**Municipal COVID-19 Facility Policy Template**

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| **Title** | Municipal COVID-19 Facility Policy | |
| **Policy #:** |  | |
| **Department** | All | |
| **Responsibility** |  | |
| **Approved by Council:** | *Date:* | *Resolution #:* |
| **Implementation Date:** |  | |

**Background:**

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The World Health Organization designated a global COVID-19 pandemic on March 11, 2020. Jurisdictions across Canada and the world implemented measures to curtail the spread of the disease. In Newfoundland and Labrador, a public health emergency under the *Public Health Promotion and Promotion Act* was called on March 18. Residents, workers, visitors and employers are subject to special measure orders as a result of this emergency. Under the provincial COVID-19 Alert Level System, designed to control disease transmission and maintain health system capacity, the Provincial Government is providing guidance for social and business activities to reopen safely. Municipalities are employers in communities. They are also the owners and operators of community recreational facilities such as arenas, pools, fitness centres, playgrounds and other centres/spaces. These facilities provide services to and facilitate programming for community members and organizations.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the policy is to outline [municipality name]’s practice and protocols for the reopening and maintenance of municipally owned recreation facilities.

**Policy Statement:**

The [municipality name] takes COVID-19 seriously. As a council and staff, we are committed to ensuring the safety of our community and our residents. We recognize the importance of recreational facilities and services to our community.

This policy acknowledges that [municipality name] is implementing COVID-19 Alert Level Guidance from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador as much as is reasonable and practicable. The policy outlines how and under what circumstances our facilities will be open to public.

[municipality name] also acknowledges that certain municipal facilities may not open if the risk of COVID-19 transmission is high and/or reasonable, practicable protective measures cannot be implemented.

**Definitions:**

For the purposes of this policy, reasonable and practicable mean what is practical and possible for a municipality to do given its size, human resource and financial capacity, as well as the number of facilities for which it is responsible to maintain at any given time.

**Scope:**

This policy applies to the following municipally owned recreation facilities: [list only the facilities that are open or that will be open. This also includes playgrounds that are open but will not be cleaned as per the guidelines. For example, if you have a playground that you cannot sanitize completely as per the guidelines but you are opening that facility, this policy will allow you to outline what you are doing with respect to this particular playground and what you cannot do right now. Stating that no sanitizing and cleaning is being done beyond normal practice and putting up signage to indicate that it is use at own risk is acceptable as long as it is outlined in the policy appendix and is communicated to the public. The goal here is to be clear with everyone in terms of your efforts and to make people aware of any potential risks. Section 3-e outlines instances where complete sanitization as per the guidelines is not possible].

At this time, it does not include [list facilities that are not open at all and therefore not covered by the policy].

[Please note that the policy can be reviewed and changed at any time and that you may add or take facilities off the list. You may also not choose to specify facilities in this section at all].

The policy covers the following four (4) areas:

1. Decision-making;
2. Communication;
3. Monitoring and sanitization;
4. Waivers.

**Responsibilities:**

Municipal staff are responsible for upholding this policy. Should there be challenges with this, the policy will require review.

**Guidelines and Procedures:**

1. **Decision-making**
   1. Municipal staff will review public health emergency special orders, guidance and information sheets provided by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador as it is made available.
   2. Municipal staff will determine their human and fiscal resource capacity to adhere to guidance provided.
   3. Municipal staff will consult with council to provide recommendations on how and under what circumstances facilities will be open to the public. See Appendix A for a list of facilities that are open, and details associated with their monitoring and sanitization.
2. **Communication**
   1. Municipal staff will communicate with the public through [outline ways in which information will be communicated, e.g. social media, community website, radio, media releases, etc.] how and under what circumstances facilities will be open to the public. This includes clear information on facility sanitization, physical distancing, limits on numbers and monitoring procedures.
   2. Signage outlining protocols and procedures for facilities will be posted outside, inside or on said facilities in clear view for users to see. This includes clear information on facility sanitization, physical distancing, limits on numbers and monitoring procedures.
   3. Municipal staff will provide updates to the public and adjust signage should anything change with respect to the protocols and procedures for facilities.
3. **Monitoring and sanitization**
   1. Municipal staff will take the following steps to sanitize: [itemize according to what is possible].
   2. Municipal staff will take the following steps maintain numbers of people at municipal locations [itemize according to what is possible].
   3. Municipal staff will develop facility monitoring and sanitization logs, where applicable, for facilities that are open according to Appendix A.
   4. These logs will be kept up to date.
   5. In cases where limited or no monitoring and/or sanitization is possible, and the facility is open, municipal staff will communicate that these are use-at-own-risk facilities and will suggest that users take their own sanitization precautions.
4. **Waivers**
   1. Municipal staff will develop and add waivers to any forms or agreements which they enter in to with the public, including facility rental agreements and program registration forms. The waiver language should include language acknowledging risk of contracting COVID-19 by way of attendance at the municipality’s facilities.

**Policy Review:**

The policy is subject to change and will be reviewed as often as necessary given the evolving COVID-19 circumstances.

**Sample Appendix A:**

Recreation facilities currently open in [municipality name]\*

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| Facility name | Monitoring and Sanitization status |
| Mill Street playground | Not sanitized twice daily; no handwashing or hand-sanitizer stations available; garbage cans available; signage posted; no monitoring in place; use at own risk. |
| Recreation complex outdoor playground | Sanitized twice daily; no hand washing or hand sanitizer stations available; garbage cans available; signage posted, monitored twice daily. |
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\*When completing these lists, please consult provincial government guidance documents and information sheets.