


**CITY OF NEW BERN
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS
OF THE CITY MANAGER**

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2.4
INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL POLICY
To: All City Employees
From: Mark A. Stephens, City Manager  3/20/20
Maintained By: Human Resources
Date: 03/19/2020
New Policy

Purpose

The City of New Bern (“city”) will take proactive steps to protect the workplace in the event of an infectious disease outbreak. It is the goal of the city during any such time period to strive to operate effectively and ensure that all essential services are continuously provided and that employees are safe within the workplace.

The city is committed to providing authoritative information about the nature and spread of infectious diseases, including symptoms and signs to watch for, as well as required steps to be taken in the event of an illness or outbreak.

Procedures

Preventing the Spread of Infection in the Workplace

The city will make every effort to prevent the spread of infection in the workplace and will ensure a clean workplace by providing (as supplies are available) cleaning sprays and wipes to clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as telephones and keyboards, door handles, railings, etc.

The city asks all employees to cooperate in taking steps to reduce the transmission of infectious disease in the workplace. The best strategy remains the most obvious—frequent hand washing with warm, soapy water; covering your mouth whenever you sneeze or cough; and discarding used tissues in wastebaskets. If a tissue is not available, coughing or sneezing into your upper sleeve, not your hands, is advised. As supplies are available, the city will provide alcohol-based sanitizers throughout the workplace and in common areas.

Unless otherwise notified, normal attendance and leave policies will remain in place. Individuals who believe they may face particular challenges reporting to work during an infectious disease outbreak should take steps to develop any necessary contingency plans. For example, employees might want to arrange for alternative sources of child care should schools close and/or speak with supervisors about the use of leave.

Staying Home When Ill

Many times, with the best of intentions, employees report to work even though they feel ill. The city provides paid sick leave and annual leave to compensate employees who are unable to work due to illness. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave may be granted if the illness or condition qualifies for FMLA designation.

During an infectious disease outbreak, it is critical that employees do not report to work while they are ill and/or experiencing respiratory symptoms of the flu or acute respiratory illness: (i.e. fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue). Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people with an infectious illness such as the flu remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C) or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. In addition, employees should not report to work if they have been exposed to others who are ill and/or experiencing respiratory symptoms of the flu or acute respiratory illness until: (i) they have satisfied any quarantine protocols established by the CDC and/or the state or local health department; or (2) they have obtained a written statement from a physician verifying that the employee does not pose a risk of exposing coworkers to an infectious disease."

Employees who report to work ill will be sent home in accordance with these health guidelines.

Requests for Medical Information and/or Documentation

If you are out sick or show symptoms of being ill, it may become necessary to request information from you and/or your health care provider. In general, we would request medical information to confirm your need to be absent, to show whether and how an absence relates to the infection, and to know that it is appropriate for you to return to work. As always, we expect and appreciate your cooperation if and when medical information is sought. The city's ability to require medical information and/or documentation may change based on Federal guidelines during the infectious disease outbreak.

Confidentiality of Medical Information

The city's policy is to treat any medical information as a confidential medical record. In furtherance of this policy, any disclosure of medical information is in limited circumstances with supervisors, managers, first aid and safety personnel, and government officials as required by law.

Limiting Travel

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, the City Manager may restrict all business related travel. Employees who have travel scheduled during the travel restriction should promptly seek a refund of any prepayments. If travel is deemed essential or mandatory, the City Manager must approve this travel on a case-by-case basis.

Telecommuting

During an infectious disease outbreak, the city may implement temporary telecommuting arrangements for employees whose job duties are conducive to working from home. However, there are some positions that require the employee to be physically present in the workplace. Individual Department Heads, with the concurrence of the City Manager, will determine who is or is not designated personnel on a case by case basis. Individual Department Heads, with the concurrence of the City Manager and Director of Human Resources, will determine who is authorized to telecommute, on a case by case basis. Designated personnel who are required to be physically present or who are authorized to telecommute, are expected to work as scheduled unless otherwise notified.

Telecommuting arrangements are expected to be short term, and the city will continue to monitor guidance from health officials and the need for remote work arrangements. Employees should not assume any specified period of time for telework, and the city may require employees to return to regular, in-office work at any time. Every effort will be made to provide advance notice of any change to a telecommuting arrangement to accommodate issues that may arise from the termination of a telecommuting arrangement. There may be instances, however, when no notice is possible.

Refer to the Temporary Telecommuting Policy for specific guidelines.

Social Distancing Guidelines for Workplace Infectious Disease Outbreaks

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, the city may implement these social distancing guidelines to minimize the spread of the disease among the staff. Social distancing is defined as remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet) from others when possible.

During the workday, employees are requested to:

1. Avoid meeting people face-to-face. Employees are encouraged to use the telephone, online conferencing, e-mail or instant messaging to conduct business as much as possible, even when participants are in the same building.
2. If a face-to-face meeting is unavoidable, minimize the meeting time, choose a large meeting room and sit at least one yard from each other if possible; avoid person-to-person contact such as shaking hands.
3. Avoid any unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone nonessential meetings, gatherings, workshops and training sessions.
4. Do not congregate in offices, work rooms, pantries, copier rooms or other areas where people socialize.
5. Request information and orders via phone and e-mail in order to minimize person-to-person contact. Have the orders, materials and information ready for fast pick-up or delivery.

Disclaimer

It is the goal of the city, during any time period of infectious disease outbreak, to strive to operate effectively and ensure that all essential services are continuously provided and those employees are safe within the workplace.


The city will not discriminate against any job applicant or employee based on the individual having a communicable disease. Applicants and employees shall not be denied access to the workplace solely on the grounds that they have a communicable disease. The city reserves the right to exclude a person with a communicable disease from the workplace facilities, programs and functions if it is determined that, based on medical determination, such restriction is necessary for the welfare of the person who has the communicable disease and/or the welfare of others within the workplace. Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) time may be granted if the illness or condition qualifies for FMLA designation.

The city will comply with all applicable statutes and regulations that protect the privacy of persons who have communicable disease. Every effort will be made to ensure procedurally sufficient safeguards are exercised to maintain the personal confidentiality about persons who have communicable diseases.

The City of New Bern Infectious Disease Control Policy is a temporary policy that is subject to change in accordance with the needs of the city, and State/Federal Guidelines.

Responsibilities

The Human Resources Department shall be responsible for the coordination of the Policy.



Mark A. Stephens
City Manager

3/20/20

Date

** Attachment – Infectious Response Plan

INFECTIOUS RESPONSE PLAN

STEP 1	STEP 2 "AWARENESS LEVEL"	STEP 3 "CDC/NC PUBLIC HEALTH DICTATES"
LOW RISK	MODERATE RISK	EMINENT THREAT
❖ Proper Hygiene (wash hands frequently)	❖ Address "What If"	❖ Working from Home (Exception – Emergency Response)
❖ Station Sanitation	❖ Minimize Non-Essential Services to Reduce Exposure	❖ EOC Activation
❖ Closely Monitor (local/state/federal/CDC/NC Public Health)	❖ Monitor WEB EOC	❖ Personal Protection Equipment requirements upgraded
❖ Home Sanitation	❖ Meetings Held via Skype	
❖ Personal Accountability (Stay Home if Sick)	❖ Order Supplies	
❖ Utilize Tel-A-Doc	❖ Make sure we are receiving information from a reliable source	
❖ Sneeze/Cough Into Arm or Tissue		

Note:

- Step 1 Typical response to flu season or infectious outbreak in United States
- Step 2 Known case of infectious virus in North Carolina
- Step 3 Known case of infectious virus in immediate area