



MUNICIPALITÉ DE SAINT-ARMAND

PREVENTION PLAN COVID-19

The context of the current situation that we are living collectively obliges all municipalities to take active measures to participate in the protection of their citizens and their employees. In this regard, the **MUNICIPALITY OF SAINT-ARMAND** is committed to a Health and Safety approach for all of its citizens. It considers all of its employees to be essential resources. Currently, we continue our usual activities and we ask you to send your requests and questions to the **MUNICIPALITY** in writing, telephone or email in order to avoid any contact with our staff who will be happy to answer you.

The **MUNICIPALITY** intends to provide you with specific information and updates, but also will introduce tools that will help you participate remotely in the decision-making and management of issues surrounding municipal life, as well as on the coronavirus pandemic that Quebec is currently going through.

During this period, the entire team of the **MUNICIPALITY** will be mobilized to answer your questions and how to proceed in such a situation. In view of the current situation, the Department of Health requests that the travel of all employees and their close family members be kept to the strict minimum for the next 30 days (as of the date this prevention plan comes into force), as well as avoiding public places. This directive is particularly important for all of our employees.

The **MUNICIPALITY** asks all of its employees to cancel conferences and meetings, and to stick only to teleconferences for the next 30 days (as of the effective date of this prevention plan).

Given the evolution of the international and Canadian situation of COVID-19, the **MUNICIPALITY** made the decision to establish and apply a strict prevention plan within its organization in order to prevent the expansion of COVID-19 and contain the risk of contamination. While specifying that for the moment the COVID-19 pandemic is under control in Quebec, with 13 confirmed cases, Prime Minister Legault has indicated that he intends to take all measures to brake and slow as much as possible a contagion which has become inevitable.

So, as long as the context requires, we undertake to communicate with our citizens on a daily basis in order to inform them of the situation directly affecting our territory. We encourage you to read the municipal prevention plan carefully.

We therefore ask you to be understanding with municipal employees and we remind you of the importance of carefully following the hygiene instructions and measures recommended by Quebec public health to counter the virus, namely to wash your hands regularly with soap, as well as cough and sneeze into your elbow. We are enclosing important telephone numbers as well as a list of useful information informing you of the various services available in our territory.

LIST OF PEOPLE TO CONTACT

Here is the contact list of Saint-Armand's Municipal Civil Protection Organization (OMSC).

Mrs. Caroline Rosetti Phone: **(450) 684-0509**
Mayor Email: maire.muni@outlook.com

Mrs. Karen Crandall Phone: **(450) 248-0299**
Deputy Mayor Email: kjenne64@gmail.com

GENERAL INFORMATION CONCERNING COVID-19

BACKGROUND (Source: World Health Organization (WHO))

On December 31, 2019, the WHO China office was informed of cases of pneumonia of unknown cause in the city of Wuhan, China's Hubei Province. On January 7, a new coronavirus (COVID-19) was isolated and identified by the Chinese authorities as the virus responsible.

INCUBATION PERIOD AND TRANSMISSION MODES

Because the incubation period is estimated between 1 and 12 days (5 to 6 days on average), we recommend a voluntary isolation period of 14 days if you have been exposed to any risk of being contaminated (you will not have any symptoms before that).

The transmission modes of the virus are as follows:

- Droplets from affected people (coughing and sneezing);
- Contact with respiratory secretions;
- Prolonged close personal contact with an infected person, such as direct contact or handshake;
- Contaminated surfaces and equipment, monitoring of hand contact with mouth, nose or eyes before washing hands (not included door handles, surfaces of public spaces, etc.).

PREVENTIVE MEASURES AND MANDATORY HYGIENE

The prevention and hygiene measures mentioned below must be respected by all of our citizens and employees in order to avoid contagion.

MANDATORY PREVENTIVE HYGIENE

- Wash your hands often with warm running water and soap for at least 20 seconds.
- Use an alcohol-based disinfectant (70% Purell or Clorox disinfectant) if you do not have access to soap and water.
- Follow the rules of hygiene when you cough or sneeze.
- Cover your mouth and nose with your arm opposite the one you use to write to reduce the spread of germs.
- If you use a tissue, throw it out as soon as possible and wash your hands afterwards.
- Avoid handshakes.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, mouth and face.

MANDATORY PREVENTION MEASURES

- Favour conference calls and videoconferences.
- Eliminate all unnecessary visits, training and group meetings by all citizens, employees and elected officials.
- Avoid crowds and confined public places.

MANDATORY PREVENTIVE MEASURES CONCERNING TRAVEL (employees)

- It is mandatory to inform management in the event of a trip already planned at road when this prevention plan was published.
- Management must report the information to the mayor as soon as possible and notify the town council.
- Anyone returning from a trip abroad must submit to a mandatory quarantine period of 14 days, even in the absence of symptoms.
- This measure also applies if someone close to the family has traveled outside the country. The employee will have to follow the quarantine period of 14 days.
- No travel outside the country is currently authorized, except for extreme emergencies (illness, death in the family). Management must be notified immediately. In this case, upon return of the employee, the latter must comply with a quarantine period of 14 days in preventive arrest (unemployment).

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF SYMPTOMS

LIST OF KNOWN SYMPTOMS

The World Health Organization (WHO), Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) as well as Canada Public Health all agree on the symptoms listed below regarding COVID-19:

- **Fever 38°C (100.4°F) and**

One or several of the following symptoms:

- **Cough**
- **Difficulty breathing**
- **Pneumonia in both lungs**
- **Bronchitis**

LIST OF SCREENING CENTRES

Screening possible, but one must first call 1 (877) 644-4545 to make an appointment, then you are referred to the closest center to your home.

Before you show up, it is important to specify that you respond to three (3) criteria:

- 1) Come back from a trip outside of Canada;
- 2) Fever, cough and difficulty breathing
- 3) Symptoms starting during the fourteen (14) days following your return to Canada.

In the wake of the means put in place to protect the population, the government has identified four (4) screening test centers for the Eastern Townships which are open 7 days a week, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on evening.

To make an appointment: 1 (877) 644-4545

1) Hôtel-Dieu de Sherbrooke (entrance on Chalifoux Street)

CIUSS de l'Estrie – Centre hospitalier universitaire de Sherbrooke
580, Bowen South Street
Sherbrooke (QC) J1G 2E8
Phone: 1 (819) 346-1110

2) Hôpital de Granby (Paré Street, outside road near the emergency)

205, Leclerc Blvd West
Granby (QC) J2G 1TR7
Phone: 1 (450) 375-8000

3) Hôpital d'Asbestos

475, 3rd Avenue
Asbestos (QC) J1T 3N4
Phone: 1 (819) 879-7151

4) Hôpital - CSSS du Granite

3569, Laval Street
Lac-Mégantic (QC) G6B 1A5
Phone: 1 (819) 583-2572, ext. 2503

Also, you can always call one of our regional hospitals.

Hôpital de Cowansville

CIUSS de l'Estrie – CHUS Hôpital Brome Missisquoi Perkins - Emergency
950, Principale Street
Brome-Missisquoi (QC) J2K 1K3
Phone: 1 (450) 266-4342

Hôpital du Haut-Richelieu

920, du Séminaire Nord Blvd.

Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu (QC) J2K 1K3

Phone: 1 (450) 359-5000

IN CASE OF KNOWN SYMPTOMS

If you have travelled outside the country and that you develop one or several symptoms described above during the 14 following days upon your return or that you have one or several symptoms described above:

- Isolate yourself within the home and avoid contacts with relatives and friends;
- If available: wear a disposable mask, type N95 (FFP2)
- Contact the Quebec medical assistance at: **1 (877) 644-4545**;
- Inform the nurses at the medical assistance of your symptoms and of the people with whom you have been in contact and the places where you have been;
- Follow the instructions of the medical assistance nurses;
- In case of no response from the medical assistance, go to the closest hospital and explain your symptoms.
- It is mandatory to respect the recommendations of the health services.

DIFFERENT SERVICES

Proxim, affiliated pharmacy – Maryse Lorrain

9, Place de l'Estrie

Bedford (QC) J0J 1A0

Phone: (450) 248-2892 (delivery 5 days a week from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)

(With a prescription, it is possible to ask for over the counter products. A maximum of 30 days of medication is available.)

Familiprix – pharmacy Gilda Bigdeli-Azari and Associate

2, Adhémar Cusson Street, suite 1

Bedford (QC) J0J 1A0

Phone: (450) 248-3348

In case of symptoms, when you pass your order at the pharmacy, inform the personnel to be cautious when delivering your medication. The delivery man will call you on the phone to tell you that he has left your medication and other products on your doorstep.

AXEP - Gendreau Grocery Store

1097, Principale Street

Notre-Dame-de-Stanbridge (QC) J0J 1M0

Phone: 1 (450) 296-4337

Gendreault Grocery Store in Notre-Dame-de Stanbridge offers a delivery service on Wednesdays and Thursdays with a minimum of \$40 of grocery. A \$3 fee is applicable for a driving distance of 3 km and more. Just call for more details and to place an order.

Citation from Mrs. Andrée Laforest, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (unofficial translation):

As mentioned by our Prime Minister during his press conference on March 15, it is essential to put all chances on our side. In order to stop and slow down the spreading of the coronavirus to a maximum. By limiting the access to public places like libraries, arenas, swimming pools, buildings where meetings are held, and congress centers, the municipal organizations will contribute in an important way to the efforts spread out by the government and the citizens of Quebec. This is the reason why I require today their collaboration so that this preventive measure can be put into places right now.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR CITIZENS

SPECIAL FRAMEWORK FOR MUNICIPALITIES ARISING FROM HEALTH EMERGENCIES

Why is the Minister of Health and Social Services adopting measures for municipalities?

The Minister of Health and Social Services is responsible for the Public Health Act. When the government declares a health emergency, the Minister has the necessary powers to impose new rules and adapt existing rules to the situation. Discussions have taken place between the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Health and Social Services concerning the exceptional measures required for the municipal sector.

How were the exceptional measures included in the ministerial decree determined?

The Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation has established a list of priority measures to ensure the health of the population in all Quebec municipalities. The measures selected ensure that municipalities will continue to exercise their responsibilities by adapting certain rules to the exceptional situation facing the population of Québec.

Could other measures be added to those set out in the ministerial decree?

Other measures are not ruled out. The Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation is closely monitoring the situation in conjunction with the authorities concerned.

Do elected officials have general discretionary power under this ministerial decree?

Municipal elected officials must comply with the applicable laws, decrees, directives, and by-laws and exercise their powers within this legal and regulatory framework.

Do the special rules provided for in the government decree and the ministerial decree infringe on the rights of citizens?

The COVID-19 pandemic is an exceptional event that requires exceptional measures, with the aim of curbing the spread of the disease and protecting the population, while allowing society to continue to function as normally as possible.

Do the special rules provided for in the government decree and the ministerial decree infringe on municipal autonomy?

The COVID-19 pandemic is an exceptional event that requires exceptional measures, with the aim of curbing the spread of the disease and protecting the population, while allowing society to continue to function as normally as possible.

The role of municipalities is essential in dealing with this pandemic. Several of the rules set out in the ministerial decree are intended to give them the latitude to act quickly and effectively in a context of uncertainty and risk.

QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE GOVERNMENT DIRECTIVES

Should the municipality close the library, arena, or municipal pool?

In order to slow down and curb the contagion caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) as much as possible, the gouvernement du Québec has adopted directives for the population of Québec.

As a precautionary measure, the municipality must prohibit public access to its indoor facilities and premises used for cultural, recreational, sports, or community activities (e.g. library, arena, swimming pool, meeting room building, convention centre), unless they are temporarily being used for public health or safety purposes.

It is up to the municipality to assess the need to maintain access to its administrative buildings, based on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It should also be noted that indoor gatherings of more than 250 people are prohibited. A request has also been made to cancel unnecessary gatherings for the next 30 days.

Should the municipality cancel sporting or cultural events held within its boundaries?

In order to slow down and curb the contagion caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) as much as possible, the Quebec government has adopted directives for the population of Quebec. One of these directives prohibits indoor gatherings of more than 250 people. It also calls for the cancellation of unnecessary gatherings for the next 30 days.

As a result, the municipality is required, in compliance with the ban, to cancel any sporting or cultural event. Moreover, since the municipality must prohibit the public from accessing its indoor facilities and premises intended for cultural, recreational, sports, or community activities, no events may be held therein.

MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS

Are municipalities required to hold council meetings?

Yes, municipalities are required to hold a regular meeting at least once a month, as required by law.

Are municipalities required to hold public council meetings?

The decree issued by the Minister of Health and Social Services allows municipalities to hold council meetings in camera and authorizes elected officials to participate by any means of communication (e.g. telephone).

Municipalities could use this option to minimize the risk of coronavirus spread that may result from holding a public meeting with a significant number of people in attendance.

To ensure transparency, municipalities could also broadcast the session on digital platforms.

Does the possibility of holding council meetings in camera not undermine transparency for citizens?

This is an exceptional measure that will be temporary. Municipalities have a duty to use it reasonably and when circumstances warrant.

The objective of this measure is to allow the municipal council to continue to make decisions necessary for municipal operations, without compromising the health of elected officials and citizens.

By what means will elected officials be able to participate in council meetings remotely?

The decree issued by the Minister of Health and Social Services allows elected officials to participate in meetings by any means of communication. For example, a municipality could organize a session by videoconference or by telephone.

BY-ELECTIONS AND MUNICIPAL REFERENDUMS

Is it true that the by-elections planned in some municipalities will be cancelled because of the coronavirus pandemic?

In order to ensure that municipal elections are conducted in conditions that facilitate voting and protect the health of voters and election workers, the electoral officers of the municipalities concerned must cancel any election and any advance poll linked to an election scheduled between now and April 26, 2020.

What will happen to candidates who were elected unopposed?

The proclamation of the election of those who were elected unopposed is maintained.

These persons will be able to take office, provided they are sworn in within the 30-day period set out in the Act respecting elections and referendums in municipalities.

What will happen to ballots marked at an advance poll already held?

Advance polls that have already been held are cancelled.

In the days ahead, joint work will be carried out by the ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation and Élections Québec to determine the procedures applicable to such a situation. Instructions will be communicated by the Ministère to the electoral officers in due course.

With respect to by-elections to be held at a later date, which rules will apply to election expenses already incurred and, in general, which rules will apply to election financing?

In the days ahead, joint work will be carried out by the ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation and Élections Québec to determine the applicable rules. Instructions will be communicated to the electoral officers in due course.

When will these cancelled by-elections be held?

All advance polls or elections scheduled up to and including April 26, 2020 are cancelled.

The Ministère will contact the electoral officers to set new dates for the elections.

How will citizens know when the by-election will be held?

The electoral officer will inform the citizens of the municipality of the new election date.

Is council entitled to sit until council vacancies are filled?

The Act provides that council may sit as long as a quorum is maintained.

In the event of the loss of quorum, the Commission municipale du Québec could provisionally administer the municipality.

What is the effect of not publishing a notice of election before April 26, 2020?

Given the applicable time period between an election notice and polling day, the municipality will not be able to hold a poll before Sunday, June 14, 2020.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is an intervention plan required?

Yes, it is recommended that a specific plan be developed in the event of an outbreak or pandemic. The ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation has prepared a guide to support the municipal sector in this regard. It will be made public in the near future.

Even if they have not developed such a plan, municipalities can take all the measures they deem necessary to protect their employees and ensure the continuity of essential services.

Do the standards for public service employees apply to municipal staff?

No. However, municipalities are encouraged to adopt measures similar to those applicable to public service staff to limit the risk of coronavirus spread among their employees.

Pour en savoir davantage sur le coronavirus, la population est invitée à consulter le site quebec.ca/coronavirus.