

**Subject:** Updates to the Attendance Policy S600-20

**Recommendation:**

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Report #2024-0172 Updates to the Attendance Policy S600-20, for information;**

**AND THAT Council approve the Attendance Policy S600-20, as amended, effective January 1, 2025.**

**Background:**

As part of the ongoing People Services Departmental policy review process, the Town's Attendance policy was identified as one requiring updates. This policy has not been revised since its creation in 2013. A revised version is attached to this report, with all changes highlighted.

**Analysis:**

As part of the analysis, the policies of neighbouring municipalities were reviewed to determine the number of sick days provided to their staff. Annual leave entitlements around the Region range from 6 to 18 days, averaging roughly 10 days per calendar year.

It has been determined that the Town could be better served by a new approach to sick leave with tighter timelines. The draft policy amendments establish 12 paid sick days per year. This matches the benefit provided for in the CUPE Local 1287 collective agreement and is consistent with the efforts of Town administration to ensure fairness and consistency between the two groups where possible. It should be noted that this total includes both personal and family sick leave as well as appointment time. Sick leave for part-time, seasonal and casual employees continues to be governed by the *Employment Standards Act*.

The policy does not allow for sick leave to accumulate or carry forward into the new year, ensuring 12 days is the most that can be taken in any given year. It also does not allow for any unused time to be paid out. Other changes to the policy include a timeline triggering the short-term disability program, the ability to request independent medical assessments in certain circumstances, and an increase to the

number of days that must be missed in order to request a medical note and to determine if an employee has abandoned their job.

Understanding that unusual circumstances may arise, an employee requiring additional sick leave greater than the annual cap will be required to use their vacation and/or lieu banks, or unpaid time off.

Should Council approve these policy changes, a January 1, 2025 implementation date allows for a smooth administrative transition as payroll would not have to calculate pro-rated entitlements for the remainder of 2024.

**Financial Considerations:**

It is difficult to quantify the financial impact of this change as the amount of sick leave taken in any given year varies. Most positions do not need to be backfilled in their absence so essentially a day of productivity is the cost of sick leave, as opposed to incurring direct financial costs.

**Alternatives Reviewed:**

Although not recommended, Council could opt to leave the existing policy unchanged.

**Strategic Plan Relationship: Enhancing Capacity and Future Readiness**

Limiting sick leave encourages regular attendance and for employees to manage their health responsibly while maintaining operational continuity. It also helps to control costs related to employee absences. This policy update will better assist with striking a balance between supporting employee wellbeing and ensuring the Town continues to function smoothly.

**Consultation:**

All members of the Senior Leadership Team were consulted regarding these draft changes.

**Other Pertinent Reports/Attachments:**

Appendix "A" – Updated Attendance Policy S600-20

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