Sedro-Woolley Policy ___ 2009 H1N1 and the 2009-2010 influenza season

A. APPLICABILITY & DURATION

This policy applies to all employees and is effective from the date of adoption through June 30, 2010 unless extended or terminated early by the Mayor. The City Supervisor shall be responsible for implementing this policy.

B. GENERAL

The intent of this policy is to supplement and modify the application of the City’s sick leave use policy, including the sick leave use policies contained in City collective bargaining agreements, consistent with public health guidance on the 2009 H1N1 flu.

C. BACKGROUND & POLICY JUSTIFICATION

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), with input from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), has developed updated guidance for employers of all sizes to use as they develop or review and update plans to respond to 2009 H1N1 influenza now and during the upcoming fall and winter influenza season. The City plays a key role in protecting its employees' health and safety, as well as in limiting the negative impact of influenza outbreaks on the individual, the community, and the nation’s economy. The City has been asked to review and revise its plans in light of the current 2009 H1N1 influenza outbreak to take into account the extent and severity of disease in their community and to plan for increased severity.

The severity of illness that 2009 H1N1 influenza flu will cause (including hospitalizations and deaths) or the amount of illness that may occur as a result of seasonal influenza during the 2009–2010 influenza season cannot be predicted with a high degree of certainty. Therefore, HHS, CDC and DHS have requested that employers plan to be able to respond in a flexible way to varying levels of severity and be prepared to refine their pandemic influenza response plans if a potentially more serious outbreak of influenza evolves during the fall and winter. In response to this request, the City is adopting Policy ____ 2009 H1N1 and the 2009-2010 influenza season, addressing the City’s policy on the use of sick leave, reporting for work, alternate working arrangements and vaccinations.

D. POLICY DETAILS

1. PREPARATION – In an effort to prepare for the 2009-2010 influenza season, the City will:

   a. Engage local health department to confirm channels of communication and methods for dissemination of local outbreak information including the identification of key personnel at the City and County for this communication;
   b. Engage employees in discussion regarding the implementation of
this plan, including any modifications to make it more effective;
c. Provide information regarding H1N1 to all employees including
CDC facts on how it spreads and how to respond when ill;
d. Coordinate a mock implementation of this plan at the pandemic
level, identifying City essential services and addressing how they will
be performed;
e. Plan for increased janitorial services in commonly used areas;
f. Encourage employees to frequently clean all commonly touched
surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and
doorknobs and provide employees with the disinfectant to accomplish
this task;
g. Provide alcohol based hand sanitizer throughout the workplace;
h. Employees who are pregnant or immune compromised should seek
increased social distancing and work with their supervisor to minimize
contact with other employees and the general public;
i. Encourage community to pay bills by computer or mail to decrease
public contact; and
j. In more severe situations, decrease face to face meetings and
gatherings and cancel non-essential travel.

2. USE OF LEAVE - City employees are allowed to use Sick Leave,
Vacation, Compensatory Time, Furlough days, and unpaid leave as a result of
H1N1 as follows:

a. **WHEN THE EMPLOYEE HAS SYMPTOMS.** Employees with
influenza-like illness shall remain at home until at least 24 hours after
they are free of fever (100° F [37.8° C] or greater), or signs of a
fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications. It is anticipated
that sick employees will be absent for work for 3 to 5 days. Under
conditions with increased severity compared to Spring/Summer 2009
H1N1, employees will be asked to remain at home and not return to
work for at least 7 days.

b. **WHEN THE EMPLOYEE’S IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER HAS
SYMPTOMS.** Employees whose immediate family members have
influenza-like illness may stay home from work to care for the sick
family member. Those employees are asked to be extra vigilant about
their own symptoms and to stay home from work if they have any
symptoms.

c. **COMMUNICATION.** Employees who are absent from work due to
influenza shall communicate with their supervisor regarding their
absence by either the telephone or the use of email.

d. **“DOCTOR’S” NOTE.** No doctor’s note is required for the use of
sick leave or other leave under this policy.

e. **OTHER.** The City will provide employees with recommendations
from the CDC, HHS and DHS in the form of payroll stuffers, links on
the City website and handouts available at the worksite, for how to
avoid, identify and deal with influenza.
3. REPORTING FOR WORK – Employees with influenza-like illness shall not report to work; employees who become ill with symptoms of an influenza-like illness during the work day shall leave work and go home. Those employees shall remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F [37.8° C] or greater), or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications and are strongly encouraged to avoid any unnecessary travel or exposure to other members of the community.

4. ALTERNATE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS – This section shall be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the employee’s supervisor and shall apply to employees with symptoms and employees caring for a family member with symptoms.

If it is practical for an employee to telecommute while sick or caring for a sick family member, upon approval from the employee’s supervisor, an employee may be permitted to work from home using remote access to the City’s network. Those employees shall track their work time and sick time in order to provide payroll with accurate time card information.

5. VACCINATIONS – The City will provide for vaccinations for both the seasonal flu and the 2009 H1N1 (anticipated to be a series of two shots) at designated times for all employees and for members of the Sedro-Woolley Volunteer Fire Department. The CDC encourages all employees to get vaccinated.