

City of Edmonton Update | August 4, 2020

Email from Adam Laughlin, Interim City Manager – sent to all City employees and respective unions

All City of Edmonton Staff,

It's great to be back after some time off with family. The pace of work related to Relaunch decisions and activities has continued and many staff are exploring Reimagine recommendations that will shape our Recovery plan. A safe, fiscally responsible restart of Edmonton's economy and the avoidance of a spike in infection rates is our goal. But we depend on all Edmontonians to do their part in ensuring a successful rebound from the pandemic.

Here is information about our Relaunch actions related to the pandemic.

Announcements from the Province

- Education Minister LaGrange announced that mandatory mask usage for all students in grades 4-12 as well as all school staff will be in place for the 2020/2021 school year. Students will be required to wear masks in all shared and common areas such as hallways and school buses. Staff will be required to wear masks in all situations when physical distancing cannot be maintained. All students, teachers, staff and school bus drivers will be supplied with two reusable masks; single use masks will be available at schools if masks are misplaced or forgotten.

Minister LaGrange identified other actions and equipment the Government of Alberta will supply to ensure the safe and successful return to school:

- Hand sanitizer stations at school entrances
- Two contactless thermometers per school
- Possible expansion of testing capacity and reduced testing turnaround for the testing of staff, teachers and students
- One reusable face shield for every teacher, staff member and school bus driver

Dr. Hinshaw stated that masks are only one part of the public health approach to protect schools. No single precaution or measure will eliminate all risks of exposure in schools or any other setting. Physical distancing, cohorting, frequent hand washing, enhanced cleaning and changes to how classes and schools operate are all equally important.

- At Dr. Hinshaw's COVID-19 update, she noted that two weeks ago, the increase in the number of cases was concerning and that by changing and being more consistent with their behaviours, Albertans could make a difference to the transmission rate. Today, she reported a dip in the infection rate and said this is evidence that the collective hard work of Albertans plays a significant role in avoiding a COVID-19 spike or second wave.

Updates

- Over the past couple of months, I've provided updates on the City's work in developing a Flexible Work Practices Program. Working remotely is a good example of one option in this program.
- Our initial goal was to have this program in place by September 1 and begin to bring employees back to City workspaces. As it stands now, most employees working remotely will continue to do so past September 1. To safely transition employees back into high-rise buildings, like Edmonton Tower or Century Place, more time and thoughtful discussion is required. A full outline, including the phases of transitioning back and guidelines for what employees can expect when returning to their workplaces, will be provided in the coming weeks.
- The City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Public Library (EPL) are co-leading an initiative to offer services and resources in an outdoor setting on Sir Winston Churchill Square, in an effort to continue to support the homeless and vulnerable community. The City is coordinating space, logistics and

operations for the project while EPL will coordinate library services and work with local agencies to also offer services to customers on the Square. This initiative is planned to launch later this week.

- The temporary face coverings bylaw went into effect on August 1 and this weekend enforcement officers patrolled several locations, including Downtown, Whyte Avenue, West Edmonton Mall, indoor park amenities, grocery stores, places of worship, transit facilities and City Recreation Centers. Overall, public compliance has been very positive and Peace Officers have focused their efforts on public education. More information about face covering compliance is [here](#).

Self Care Moment

“Me” time matters when it comes to happiness. Alone time can help us to unwind, improve our concentration, problem solve, enhance our relationships and give space for self discovery. If finding “me” time is a struggle, consider the following tricks:

- Wake up 30 minutes earlier than the rest of your household
- If you have an office door, close it
- Temporarily unplug from devices and gadgets
- Take your lunch break in a park
- Make monthly dates with yourself

Public Information

Information about the COVID response is online at edmonton.ca/covid-19. I encourage anyone with questions to review those materials. The website is updated frequently.

Supervisors, please print this email ([attached as a PDF](#)) for those staff who do not have access to a computer. The best source of information remains the [Employee Guide](#) (*version 15, remember to refresh*).

Members of the Relaunch Task Team are found [here](#).



Adam Laughlin
Interim City Manager