North Slope Borough Employee Travel Policy (Update)

On April 1, 2021, the North Slope Borough Emergency Declaration expired. Due to individual actions of community members, the collective sacrifices required by our previous emergency orders, a successful start of vaccinations, and the decrease in COVID-19 positive cases, the North Slope Borough is beginning to move into the recovery phase of our COVID-19 operations. However, we must all continue to remain vigilant and not let our guard down against the virus that has affected us all over the past year.

COVID-19 vaccines are effective in protecting you from getting sick. More vaccinations lead to fewer COVID-19 illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths. Anyone 16 years or older who lives or works in Alaska is eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Based on what we know about COVID-19 vaccines, people who have been fully vaccinated (meaning two weeks have passed since the receipt of second dose of a two-dose vaccine series like Moderna or Pfizer, or one dose of a single dose vaccine like Johnson & Johnson) can start to do some things that they had stopped doing because of the pandemic.

North Slope Borough Employee Travel
To ensure the safety and wellbeing of our communities, we have updated the North Slope Borough COVID-19 Travel Policy. The NSB COVID-19 Travel Policy amends previous policies and plans regarding employee travel. Employees traveling to, and within, the North Slope Borough must do one of the following before returning to the workplace:

1.) Obtain a negative result from a COVID-19 (SARS-CoV2 PCR) laboratory test conducted on the day of travel, or after arrival to the North Slope Borough. This cannot be a “rapid test”. Employees must quarantine and practice social distancing as much as feasible until they are notified that they tested negative for COVID-19. Employees unable to work due to testing requirements must use annual leave or be on LWOP while waiting for a negative COVID-19 test result. Telework requires prior supervisory approval; or

2.) For employees who reside outside of the North Slope Borough, obtain a COVID-19 (SARS-CoV2 PCR) laboratory test within 3 days of travel to the North Slope Borough, and not depart for the North Slope Borough until a negative test result is obtained. Employees must isolate and practice social distancing as much as feasible after the COVID-19 test is conducted until departure to the North Slope Borough; or

3.) Quarantine for 10-days after arrival at their final destination on slope. Employees must isolate and practice social distancing as much as feasible during layovers. During quarantine, employees may
not visit any public spaces or have visitors, other than medical professionals, or others authorized by the North Slope Borough Incident Management Team. Employees may only leave their quarantine location for medical emergencies or to seek medical care. Employees unable to telework during quarantine must use annual leave or be on LWOP. Telework requires prior supervisory approval.

Employees who meet one of the exceptions below will no longer need to quarantine or test before travel either within the North Slope or travel to the North Slope from off-slope.

1.) Employee can provide proof of full vaccination and two weeks have passed since the final vaccination shot (two shots for Moderna or Pfizer and one shot for Johnson & Johnson). The employee must also be without symptoms; or

2.) Employee can provide proof of a positive COVID-19 test within the past 90 days, is currently without symptoms and can provide documentation of recovery from a medical provider or public health official indicating the employee was released from isolation.

Department directors may authorize special travel arrangements for rotational employees, employees with irregular work schedules and for unusual/emergency circumstances. All authorizations must be submitted to the NSB Office of Emergency Management for review.

The NSB respects local mandates and concerns of our communities. We will continue to notify officials of any planned intra-slope travel of employees through email.

Reminder of required workplace safety measures:
Face coverings: When social distancing cannot be maintained (six foot separation), all employees, regardless of vaccination status, must wear an appropriate face covering that covers the nose and mouth when in any NSB facility. The face covering must be worn when in common use areas such as hallways, breakrooms, restrooms, etc.

Sanitation: All employees, regardless of vaccination status, must continue to frequently wash hands with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer if soap and water is not available. Additionally, shared workspaces should be cleaned frequently to help prevent the spread of germs.

Children in the Workplace: On June 5, 2020, Mayor Harry K. Brower Jr. suspended the Children in the Workplace Policy. Infants and children are not allowed in the workplace until further notice.

This document is the North Slope Borough’s policy for employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSB will continue to monitor and update this policy as new information is provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Employees that violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy is effective April 9, 2021, and is effective until rescinded.

Harry K. Brower, Jr.
North Slope Borough Mayor