



# FRASER VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**POLICY:** COVID-19 Recovery Policy

**Date Issued:** May 26, 2020

**Date Amended:**

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the *COVID-19 Recovery Policy* is to demonstrate the Fraser Valley Regional District's ongoing commitment of taking all measures necessary to reduce the risk of exposure and transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in our workplaces and in our communities.

## **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the *COVID-19 Recovery Policy* is to ensure that Fraser Valley Regional District staff is reintegrated into the workplace in accordance with the directives and orders of the Provincial Health Officer and WorkSafeBC Guidelines.

## **FRAMEWORK**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on public health and safety across the globe. Around the world, governments have taken various approaches in an attempt to bend or flatten the curve of the transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. In the interests of reducing the risk of exposure and transmission of the virus in our workplaces and our communities, on March 23, 2020, the Fraser Valley Regional District instituted measures to allow designated staff to work off-site, and activated its business continuity plan in order to enable critical business operations to continue to function and to enable the delivery of essential services. Many public facilities operated by the Fraser Valley Regional District were also closed or partially closed to the public as a further control measure. Limited staff continued to attend Fraser Valley Regional District workplaces while practicing appropriate physical distancing and other control measures in an effort to minimize the risk of exposure and transmission of the virus. Accordingly, Fraser Valley Regional District Committee and Board meetings were conducted in the absence of the public through video-conferencing platforms.

The physical and mental health, safety and well-being of all Fraser Valley Regional District staff have remained and will continue to remain a top priority during our response and recovery to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On May 6, 2020, the provincial government of British Columbia revealed its *BC's Restart Plan*. This 4-phase plan sets out what the "new normal" means for Employers and Public Institutions as the province reopens. As stated in the provincial plan, "BC's restart will be a careful, step-by-step process to ensure that all of BC's combined efforts and sacrifices in the fight against COVID-19 are not squandered. For different organization sectors to move forward, they will be asked to develop enhanced protocols aligned with Public Health and Safety Guidelines under the *BC Restart Plan*."

On May 8, 2020, WorkSafeBC issued Guidelines requiring Employers to develop a *Covid-19 Safety Plan[s]* for their respective workplace[s] prior to resuming operations.

The Fraser Valley Regional District has put target timelines in place for purposes of reintegrating staff back into the workplace[s] in accordance with WorkSafeBC Guidelines.

The process of reintegrating staff back into Fraser Valley Regional District workplaces will support the phased reopening of other Fraser Valley Regional District facilities to the public. This combined effort is the recovery phase of the organization's response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. The FVRD will continue to monitor and adjust our control protocols as necessary to ensure that appropriate control measures are in place at all times to reduce the risk of exposure and transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in our workplaces and our communities.

This policy is informed by, and will be interpreted and implemented in accordance with:

- ✓ Directives and Orders of the Provincial Health Officer
- ✓ *BC's Restart Plan*
- ✓ Directives of the Government of Canada and the and Provincial Government of British Columbia
- ✓ BC Centre for Disease Control
- ✓ Public Health Agency of Canada
- ✓ WorkSafeBC
- ✓ Labour and Employment legislation
- ✓ Other relevant enactments

## **PRINCIPLES**

The following principles underlay the *COVID-19 Recovery Policy*:

1. The physical and mental health, safety and well-being of all FVRD staff remains a top priority as FVRD staff are reintegrated back into Fraser Valley Regional District workplaces
2. Recognition that that FVRD staff can not be reintegrated into the workplace until WorkSafeBC Guidelines are implemented
3. Recognition that FVRD staff must have a clear understanding around the health and safety controls and measures that are being put in place to reduce the risk of SARS-CoV-2 virus transmission in the workplace as FVRD staff are reintegrated back into the workplace, and as other Fraser Valley Regional District facilities reopen
4. Recognition that the process of reintegration will be phased, gradual and measured
5. Recognition that each Fraser Valley Workplace is unique
6. Recognition that FVRD staff have a legal right to refuse work if they believe the workplace presents an *undue hazard* to them
7. Recognition that FVRD staff members will not be allowed to attend the workplace where their attendance may pose a risk of exposure or transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Policy implementation is dependent on:

- ✓ Directives of senior levels of government and the Provincial Health Officer
- ✓ Assessing and managing the risk of SARS-CoV-2 virus exposure and transmission in the workplace and implementing appropriate “Engineering and Administrative” Controls
- ✓ Need for flexibility and adaptation given the uncertainty around the possible resurgence of the SARS-CoV-2 virus at any time and resulting directives of the Provincial Health Officer
- ✓ Early, open and ongoing communication with FVRD staff
- ✓ Development and implementation of policies that will support reintegration efforts and compliance with WorkSafeBC
- ✓ Ensuring that FVRD staff can raise safety concerns
- ✓ Staff training
- ✓ Managing expectations and instilling confidence
- ✓ Ongoing assessment and monitoring in the workplace and updating health and safety protocols as necessary

## **PROCEDURE**

Staff will be reintegrated into Fraser Valley Regional District workplaces, and other Fraser Valley Regional District facilities will be allowed to fully reopen once a *COVID-19 Safety Plan* (in accordance with WorkSafeBC Guidelines) is put in place for the respective workplace. Each plan will include the following six steps:

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|---------------|---|
| <b>Step 1</b> | Assessing the risk of exposure and transmission in the workplace and involving workers in the assessment    |
| <b>Step 2</b> | Implementing protocols and other engineering and administrative controls to reduce the risk of transmission |
| <b>Step 3</b> | Develop policies  |
| <b>Step 4</b> | Develop a corporate communication plan; deliver staff training reintegration                                |
| <b>Step 5</b> | Plan monitoring and updating  |
| <b>Step 6</b> | Assess and address risks arising from the resumption of operations  |

## **MEASURING SUCCESS**

The success of this policy will be measured by:

- ✓ Ensuring that FVRD has complied with the Orders of the Provincial Health Officer and have put *COVID-19 Safety Plans* in place at all Fraser Valley Regional District workplaces before the resumption of full operations in accordance with WorkSafeBC Guidelines
- ✓ Documenting the efforts FVRD has taken to put appropriate engineering and administrative controls and measures in place to reduce the risk of exposure and transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in Fraser Valley Regional District workplaces
- ✓ Supporting the mental health and well-being of all Fraser Valley Regional District staff by appropriately managing change, helping to reduce anxiety and by offering resources and support
- ✓ Early and ongoing communication with all Fraser Valley Regional District staff