

March 20, 2020

Dear Employer,

Saskatchewan has declared a public health emergency due to the rising number of cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The Saskatchewan Chief Medical Health Officer has ordered anyone returning to Canada from international travel to self-isolate for 14 days. In addition, the Public Health Agency of Canada advises returning travelers and any individual who is experiencing respiratory symptoms to stay on self-isolation until 24 hours **after** symptoms have **fully** resolved.

**Please excuse your employees from work or accommodate alternative work arrangements (if an employee is well enough and able to work from home) under the following circumstances:**

1. Any employee who has travelled outside of Canada, including the United States of America, is ordered to self-isolate at home for 14 days upon their return.
2. Any employee is ordered to self-isolate for 14 days who lives with, provides care for, or has spent extensive time with someone who:
  - a. Has tested positive for COVID-19, or
  - b. Is suspected to have COVID-19, or
  - c. Has respiratory symptoms (fever, cough, or shortness of breath).

In accordance with provincial health guidelines, asymptomatic patients and those with mild symptoms are not being tested. Patients with mild symptoms or who are feeling ill, have been ordered to self-isolate for 14 days.

On March 17<sup>th</sup>, the Saskatchewan Legislature passed new legislation that extends leave to all workers during the declared public health emergency and removes the requirement for sick notes. The Chair of the Saskatchewan Medical Association's Section of Family Practice, Dr. Carla Holinaty, has said that "writing sick notes places extra duties on doctors when they're already dealing with an unprecedented public health challenge." **Additionally, there is no role for requiring a doctor's note to "clear" an employee to return to work after a period of self-isolation if they are asymptomatic and have not been re-exposed.**

Please treat this letter as a sick note based on the provincial health guidance. Individualized sick notes will not be provided to confirm if your employee has been tested for COVID-19 or to confirm recovery from illness. It is our civic responsibility to social distance and avoid unnecessary office visits in order to limit spread during this pandemic.