

Administrative Procedures



AP 308 - COVID -19

References:

Re-Open Saskatchewan: A plan to re-open the provincial economy updated June 16, 2020
Primary and Secondary Educational Institution Guidelines June 18, 2020

[The Saskatchewan Employment Act](#)
[Occupational Health and Safety Regulations](#)
(OHS)

Related:

AP 410: Student Safety
AP 508: Duty to Accommodate
AP 510: Health & Safety

Tracking:

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March 29, 2021

Status:

BACKGROUND

On June 9, 2020, the Government of Saskatchewan announced that in-classroom learning will resume for the 2020-21 school year. To help school divisions prepare for the return of students and staff, provincial guidelines have been developed to inform local planning. This procedure has been created to ensure a safe return to the workplace for all staff. These protocols will continue to be adjusted as necessary following the direction of the Chief Medical Health Officer of Saskatchewan.

PROCEDURES

1. General Guidelines

- 1.1 When practical, physical distancing (two metres) between individuals should be maintained. If this is not possible, other measures should be used, such as the use of personal protective equipment, masks and self-monitoring of personal health.
- 1.2 Proper hand hygiene is expected from all employees. Practices include using soap and water when hands are soiled and hand sanitizer when visibly clean. Cough and sneeze into your elbow and avoid touching your face, mouth, nose and eyes.
- 1.3 Employees may choose to bring their own hand sanitizer for personal use to supplement what the school division will be providing.
- 1.4 Masks usage will be in accordance with school division protocols. Staff will wear masks where physical distancing is not possible. This will include upon entry and exit to the school, while in common areas, classrooms and staff rooms. However, if an employee wants to wear a mask while at work at all times, they can wear one. The NESD will provide masks to employees.
- 1.5 Employees shall limit physical contact throughout the school day and avoid close greetings such as handshakes.
- 1.6 Employees are expected to keep workspaces clean and free from clutter.
- 1.7 Employees are expected to keep their own desk space clean and sanitized. Disinfectant will be provided by the school division.
- 1.8 Sharing food, drinks or other personal items is to be avoided.
- 1.9 Employees shall not enter private residences or provide personal transportation to students.

1.10 Employees shall avoid unnecessary work-related travel.

2. Guidelines for Illness

All employees are expected to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms. Employees will use the [NESD Daily Screening Questionnaire](#) to confirm they are fit to work. This questionnaire is based on the online Saskatchewan COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool <https://public.ehealthsask.ca/sites/COVID-19/> and may be updated at any time.

Common symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Headache
- Muscle and/or joint aches and pains
- Sore throat
- Chills
- Runny nose
- Nasal congestion
- Conjunctivitis
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Nausea/vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Loss of appetite
- Loss of sense of taste or smell
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing

If an employee has symptoms of COVID-19 illness they are to stay home and call the 811 Health line. The employee shall follow the recommendations and direction provided.

- 2.1 The employee should request their absence using the normal process established at the school level and enter the absence into Frontline AESOP. If the employee does not have sufficient sick leave they are to enter their absence using leave without pay, vacation, time in lieu, personal day or earned day off. Employees should remain home as directed by public health.
- 2.2 If the Healthline 811 consultant directs the employee to remain at home, then the employee is eligible for quarantine leave as outlined in section 3. The employee should request quarantine leave (if available in their collective agreement) through Frontline Absence Management and provide the required documentation. Upon verification, human resources will approve the quarantine leave.
- 2.3 If an employee feels well enough to work and the supervisor confirms the employee can continue to perform meaningful work while at home then no absence entry is required.
- 2.4 If an employee has an existing or underlying medical condition, or the employee is the primary caregiver for a family member that has an existing or underlying medical condition, and feels they are unable to perform their duties without an accommodation, the employee is to contact their principal/supervisor and the Superintendent of Human Resources. Additional information regarding the duty to accommodate process can be found in [Administrative Procedure 508](#), [STF Duty to Accommodate Guidelines](#) or [CUPE Accommodation of Employees](#).

3. Public Health Orders

All employees will follow the directives outlined in the most recent Public Health Order available at www.saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus. A medical health officer refers to a public health officer designated as such under The Public Health Act, 1994. Family doctors and other medical personnel are not medical health officers and do not have the authority and cannot order mandatory self-isolation.

Employee's eligible for quarantine leave (documentation will be required) may access it as follows:

- Employees that have been identified by a Medical Health Officer as **having COVID-19**. The employee shall not return to work until such time as a Medical Health Officer determines that they no longer pose a public health threat;
- Employees that have been identified by a Medical Health Officer as a **close contact of a person or persons with COVID-19**. The employee shall not return to work for 14 days from the date of last having been exposed to COVID-19, or upon approval from public health;
- Employees **who are household members of someone who has COVID-19 symptoms** and who become symptomatic. The employee shall not return to work for 14 days after becoming symptomatic, or upon approval from public health; and
- Until further notice, staff who have **out-of-Canada travel** scheduled should cancel travel plans (as identified by the Government of Canada). In the event that the staff member considers travel to be essential, contact with the Superintendent of Human Resources is required prior to travel. Employees who choose to travel outside of Canada and are subject to the mandatory 14-day self-isolation period upon their return to Canada will not have access to sick or quarantine leave during the self-isolation period.

If the documentation provided by the employee is not clear or if the division has reasonable doubts or concerns about any of the documentation provided by the employee, the division may require further details or confirmation of the documentation.

4. Additional Health Supports

- 4.1 Healthline 811 (All Staff)
- 4.2 Member and Family Assistance Program (STF members) 1-833-485-4245
- 4.3 Employee Family Assistance Program (CUPE and Teamster Members, Non-union Staff and Out of Scope Staff) 1-833-515-0766 (effective September 1, 2020).

5. COVID-19 Vaccination

5.1 The North East School Division strongly encourages all employees eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccination do so at the time permitted by the Saskatchewan COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery Strategy.

5.2 Effective March 18, 2021, amendments to *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2021* (section 6-22.1, Special Vaccination Leave) establishes that during the pandemic, workers are entitled to up to three consecutive hours of leave to receive a COVID-19 vaccination.

5.3 Employees are asked to schedule COVID-19 vaccination appointment times outside of scheduled work hours to the best of their ability. Should time away from work be required, employees are expected to:

5.3.1 Contact their Administrator/ Manager to discuss the time required away from the workplace in order to ensure operational considerations are met.

5.3.2 Replacement needs will be determined by the Administrator/ Manager.

5.3.3 Enter the absence into Frontline Absence Management selecting “Med Appt – COVID Vac” leave for the time required to be away, up to three (3) hours. The employee should indicate the location of the appointment in the comment section.

5.3.4 The new “Med Appt – COVID Vac” is a new leave that does not impact any accrued existing leaves (i.e. sick leave, pressing matters, etc).

5.3.5 Only one paid “Med Appt – COVID Vac” request per employee will be approved. Time may not be split between two separate appointments. If an employee is required to get a subsequent COVID-19 vaccination, employees can book time away from work per the regular process for medical appointments. Enter time in Frontline Absence Management as “Sick/Med – Medical Appt”.

5.3.6 Any employee requiring more than three (3) hours away from work shall discuss the needs with their Administrator/ Manager and receive prior approval from the Superintendent of Human Resources.

6. Guidelines for Work Refusals

Section 3-31 of *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* states that an employee may refuse to perform any particular act or series of acts at a place of employment if the employee has reasonable grounds to believe that the act or series of acts is unusually dangerous to the employee’s health or safety or the health or safety of any other person at the placement of employment until:

- i. Sufficient steps have been taken to satisfy the employee otherwise; or
- ii. The occupational health committee has investigated the matter and advised the employee otherwise.

6.1 An employee’s right to refuse to perform work as a result of COVID-19 will be contingent upon factors including (but not limited to) the following:

- i. the state of the COVID-19 situation in the employee's particular community and workplace at the time the refusal to work is being exercised;
- ii. the age and health of the specific employee;

- iii. the type of workplace where the employee usually performs their functions;
 - iv. the specific field of work and their normal duties or tasks;
 - v. the measures adopted by the North East School Division schools to prevent the transmission of COVID-19, including workplace hygiene and personal protective equipment (PPE), where applicable;
 - vi. whether or not there has been a diagnosed case of COVID-19 within the school community;
 - vii. whether the employee or the circumstances fall in one of the legislative exceptions to the right to refuse unsafe work; and
 - viii. any other factually relevant considerations in assessing whether there is a hazard, a risk or a danger.
- 6.2 If an employee has reasonable grounds to believe they have been asked to perform an unusually dangerous act, the employee shall notify their principal/supervisor, and the Superintendent of Human Resources.
- 6.3 The principal/supervisor should notify the local Occupational Health Committee of the refusal.
- 6.4 If an employee has refused to perform an act or series of acts pursuant to section 3-31, the employer shall not request or assign another employee to perform that act or series of acts unless that other employee has been advised by the principal/ supervisor, in writing, of:
- i. the refusal and the reasons for the refusal;
 - ii. the reason or reasons the employee being assigned or requested to perform the act or series of acts may, in the employer's opinion, carry out the act or series of acts in a healthy and safe manner; and
 - iii. the right of the employee to refuse to perform the act or series of acts pursuant to section 3-31.
- 6.5 Following notification, the school OHS committee will investigate the concern and communicate the decision (the vote must be unanimous for or against the refusal) to the employee, principal/supervisor and Human Resources. The OHS Committee should consider the following questions:
- 6.5.1 Does the employee have an underlying health concern that puts them at a greater risk if infected?
- 6.5.2 Are the job duties being assigned outside the normal duties or tasks of the position?
- 6.5.3 Has the workplace implemented strategies in alignment with the most recent Re-open Saskatchewan guidelines for educational institutions and current Public Health Orders for that type of workplace?
- 6.5.4 Is the workplace unsafe even with increased hygiene and personal protective equipment?
- 6.5.5 Does the workplace have an employee or student who has been diagnosed with COVID-19?
- 6.5.6 Are there any other factually relevant considerations in assessing whether there is a hazard, a risk or a danger?

- 6.6 If your work refusal is supported by the OHS Committee, Human Resource and the principal/supervisor will take steps to address the danger and ensure the workplace is safe.
- 6.7 If the concern cannot be resolved within the school or workplace, Human Resources will contact an occupational health officer at the Occupational Health and Safety Division. The officer will investigate the refusal and rule on the matter.
- 6.8 As per Section 3-32(b) of The Saskatchewan Employment Act, the employee is entitled to refuse to perform the act or series of acts until the occupational health officer has investigated the matter and advised the employee otherwise.