staff recommend that County Council adopt the policies HS 1.4 Health & Safety Program – General Responsibilities, HS 12.1 Communicable Illness Infection Control and HS 13.7 Respirator Program and that County Council direct staff to update the Health and Safety Manual.

Attachments

1. Report 2024-076 ATTACH 1 ‘HS 1.4 Health & Safety Program – General Responsibilities’
2. Report 2024-076 ATTACH 2 ‘HS 12.1 Communicable Illness Infection Control’
3. Report 2024-076 ATTACH 3 ‘HS 13.7 Respirator Program’