

## Annual General Meeting, October 26, 2021

### Board Response to Member Resolution

#### Ethical Standards

As described in our 2020 Annual Report (page 5), the Yellowknife Direct Charge Co-operative Limited (Co-op) has ethical standards it adheres to. We recognize that this consumer-owned Co-op has a responsibility to respect, to promote, and to protect the rights of consumers, and that these rights include:

- a. The Right to Safety – *The Co-op has implemented the above new policies and procedures to increase staff and consumer safety.*
- b. The Right to Be Informed – *We have posted COVID information as/when we received from the government to inform staff of the most up to date information possible.*
- c. The Right to Choose – *We support your right to choose and as an essential service provider we will not ban any of our owners, customers or staff based on their medical choices.*
- d. The Right to Be Heard – *The Co-op offers all members a chance to be heard through communication boxes in store and annually during our AGM.*

#### WSSC Exposure Plan and Industry COVID Policies

What follows is a breakdown of our WSSC exposure plan and our retail guidance packages on COVID from Federated Co-operatives Limited and Arctic Co-operatives Limited, in response to the question, “what has the Co-op done”.

In response to the Covid pandemic, the Co-op has implemented the following new, internal industry specific policies relating to employee and consumer safety. These policies and procedures have been developed specifically for our industry, by industry experts. Based on these new policies, we have implemented new procedures in the following categories:

1. Food Safety, including procedures regarding:
  - a. Employee Hygiene practices
  - b. Sanitation
  - c. Cross Contamination prevention
  - d. Temperature Monitoring
2. Employee Wellbeing, including:
  - a. Wellness checks
    - i. Provide self assessment information and establish a culture of self-reporting and an abundance of caution.
  - b. Physical barriers
    - i. Plexiglass shields
    - ii. Reconfiguration of facility to improve social distancing
    - iii. Create hourly sanitation logs for touch points in store
  - c. PPE
    - i. Provide all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to staff

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- ii. Install PPE signage throughout store
  - d. Cleaning Supplies
    - i. Provide cleaning supplies at every workstation
    - ii. Hire additional employees designated for sanitation throughout the day
  - e. Physical distancing
    - i. Mandate use of PPE and constant cleaning where distancing cannot be maintained
    - ii. Remove several store offerings to comply with industry standards regarding COVID protocols (bulk, sampling, etc.)
  - f. Safety Policies
    - i. Update our safety policies to include new protocols from government health bodies including:
      - 1. Install visual clues to remind staff of required handwashing frequency
      - 2. Post gov provided signage regarding handwashing techniques
      - 3. Post gov provided signage regarding social distancing
      - 4. Install and regulate hourly sanitation sheets
  - g. Training
    - i. Maintain our standards by mandating safety training for new and existing team members
  - h. Staff Scheduling
    - i. Similar to all essential retailers seeing a surge in customers, it is important to ensure we increase hiring to manage the higher demands on employees during the COVID-19 crises. Extra employees usually needed for stocking, crowd control at check-out and cleaning
- 3. Customer Health and Safety, including:
  - a. Customer requirements - managing access to the store and protecting the safety of employees and customers.
    - i. At store entrance
      - 1. Limit number of customers, security to ensure
    - ii. Signage and Communication
      - 1. Signage installed throughout store
    - iii. Hand Sanitizer at entrance and exit
    - iv. PPE for Customers
      - 1. Available at member service for customers
    - v. Vulnerable/Elderly
      - 1. Started "Senior Hours" from 8am to 9am for seniors and immune compromised
  - b. Physical Distancing ensures adequate space to allow customers to shop while avoiding proximity with other shoppers and employees.
    - i. Limit the number of customers
    - ii. Layout changes
    - iii. Signage around stores

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- c. Checkout and Payment - Limit interaction during checkout and payment to minimize transmission risk
    - i. Contactless Payment
    - ii. Reusable Bags
    - iii. Check Out/Self-Check Out
  - d. Store Cleanliness – Increase cleaning and disinfecting to ensure potential virus exposure is reduced
    - i. Frequent, Scheduled Cleaning and Sanitization
    - ii. Hours of Operations
    - iii. Customer Communication
4. Retail Operations, including:
- a. Store Operations
    - i. We have had to reduce hours when staff levels dropped temporarily and will reduce hours in the future as/if needed.

**Member Resolution**

Whereas: COVID-19 is a serious public health concern and vaccination is the best protection against the virus.

Whereas: the Yellowknife Direct Purchase Co-op has been listed as a COVID-19 exposure site.

Whereas: the 7th principle of the cooperative movement is concern for the community; and,

Whereas: Co-operative beliefs include staff responsiveness to member/owners and social responsibility.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Yellowknife Direct Charge Co-op Board of Directors explore the feasibility and proceed with:

- Implementing a policy to mandate COVID-19 vaccination for all YK Direct Charge staff and board; and,
- purchase and install hepa-filters in the greenhouse, gas bar and store.

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Vaccinations

The Co-op's Board of Directors (Board) has reviewed the Co-op's ethical standards, WSCC's exposure plan, and industry COVID policies in place to protect customers, staff and the Board. The pharmacy has also received rapid COVID tests from the GNWT for staff and the Board to use should they have any potential exposure concerns. With the aforesaid in mind, the Board will not be implementing a policy to mandate COVID-19 vaccination for all of the Co-op's staff and the Board.

HEPA Filters

Respecting the resolution *purchase and install of hepa-filters in the greenhouse, gas bar and store*, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends MERV 13 (rated or higher) filters for

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facilities such as ours, based on the capacity of the air handling unit itself. Each air handling system has limits to the filters that can be installed. Like the CDC, the Government of Canada recommends using the highest rated filter that can be installed. The higher the MERV rating, the more restricted the air flow. The air handling system throughout our store is not interchangeable with HEPA filters, which are significantly different shape and not installable in our existing infrastructure. We have used the CDC's guidelines to purchase the recommended MERV 13 air filters for our air handling units, these have been on order for the store and the gas bar and should be here and installed in early December 2021.

The Growcer is not connected to the store. It is located approximately five (5) metres away from the store's side entrance. You must walk outside to enter and exit the Growcer. The Growcer does not have air filters but uses an exhaust fan connected directly to the outside. Fresh air from the outside is regularly exchanged. One (1) staff member attends to the plants and must wear protective equipment (mask and gloves) to ensure that the plants do not become infected with any fungus or insects; this was required prior to Covid. As the Growcer uses an exhaust fan to replace inside air with fresh outside air hourly, a HEPA filtration system would not provide increased protection. The Board has no concerns about the spread of COVID within the Growcer.