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**REPORT TITLE: COVID-19 Temporary Pandemic Pay**

**FROM: Janice Sheehy, Commissioner of Human Services**

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Commissioner of Human Services be authorized to execute the Temporary Pandemic Pay – Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative agreement, and any amendments thereto, for receipt and use of COVID-19 related funding from the Province of Ontario in accordance with the Guidelines provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH);**

**And further, that the Director, Housing Services responsible for service provision funding be delegated authority to execute any other related documents to deliver the COVID-19 Temporary Pandemic Pay programming and financial supports, on business terms satisfactory to the Commissioner of Human Services and on legal terms satisfactory to the Regional Solicitor;**

**And further, that the 2020 Housing Support gross expenditures and revenues be increased by an initial \$359,710 as a result of the additional provincial funding with a final adjustment being made once all funds have been disbursed;**

**And further, that the Commissioner of Human Services be authorized to execute any new or amending agreements and other related documents necessary to receive and/or deliver funding from the government of Ontario or the government of Canada as it pertains to COVID-19 emergency response, provided that such agreements and other related documents are on business terms satisfactory to the Commissioner of Human Services and on legal terms satisfactory to the Regional Solicitor;**

**And further, that the 2020 Housing support gross expenditures and revenue be adjusted based on any additional such funding on finance terms satisfactory to the Commissioner of Finance.**

## **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- On April 25, 2020, the Provincial Government announced the COVID-19 Temporary Pandemic Pay initiative to support eligible frontline workers.
- Eligible workers will receive a \$4.00 per hour increase to their base salary as well as a lump sum amount depending on actual hours worked for a 16-week period commencing April 24, 2020.
- The Region of Peel as the Housing and Homelessness System Service Manager (Service Manager) is required to administer the funds in the Shelter and Supportive Housing Sectors to organizations that currently receive funding from the Service Manager or Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.
- The funds will be flowed through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative.

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- The initial installment is for \$359,710 with subsequent installments based on the actual costs incurred.
  - The Region of Peel is eligible to receive 5 percent of the total funding allocation for administration costs.
  - Authority is requested to enter into the funding agreement for the COVID-19 Temporary Pandemic Pay initiative as required by the Province of Ontario and resulting agreements for the delivery of funding under that initiative.
  - Authority is also requested to enter into future COVID-19 emergency funding agreements, including amendments to existing agreements, as required by either the Province of Ontario and/or the Government of Canada with the Service Manager for the Region of Peel, for the receipt and use of any such potential funding.
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## **DISCUSSION**

### **1. Background**

On April 25, 2020 the Provincial Government announced the COVID-19 Temporary Pandemic Pay initiative aimed at helping frontline staff who are at heightened risk during the COVID-19 outbreak. Temporary Pandemic Pay will provide an additional \$4.00 per hour for eligible front-line workers, effective for 16 weeks from April 24, 2020 to August 13, 2020. Eligible workers who work at least 100 hours in a designated 4-week period will also receive an additional lump sum payment of \$250 per 4-week period, for a possible total of \$1,000 over the 16-week period.

The Temporary Pandemic Pay is to be distributed by various Ministries, based on sector oversight. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) will be disbursing funds through the Service Managers to eligible employers in the Shelter and Supportive Housing Sectors that currently receive funding from the Service Manager or MMAH. Eligible employers are tasked with administering the Temporary Pandemic Pay to their employees and submitting required reports to the Service Manager. Appendix I provides an overview of eligible workplaces and eligible employees.

### **2. Temporary Pandemic Pay - Funding Directive**

In a letter dated June 12, 2020, (Appendix II) the MMAH provided further details regarding the Temporary Pandemic Pay and informed the Region that the funds will be administered through the existing Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative by increasing the base funding. The initial funding allocation is \$359,710 and is based on staffing information collected through the Emergency Shelter Survey provided by Service Managers. A second installment will be based on employer mid term reporting and forecasting with a final reconciliation at the end of September 2020, once the final report is submitted. The Region of Peel is eligible to receive 5 per cent in administrative fees in proportion to the funding that it pays to eligible employers.

### **3. Future COVID-19 Funding Directives**

As the COVID-19 emergency response by the government of Ontario and government of Canada continue, there may be additional funding allocations directed to Service Managers to administer. Each funding allocation generally requires approval by Regional Council to provide authority to staff to receive and administer the funds based on the prescribed

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directives. In anticipation of potential future funding allocations, it is recommended that the Commissioner of Human Services be authorized to execute any new or amending agreements to receive funding from the government of Ontario or the government of Canada as it pertains to COVID-19 emergency response and ensuring compliance with requirements of the Regional Solicitor and the Commissioner of Finance. The purpose of this request is to meet the quick turnaround times for the provision of funding.

## **RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

The timelines provided by the MMAH are extremely tight and will place additional pressures on sectors already challenged by operating in the current pandemic environment. The Region of Peel will work with the Ministry to balance deadlines with impacts on the sectors, with a focus on getting funds to eligible employees as quickly as possible.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Region of Peel has been allocated an initial installment of \$359,710 for the administration of Temporary Pandemic Pay to eligible employers. The Region of Peel will receive additional installments based on declared eligible staffing costs by eligible employers, amount to be determined once mid term and final reporting completed. The Region of Peel is also eligible to receive 5 per cent in administrative fees in proportion to the funding that it pays to eligible employers.

The 2020 Housing Support gross expenditures and revenues will be increased by \$359,710 initially and then subsequently by a final amount determined by actual costs as well as the 5 per cent administration fees based on the total funding allocation. Future increases may be required should there be additional funding provided by the government of Ontario and/or the government of Canada.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Region of Peel as a Service Manager is required to administer the COVID-19 Temporary Pandemic Pay to eligible employers through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative. The initial funding allocation is \$359,710 with the balance of funding being released based on actual costs. Eligible frontline employees will receive a \$4.00 per hour increase along with a lump sum payment (based on hours worked within a designated period) to compensate them for their efforts in supporting Ontario's most vulnerable residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through this report, staff is seeking the required authorities and approvals to enter into the funding agreement for the Temporary Pandemic Pay with the Province of Ontario and resulting agreements for the delivery of such funding, as well as subsequent COVID-19 Pandemic emergency funding agreements with both the government of Ontario and the government of Canada, to administer the funding as per program directives and in response of local needs.

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### APPENDICES

Appendix I - COVID-19 Temporary Pandemic Pay Eligible Workplaces and Employees  
Appendix II - June 12, 2020 letter from Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

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*For further information regarding this report, please contact Aileen Baird, Director, Housing Services, Ext. 1898, aileen.baird@peelregion.ca.*

*Authored By: Joyce Nielsen, Project Manager*

***Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:***

Department Commissioner, Division Director and Legal Services.

Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.



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N. Polsinelli, Interim Chief Administrative Officer