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CIRCULAR TO MUNICIPALITIES AND LOCAL SERVICE DISTRICTS

As we all know, local governments have an important role to play in the viability and sustainability of our many communities around this province. During the current COVID-19 pandemic, local leadership is even more important. There is much local leaders can do to support residents in need and to continue to provide essential municipal services. Now, more than ever, it is important for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to show their famous resilience in the face of this ongoing challenge.

The Department of Health and Community Services (HCS) has developed information materials specifically for communities to use during this time. Attached to this circular, you will find the following documents from HCS:

- Community Support during COVID-19;
- Information for Rural and Remote Communities;
- Supporting Vulnerable Communities;
- How to Self Isolate;
- COVID-19 Prevention Poster; and
- COVID-19 Hand Washing Poster.

We ask that you review these documents and consider how your local government can assist residents, especially the vulnerable groups who may need extra support during this time. If no local solutions are available, local governments are encouraged to reach out to the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) at 729-3703. The Department of Municipal Affairs and Environment will coordinate with provincial to provide a response, and if necessary, will engage the Canadian Armed Forces Joint Task Force Atlantic for the assistance of reservists or the Canadian Rangers. These requests will be addressed on a case by case basis and the process to be followed is attached (“Request for Assistance: Assessment Flow Chart”).

Finally, we ask that local governments continue to provide essential municipal services to residents. The attached Municipal Business Continuity Guide and Municipal Service List provide a framework local governments may use to identify which services should be continued. We certainly appreciate your many efforts during this difficult time. If you have specific questions about municipal roles and responsibilities during this time, feel free to reach out to the Municipal Support staff in your region.

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