



MEMORANDUM

To: All Employees of OPTIONS NORTHWEST
Cc: UNIFOR 229
From: Tony DeAgazio, on behalf of the Pandemic Team
Date: May 13, 2021 (#16)
Re: COVID-19 update

Please place in the COVID-19 binders

Happy Thursday!

As you may have heard by now, Ontario Premier Doug Ford announced today that the province-wide stay-at-home order will be extended for an additional two weeks (**until June 2nd**), saying the move will help deliver the “most normal July and August possible.”

On another note, the Pandemic Team wants to provide you with information regarding **Public Health Travel Restrictions - Guidelines and Process for Employee Travel and Time Off Requests**.

Limiting non-essential travel is an important element of a strategy to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Please refer to the guidelines and process below regarding travel and time off requests.

1. Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU) recommends avoiding all non-essential travel outside of Northern Ontario. As a result, the following requirements are in place to ensure a safe workplace for our employees and the people we support:
 - a. Employees who plan to travel outside of Northern Ontario are required to review their plans with their immediate supervisor for adequate coverage purposes; and
 - b. Employees are required to self-isolate for a period of time based on the current TBDHU guidelines for the travel destination.
2. If the employee has existing approved vacation that **does not** include the isolation period, the supervisor will determine if it is operationally feasible to approve the additional required time off to comply with the required isolation times.
 - a. If so, the employee will request an unpaid leave of absence. The employee may request a vacation payout if available to compensate for unpaid time off.
 - b. If not, the employee must cancel or amend travel plans to ensure a return to work as scheduled.

- c. Employees who decide to cancel their travel plans may request to cancel their previously approved vacation, as per the collective agreement and agency policy.
 - d. Please note: the supervisor will determine if it is operationally feasible to approve the employee to work from home during the required isolation period.
3. New requests for vacation/time off for the purpose of travel must include the required isolation period.
 4. Employees travelling for **compassionate or necessary medical reasons** will not be unreasonably denied the unpaid time off for travel or self-isolation. Documentation may be requested by the supervisor to justify this need.
 5. If travel restrictions/isolation requirements are lifted or altered, an employee may request to cancel any additional approved time off if the shifts are available.

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out to your supervisor or any member of the Pandemic Team if you require support or have questions.

Stay well and stay safe!

Tony DeAgazio