

**To:** All users

**From:** Maura McKinnon, Chief Human Resource Officer

**Date:** March 24, 2020

**Re:** **Bulletin #10c: COVID-19 HR Update – Mar 24 2020**

### **Childcare arrangements**

We understand that the closure of public schools and early learning and childcare facilities has posed a challenge for those Horizon employees with children who require childcare. With the goal to ensure that the children of essential services employees were able to be quickly placed in alternative childcare facilities, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is working closely with a number of childcare operators across the province. Horizon has been in frequent contact with EECD on this and has been assured that EECD staff are working 24/7 to secure placement for children who have been registered through the parent portal.

If your efforts to make alternate childcare arrangements were unsuccessful and you still require early learning and child care, you must register through the parent portal by calling 1-833-221-9339. Once children have been registered, EECD will work to secure placement and will contact parents directly. All questions on placement requests should also be directed by calling this number.

### **Recommendations on preventive measures for pregnant health care workers**

During pregnancy, immunity is reduced, and physiological and immunological changes make pregnant women more vulnerable to respiratory infections, such as COVID-19.

Horizon has recommended that managers limit exposure of pregnant health care workers to patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection.

Pregnant health care workers must follow basic precautions in addition to taking droplet or contact transmission precautions. They must also learn to select and use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

In the current context of early identification of cases, isolation, and lack of community transmission the following recommendations are being proposed for managers of pregnant staff.

Please note that these recommendations for pregnant workers are subject to change when epidemiological or clinical data justify an update.

We ask that you contact your manager to discuss whether your current work assignment places you at risk.

## **Social distancing**

We are all required to do our part to “flatten the curve”!

Horizon feels it is important to remind staff to exercise appropriate social distancing in the workplace, whenever possible.

For those department and units where a number of employees work together, Horizon wanted to take this opportunity to remind all employees of the importance of working with their teams to make the necessary modifications to enhance everyone’s safety, such as:

- Respecting the two-metre (six-feet) separation guideline when in a room with others (whenever possible);
- Avoid shaking hands or touching others;
- Maximizing the use of phones and Skype instead of in-person meetings;
- Avoid over-crowded elevators;
- Avoiding sharing phones, pens, computers and other work tools where possible (if sharing some work tools cannot be avoided, clean them often).

[Personal hygiene](#) also plays a critical role in preventing the spread of the virus. We all need to practice these personal hygiene habits:

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth;
- Consistently use good hand hygiene measures, which include frequent handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Maintain good respiratory etiquette, such as covering your mouth and nose with your arm or sleeve when coughing and sneezing, disposing of any used tissues as soon as possible, and following with handwashing or use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

Employees who have not completed the "[Routine Practices and Additional Precautions](#)" and "[Clean Hands Save Lives](#)" e-learning modules are reminded to do so.

Employees will also see changes been made in cafeterias and coffee lines to ensure that appropriate social distancing is being maintained.

Employees waiting for active screening are reminded to maintain a two-metre separation at all times while in line.

Thank you for your cooperation.