

# CENTRAL PEACE - REGIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



## COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

**Last Update: 2020-01-27**

## Introduction

The Central Peace - Regional Emergency Management Communicable Disease Pandemic Response Plan is intended to function as a Hazard Specific Annex of the Central Peace – Regional Emergency Plan which is an All Hazards Process to managing Emergencies in some or all of the five Partner Municipalities.

This Plan will contain procedures for the Municipal Response to during a State of Public Health Emergency as declared by the Minister of Health or designate. All Contact Information for Alberta Health Services, Other Provincial Ministries , Municipal Council & Staff, Local Businesses, Community Groups and other resources is contained in the Central Peace – Regional Emergency Plan.

Procedures contained in this plan were written to address Pandemic Influenza, but they should work for any Communicable Disease Outbreak. Every communicable disease outbreak is a dynamic event and Alberta Health Services will adjust their response as required to appropriately manage each outbreak. Each outbreak will also have the probability of unforeseen actions and reactions by the general public that may impact procedures contemplated in this plan.

## Key Objectives

- 1. Provide municipal support to the Alberta Health Services Communicable Disease Pandemic Response Plan.**
- 2. Ensure continuity of essential municipal services.**
- 3. Ensure continuity of essential commerce.**

In keeping with the stated Key Objectives, it is imperative that the Partner Municipalities develop and maintain current Business Continuity Plans.

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**SECTION 1**  
**MUNICIPAL SUPPORT**  
**TO THE ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES**  
**COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN**

**Concept of Operations**

The World Health Organization monitors influenza and other disease activities worldwide. When there are a number of human influenza outbreaks occurring, steps will be taken to determine if a viral pandemic is surfacing. If such a virus is detected, the World Health Organization will activate its Influenza Pandemic Plan. Through this mechanism, Health Canada and Alberta Health and Wellness will, in turn, implement their Influenza Pandemic Plans and procedures, which include arrangements developed by the Alberta Health Services and Alberta Emergency Management Agency.

Plans and procedures will be implemented by Alberta Government to respond to the consequences of an Influenza Pandemic on provincial and municipal services due to a possible reduction in available provincial and municipal resources and the disruption of provincial and municipal governance.

Although there appear to be five levels of alert: Novel Virus Alert Stage; Pandemic Alert Stage; Pandemic Imminent Stage; Second Wave; and Recovery Phase, the municipal response will be implemented during the Pandemic Alert Stage.

Alberta Health Services, under the leadership of the Medical Officer of Health, is responsible for developing a Pandemic Influenza Contingency Plan which must be submitted to Alberta Health and Wellness. Alberta Health Services (AHS) is expected to involve municipalities and other stakeholders in the development of their plans.

The municipal response to the AHS plan will provide the guidelines and procedures for the local municipal government to collaborate with AHS to maintain the continuity of government services and support to its residents. This will be carried out through the mutual and cooperative efforts of the province, AHS and the municipal emergency management agency. A lead role will be taken by the Medical Officer of Health for providing advice and counsel to the municipal emergency management agency.

**The Municipal Response**

**Pandemic Alert:**

Upon notification from AHS of a Pandemic Alert, the municipal Director of Emergency Management under the guidance and counsel of AHS will implement the procedures required to ensure maintenance of municipal operations. Arrangements include informing the public of the municipal response and steps being taken to protect the public. The Emergency Operations

Center will be activated as required to facilitate these activities. Appropriate key designates representing the Emergency Management Agency will report to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for a briefing from the Medical Officer of Health or designate on the magnitude and scope of the situation.

### **Pandemic Imminent:**

As the situation escalates, the functions of the EOC will become more aggressive in response to the seriousness of the situation. Key designates necessary for the implementation of the required municipal arrangements and coordination of response will be required to report to the EOC to carry out their designated tasks.

### **Recovery Phase:**

Recovery activities will be ongoing following the Pandemic Imminent stage to assist those recovering families and individuals victimized by Pandemic. These coordinated activities will be delivered from a Victim Assistance Center established to provide access to a variety of municipal, government and NGO services organized to provide for the recovery of individuals from the impact of pandemic.

### **Second Wave:**

In the event that there is a “second wave”, AHS will ensure that municipalities are informed so that the municipal response can be quickly re-activated. Municipalities will respond by once again activating the EOC and response procedures as required. These activities will be carried out under the guidance and counsel of the Regional Health Authority.

### **Pandemic Response Priorities**

In the face of a pandemic influenza outbreak, the municipality in consultation with the Regional Health Authority (RHA) will activate the necessary contingency plans and set priorities for:

- a) continuity of local government and maintenance of administrative support
- b) maintaining public safety services [Fire Ambulance, Police]
- c) maintaining the integrity of essential public works, municipal services such as water treatment and delivery, waste management, garbage disposal and utilities
- d) working with the AHS [Communications] in providing information and advice to the public via regular announcements and prepared information guidelines
- e) closure of public buildings where it is deemed to the best interests of public safety and minimizing the spread of infection
- f) establishing alternative care facilities, triage centers, and immunization as requested by AHS to facilitate provision of health services to the public
- g) activating a committee of local business persons charged with the task of activating their mutual aid pacts to assist one another in maintaining a level of service to the community, particularly those services involving access to pharmaceuticals, retail food purchases, gasoline and other commerce deemed necessary

- h) coordination and direction of FCSS and local NGO support to the municipal response

The Director of Emergency Management will coordinate the municipal response and ensure that other necessary components of the Municipal Emergency Plan are implemented as required. Activities such as making a declaration of a state of local emergency, providing Emergency Social Services, designating facilities to be used as alternate care facilities, triage areas, morgue and storage sites and providing municipal support to Health Care Facilities, Long Term Care Centers, Seniors Homes, and Environmental Health will be carried out as deemed appropriate and already described in the Municipal Emergency Plan.

### **Continuity of Local Government - Public Safety & Essential Services**

The Director of Emergency Management will ensure that arrangements are in place for AHS to provide reasonable warning, information and protection against influenza so that continuity of local government can be maintained; this includes administration and municipal personnel tasked to maintain municipal services and operations, Public Safety [Fire, Ambulance, Police] Public Works and Infrastructure.

Elected officials and members of council will ensure that areas of responsibility essential for maintenance of government have been backed up so that alternative individuals can take over management in case of an absence due to illness.

If necessary, the “local authority” of the community will establish additional, service-oriented, mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities to share human resources and expertise to ensure ongoing operation of municipal services.

### **Maintaining Public Safety Services**

The Fire, Ambulance and Police service will ensure that sufficient back up support is available to respond to a significant shortfall of personnel.

Mutual aid agreements between communities will be reviewed as to their relevancy to a pandemic situation.

A registry of former and retired personnel and suitable volunteers will be established.

### **Maintaining Essential Services**

The Director of Emergency Management will work with Emergency Services managers and municipal department heads to establish a list of essential services and key personnel.

Each service manager will ensure that all essential positions are backed up with an alternate.

A list of contact persons and suitable volunteers and/or former staff will be developed and maintained.

## Public Information – Corporate Communications

The designated municipal Emergency Public Information Officer (EPIO) will, in consultation with AHS, develop templates for information guidelines and instructional brochures for local businesses, municipal and emergency services and the general public [local residents] and ensure timely releases of information to the media. Information pamphlets will be prepared locally for delivery to municipal residents to ensure the delivery of information essential to health and self-care; local service organizations will be tasked to assist with the distribution of information to businesses, worksites and local residents.

## Closure of Public Buildings

The municipal Director of Emergency Management and the Emergency Management Agency will, in consultation with AHS, establish a list of public buildings and review the benefits and disadvantages of closure of certain of those public facilities in the interests of public health.

## Alternate Treatment Facilities

If it becomes necessary to establish alternate treatment facilities, triage areas or dispensaries for supplies to the public, the Director of Emergency Management will arrange for AHS to access suitable locations already identified in the Municipal Emergency Plan.

In the event that alternate treatment centers are established, and if there is a requirement for the transportation of individuals to treatment centers or triage areas, the Director of Emergency Management will task the Public Works [Transportation] manager with responsibility for arranging a transportation service to meet the needs of those without transportation or those unable to transport themselves so that they can access treatment or immunization.

Transportation arrangements will also be available to move equipment and supplies to locations where they are needed.

## Morgue Facilities - Burial Plots - Cremation

In consultation with AHS and local funeral homes, the Director of Emergency Management will arrange a suitable location for the establishment of a temporary morgue either by choosing an appropriate facility or facilities which have the capability of serving as a temporary morgue and have a discrete, secure staging area for refrigerated trucks.

Local funeral homes will be contacted concerning managing the possibility of large numbers of deceased persons.

It will also be necessary to determine the availability of burial plots and assign staff/crews to assist local funeral homes with tasks associated with burial or cremation of fatalities.



### Maintaining Essential Commerce

The Director of Emergency Management will task the local Business Leaders to establish a committee of representatives of local business leaders to ensure that essential retail operations can continue to operate notwithstanding a major reduction in staff.

AHS will provide advice and counsel as a committee member and will also provide information/guidelines as necessary to local businesses to minimize the impact of staff contact with the public. Employers and employees will be provided education on pandemic influenza precautions.

Businesses will be asked to prioritize work loads and develop lists of essential personnel, replacement workers and suitable volunteers who can be called in [health permitting] to maintain services.

Business will be asked to be prepared to make arrangements to rotate hours/days of operation, or rotate [loan] service staff.

Businesses deemed to be necessary are as follows:

- a) Pharmacies
- b) Grocers (retail & wholesale)
- c) Gasoline and Service Stations
- d) Hardware
- e) Mechanical Repair
- f) Others to be selected as deemed necessary

### Volunteer Support Services

The Director of Emergency Management will ensure the establishment of a volunteer support services registry. Volunteer support services whether local service club members or NGO's will carry out their functions under coordination of the Director of Disaster Services and guidance of AHS.

It will be the role of the Chief Administration Officer to ensure that all volunteers are registered so as to provide protection to them under the Workers Compensation Act.

### Travel Restrictions

AHS will provide the Director of Emergency Management and the Emergency Management Agency with its expertise in determining the need for travel constraints or restrictions to and from the municipality and within the community should this become necessary.

The advice and instructions of AHS concerning travel constraints and restrictions in the community will be enforced by the declaration of a "state of local emergency".

Following this declaration, the Police will be asked to arrange enforcement restrictions to constrain or control travel within and into or out of the community.

Public Works/Infrastructure staff will erect traffic barriers as directed by the Police and may also be tasked as required to assist in controlling traffic.

### **Military Assistance**

If it becomes necessary, the Director of Emergency Management will contact the Alberta Emergency Management Agency to request security and enforcement support from Alberta Domestic Operations (Military).

## SECTION 2

# COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

### General

Following the receipt of information from Alberta Health Services (AHS) which necessitates the activation of the Pandemic Response Annex to the Municipal Emergency Plan, the EOC will be activated to the degree necessary to support the municipal response.

As required, resource members of the Emergency Management Agency will be called upon to establish and maintain a presence at the EOC to coordinate service delivery of their resources.

The degree of EOC and Emergency Management Agency activity will be determined by the support required by the RHA response.

Four stages of municipal response have been identified which will require attention:

### Pandemic Alert Stage:

Sustained person-to-person transmission of an influenza virus has been identified.

Municipal resources will be required to implement contingency plans to assist Government of Alberta and AHS implement their plans. This will require activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and a call out for appropriate designated EOC personnel. Local authority will review the process related to making a “declaration of local emergency”.

### Pandemic Imminent Stage:

Unusually high rates of morbidity and mortality have been recorded.

Additional municipal resources will be deployed to assist Alberta Government departments and AHS. EOC activities will be enhanced by calling in more, required Emergency Management Agency members.

If necessary, to access extraordinary powers to constrain travel, conscript individuals and control the movement of people, the local authority will, when it is seen as necessary and timely do so declare a “**state of local emergency**” and make appropriate announcements to the public and inform Alberta Emergency Management Agency.

In the interest of limiting person to person contact it may be advantageous to activate and operate the Central Peace Regional EOC by means of Conference Calls.

Where facility closures or travel restrictions have been imposed municipal offices may chose to operate their offices under lockdown mode with access to services by telephone or internet only.

Where shortages of available firefighters occurs, Fire services may revert to an automatic defensive response to any fires where there is no risk to human life or further spread of the fire.

Public works crews may find it necessary to maintain only minimal road access for essential or emergency traffic.

### Recovery Stage:

Assistance from three levels of government will be required to assist in the short term and long-term recovery of affected families.

A Victim Assistance Centre will be activated to provide public access to a variety of government support services required by those families, which have been impacted by the Pandemic.

This activity will commence and conclude its activities under recommendation of the municipal Director of Emergency Management, Alberta Emergency Management Agency and AHS.

### Second Wave:

Ongoing monitoring of the virus has detected renewed Pandemic activity. Municipal resources will renew the deployment of procedures required to assist the Regional Health Authority.

## SECTION 3

### The Municipal Response to Communicable Disease Pandemic

#### Pandemic Alert Stage:

Alberta Health Services (AHS) will advise the Director of Emergency Management of the impending situation and declaration of a Pandemic Alert. The Director will review and implement municipal procedures as needed to respond to a Pandemic Alert. The Director of Emergency Management will ensure that the following steps are carried out:

#### STEP 1

1. The mayor/reeve and council will be informed immediately.
2. All Emergency Management Agency personnel identified in the Municipal Emergency Plan (MEP) will be advised to report to the EOC for a briefing of the situation.
3. The Director of Emergency Management will brief the EOC and local authority of the situation as it has been communicated by the Regional Health Authority.
4. The EOC group will be provided information and briefing update on the nature of the Pandemic and precautions that must be taken by all staff.
5. The Director of Emergency Management will provide for review by the Emergency Management Agency, self-help guidelines on influenza precautions for schools, workplaces and all essential services.
6. The Director of Emergency Management the “local authority” and the Public Information Officer will review the process for declaring a “state of local emergency” and notification of the public.

#### STEP 2

1. Emergency Services and municipal services supervisors, administrators, and department heads will be provided self-help guidelines to distribute to their staff and families. They will also be requested to review their list of back-up support staff and additional personnel that may be needed and be prepared to provide an update of their status within 48 hours.
2. Key representatives of local service organizations, FCSS and local NGO’s will be briefed on the situation and asked to assist in the distribution of these information packages to the community at large.

3. Administrative staff expected to be handling telephone inquiries will be provided fact sheets containing information to respond to inquiries from the public. They will be asked to familiarize themselves with the information

### STEP 3

1. The DEM will confirm contact information and the availability of pre-designated facilities and arrangements for alternative care facilities, triage areas secure storage areas and morgue facilities and arrange for those facilities to be reviewed by AHS.
2. Arrangements for transportation of personnel, equipment and supplies will be reviewed. A list of suitable vehicles will be confirmed.
3. Security arrangements for potential storage locations for supplies required by AHS will be reviewed with the Police representative of the Emergency Management Agency.
4. The Director of Emergency Management will facilitate with local business leaders, a meeting of representatives of local, essential businesses to discuss possible collective emergency mutual aid arrangements to provide the loan of staff support in the event of a major shortfall in staff labor, the object being assurance that the forced closure of understaffed businesses will not occur. Arrangements will be made for these businesses to be provided information on the magnitude and scope of a pandemic and precautions that they must take to protect themselves and their families.

### STEP 4 (48 hours after Pandemic Alert notification)

1. Members of the Emergency Management Agency will be requested to meet at the EOC to report their Pandemic response status. A review of procedures will be carried out.
2. A representative from AHS will be invited to the EOC for the Emergency Management Agency status briefing on the status of the municipality to assist AHS in its response to Pandemic. *If this cannot be managed, then following the briefing by Emergency Management Agency representatives, a formal status report will be emailed to AHS.*

## Pandemic Imminent Stage

Alberta Health Services (AHS) will inform the municipal Directors of Emergency Management that a Pandemic is imminent. The Director will carry out a review of municipal arrangements to assist AHS response. The Directors of Emergency Management will ensure that the following steps are carried out:

### STEP 1

1. The mayor/reeve and members of council will be advised of the situation immediately.
2. Emergency services managers [Fire, Ambulance, Police], essential services managers and department heads will be contacted and advised to report to the EOC.
3. Administrative staff will begin a call-out of all other Emergency Management Agency members, key designates of local service organizations and locally based NGO's, advising them to report to the EOC.
4. The Director of Emergency Management will provide a briefing of information received from AHS and advise all managers and Emergency Management Agency members to now be prepared to implement their contingency plans and arrangements to provide for continued services in the face of possible staff shortfall due to illness.
5. All personnel will be reminded to review the precautions necessary to protect themselves and their families.
6. The EOC will be formally activated to commence support operations of AHS, responding municipal, Emergency Management Agency and NGO organizations.
7. Emergency Management Agency members will be notified that they will be called in as required to direct municipal operations.

Initially, the EOC will be occupied by the EPIO who will communicate with AHS communications in order to facilitate the development of information hand-out material to be printed out locally.

Public Works will arrange access and control of designated facilities to be used by AHS.

Administrative staff and volunteers will be expected to handle telephone lines/inquiries.

8. As the situation accelerates, more Emergency Management Agency members will be called in as needed to coordinate their specific resources.
9. Each Emergency Management Agency and NGO representative will be advised to make arrangements for continued contact, followed by an active, continued presence/communication with the EOC to coordinate service delivery and to provide status updates to their operations.
10. The mayor/reeve and council will review the need to declare “a state of local emergency”. If and when, extraordinary powers will be required to implement the municipal response, a “declaration” will be made as described in the Municipal Emergency Plan; a copy of the “declaration” will be emailed to the Alberta Emergency Management Agency.

## STEP 2

1. Public Works staff will implement arrangements to access designated facilities prioritized as alternate care facilities, triage centers, storage facilities and morgue.
2. Security arrangements for designated locations for alternate care, triage, storage, morgue and other sites will be discussed with the Police.
3. Public works staff will determine and prioritize the location of a Victim Assistance Centre to be utilized to provide for service delivery of government departments and NGO’s at a time to be announced by the Director of Disaster Services.
4. The EPIO/Corporate Communications will communicate with AHS to coordinate if necessary, arrangements for the distribution of self-help information to the general public.
5. The EPIO/Corporate communications will arrange for the distribution of self-help information in print and electronic format as required ensuring the broadest possible coverage of information to the public.
6. The Director of Emergency Management will advise all Emergency Management Agency members, and representatives of local service organizations and NGO’s to be prepared to report their status within 72 hours. A suitable meeting place in the community will be arranged for by the Chief Administration Officer.

## STEP 3

1. The Chamber of Commerce will arrange a meeting with representatives of local business to advise them of the steps being taken by the community. Self-help information will be made available for distribution to all worksites in the community.



2. Administration staff and volunteers will be briefed on how to communicate information to the inquiring public. Staff will be provided “fact sheets” with information on the municipal response, telephone contact numbers, alternate care locations etc.

#### **STEP 4**

1. As and if the situation dictates the necessity for such action, the Director of Emergency Management will, in consultation with AHS, order the closure of certain public buildings in the interests of public safety.
2. As and if the situation dictates the necessity for such action, the Director of Emergency Management will, in consultation with AHS, order constraint and control of the movement of personnel in to and out of the community. The necessary arrangements will be implemented by the Police. If needed, the public works department will provide barriers and other means of facilitating the control of access to the community.

### **Recovery Stage**

During municipal response to Pandemic Imminent, it is not expected that all residents will become ill at the same time. While some are becoming ill, others will have recovered and may be in need of assistance from a variety of municipal, provincial, federal support systems. These support systems will be organized to provide service delivery at a centralized location [Victim Assistance Centre]. This facility will be activated following consultation and counsel with AHS and the Emergency Management Agency following consultations with Alberta Emergency Management Agency.

1. When deemed appropriate and necessary, a Victim Assistance Centre will be established to provide short-term and long-term support to families and individuals who need to access federal, provincial and municipal support programs. Government departments will be provided workspace, communications and security arrangements to facilitate service delivery.
3. Arrangements for health information, social services and mental health counseling will be made to provide this support from the Victim Assistance Center once it has been established.

### **Second Wave**

Following the notification of a Pandemic “Second Wave”, the Director of Emergency Management will inform the mayor/reeve and council of the situation and arrange for a call-down of Emergency Management Agency members.

The operational status of the membership will be reviewed and as required, steps taken during Pandemic Alert and Pandemic Imminent will be followed as required by the escalating situation.

## SECTION 4

### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### Municipal Council & Staff Contacts

Birch Hills County  
Municipal District of Spirit River # 133  
Saddle Hills County  
Town of Spirit River  
Village of Rycroft

***Reference: Section 3 Contacts in the Central Peace – Regional Emergency Management Plan***

#### Utility Company Contacts

ATCO Electric  
ATCO Gas  
Birch Hills Gas Coop  
Central Peace Gas Coop

***Reference: Section 3 Contacts in the Central Peace – Regional Emergency Management Plan***

#### Provincial Government Contacts

Alberta Emergency Management Agency  
Alberta Health Services

***Reference: Section 3 Contacts in the Central Peace – Regional Emergency Management Plan***

#### Other Contacts

Schools  
Community Groups  
Royal Canadian Mounted Police  
NGO Council of Alberta

***Reference: Section 3 Contacts in the Central Peace – Regional Emergency Management Plan***

#### Resource Contacts

Internal Resources  
External Resources

***Reference: Section 6 Resources in the Central Peace – Regional Emergency Management Plan***

## SECTION 5

### Facilities and Resources

#### Local Sites for Anti-Viral Distribution

Alberta Health Services (AHS) will identify preferred sites for distribution of anti virals based facility attributes and available resources at those locations.

***Reference: Section 3 Contacts in the Central Peace – Regional Emergency Management Plan***

#### Alternate Morgue Facilities

Refrigerated trucks would be used as temporary morgue facilities to the greatest degree possible, however, in extreme circumstances where such vehicles are overwhelmed or not available Refrigerated facilities could be utilized, but must be considered as a last resort.

***Reference: Section 3 Contacts in the Central Peace – Regional Emergency Management Plan***

#### Essential Commerce (Supplies)

The continued availability of essential supplies such as accommodations, food, fuel, hardware, & pharmaceuticals is of high importance.

Staff and supply shortages may necessitate cooperative sharing and operation from fewer locations, plans for such possibilities should be made in advance.

***Reference: Section 6 Resources in the Central Peace – Regional Emergency Management Plan***