

COVID-19

ICC Staff Update

6 MAY 2020

CURRENT ALERT LEVEL **3**



Well, what a difference a week makes!

While it was a fortnight ago that I last communicated with you via this newsletter, we have seen some huge changes happen in our community, in our country, and in our organisation – and it has been the past week which has really had an impact.

We have finally seen the number of new cases of COVID-19 drop to zero for a couple of days running, and we have seen businesses big and small grapple with what they can and can't do at Alert Level 3.

There is still uncertainty about what we can and can't do at Alert Level 2.

On the matter of pay – today we will be sending out a statement to media within minutes of you reading this update.

I've included the statement in its entirety below – after all, this is about **your** pay, and you deserve this information first.

There's a couple of points within our statement that are important messages I want to reinforce for you, our team:

We recognise that most of you have responded positively to our proposal, and we thank you for this. We know that throughout our community, people are doing it tough. You have all shown great leadership, empathy, and consideration in your feedback – it is very much appreciated.

We also believe that in the coming days, it is likely that we will see a move to Alert Level 2. The ELT is continuously working through what this might mean for our organisation – without certainty, this is challenging, but we remain committed to attempting to strike a balance between your needs,

and ratepayers' needs, while also treating you fairly and equitably.

We are working with our Elected Members to establish what recovery might look like for our community, and for Council as an organisation – I've signalled to you before that the way we "do business" may need to change quite drastically from how it has been previously.

The post-COVID-19 Invercargill City Council may look quite different to the pre-COVID-19 Council.

We'll keep you up to date on this as proposals are made, or decisions discussed.

Finally, we've had feedback from some teams that some of you are starting to struggle a little bit with this extended period of being at home, and working from home where you can.

Our way of working has changed significantly, in a very short time, and the change has kept on coming ever since.

Please do continue to reach out to your colleagues or team leaders and managers. Utilise EAP services that are available to you, and most importantly, keep talking.

Unite against COVID-19:

Be kind. Share only facts, not rumour. Time to prepare, not panic. www.covid19.govt.nz



Wednesday, May 6, 2020

ATTENTION: CHIEF REPORTERS
CIVIC REPORTERS

ICC changes staff pay proposal

Invercargill City Council is today making changes to a proposal regarding staff pay during COVID-19.

Chief Executive Clare Hadley said following feedback from staff on the proposal, it was decided that all staff would continue to receive Pandemic Leave for the current pay period (ending Sunday 10 May).

“Our proposal was made at a time where there was significant uncertainty around how long our staff would be unable to return to work. It would seem that, with decreasing numbers of COVID-19 cases, and the successes so far of Alert Level 4 and 3, that we may be at Level 3 for a much shorter period of time than that which we had planned for,” Mrs Hadley said.

“As such, the Council’s Executive Leadership Team have decided that continuing to pay staff pandemic leave for another pay period is acceptable.”

The previous proposal was that all staff unable to work would be paid 50% of their usual income, staff able to work part time would be paid 75% per cent of their usual income, and those who were able to work their usual hours would be paid as usual.

Those in either the 50% or 75% area would be able to top up their income using annual leave available to them.

The proposal came following four weeks of pandemic leave, where all staff were paid their normal income.

Mrs Hadley said the vast majority of staff impacted by the proposal had given positive feedback, and indicated they were happy to be receiving a reduced level of pay given that they were not working at full capacity.

“We are grateful to those staff who supported the proposal - for their understanding of the difficult circumstances, and our desire to preserve funding for the benefit of all ratepayers,” she said.

“It is important to consider the situation in which our entire community finds itself, and to balance any potential impacts on staff, with impacts on our community. It’s unfortunate that despite us working hard to find this balance, we have been unable to reach an agreement with the PSA at this time.”

She said Council’s Executive Leadership Team was considering the increasing likelihood that New Zealand may be moving to Alert Level 2 within a matter of days, and that helped form the basis of the decision.

“We will continue our dialogue with the unions and other employees in case that doesn’t happen, or if Alert Level 2 prohibits some employees from returning to their normal duties,” she said.

Meanwhile, redeployment opportunities for staff continue to be investigated and implemented.

“New health and safety requirements and the continuation of physical distancing measures means that there are some departments which require more staff to continue to provide their service,” Mrs Hadley said.

This means that while some parts of Council may not be able to fully operate for some time, staff from those areas may be redeployed to other departments.

“As with all employers in Invercargill, we have been tasked with finding our way through an unprecedented situation. We remain committed to being fair to all our staff, whether they are union members or not, and balancing this with being fair to our ratepayers. As New Zealand continues to find its way forward through COVID-19, so too will we – and this might mean that our proposals will need to change again,” Mrs Hadley said.

ENDS

Enquiries

Invercargill City Council Chief Executive Clare Hadley – 027 435 8615