

May 9, 2022

### **RE: CITY FIRING OF UNVACCINATED EMPLOYEES**

This letter is being sent to Mayor Eisenberger and the City Councillors of Hamilton Ontario with regard to the city's decision to fire all unvaccinated employees as of May 31, 2022.

That Council would vote to take this step is really puzzling in view of the fact that the top doctor in Ontario, Dr. Kieran Moore, indicated in mid February 2022 that vaccine policies should no longer be in place. Everyone at the City followed the advice of top doctors when implementing vaccine and mask policies; however, now it seems the Mayor and certain city councillors know more than the top doctors when it comes to doing away with these mandates and policies. Does the city of Hamilton only follow top doctor recommendations when they fall in line with their personal beliefs??

Even the City's own HR department could see that Hamilton should be following provincial recommendations due to "legal challenges". If these employees sue the City of Hamilton and I'm sure they will, the cost to the taxpayers will be astronomical and your own HR department had the foresight to see this; so tell me, is this really about protecting others? Seems more like a vindictive action.

Councillor Danko verifies this by his comment to the CBC reporter Desmond Brown, "As we speak, I have a family member upstairs sick with COVID right now [so] my tolerance for this anti-vaxx narrative is at an all-time low," he said. If this doesn't shout vindictive, I don't know what does.

And Councillor Danko should not be painting everyone in a derogatory way by calling them anti-vaxxers. Injecting oneself with a relatively unknown substance is a big deal for many, many people. He further noted some people choose not to be vaccinated not because of health reasons, but simply because they don't want a vaccine. What a ridiculous thing to say. Hundreds of thousands more got it not to prevent their community from getting covid, but to travel, play sports, go to the gym, eat in restaurants etc. People should not be forced into taking a medical treatment against their will. Sure it's supposed to be safe; but what if it's not? This is something we won't know for years to come.

What about people losing their livelihoods? Did any of you who voted to fire employees even give any consideration to the snowball effect this would have on the lives of these individuals and their families? Did those of you who voted to fire people realize some of these folks could lose their homes, the ability to feed themselves or their families? Not to mention lost health care benefits for themselves and that of their dependents. This kind of action will cause immeasurable grief and hardship for families for years to come. Suicides and depression are at an all time high. These folks along with the rest of us have been on an emotional rollercoaster for 2 years now. Then the City told them all that mandates would be suspended; then 2 weeks later vote to keep mandates? Really is this how you decide things? No, yes, maybe? And 64 employees have already been on unpaid leave.

I also feel City Councillors should not have the power to take away a person's livelihood. We aren't talking about fixing potholes. Now there will be 500 or so City employees without work. Who is going to do the work that these employees were doing? How well is the City going to run with this kind of shortage of people. If you think you can just hire replacements....good luck. The government has made it way to easy to get paid to stay home. No one wants to work anymore. I'm guessing some of these employees are long term with years of experience and knowledge that cannot be easily replaced.

So the remaining employees will have to cover the work that was being done by the fired employees, how effective is that? Adding more work to the employees that were heralded for getting vaccinated. I'm sure they will appreciate their reward. Is this what a City Council does to its constituents....contribute to the inability to serve them. And the City will be adding to unemployment in Hamilton.

The City of Hamilton has a vaccinated employee rate of 94 percent. Does that not surpass what even the province can boast and the province is pulling back from mandates and policies. If people are vaccinated; why are they afraid of the unvaccinated. Wasn't the vaccination suppose to protect the person getting it. This decision reeks of punishment for those that didn't bend to coercion and personal beliefs. The six councillors that voted to fire will still meet unvaccinated people in their daily lives....this action by no way protects them or anyone. Are you so petty that you want to punish people for not holding the same belief as you because this action to fire people is not even based on science of any type and now you know more than the "experts" that you like to quote.

For those councillors that voted in favour of ending the mandates, you are to be commended for having the intelligence to see that the best thing is to follow what the top doctor is now saying and move on. It's not necessary to punish people who have a different point of view or set of values.

Mayor Eisenberger, you should be ashamed of yourself for leading Council members down this path. Dividing employees and citizens against each other. You complement employees that did get vaccinated; but you don't mention how many did it just to keep their jobs. A hard choice, my job or my body autonomy. Pitting citizen against citizen for what is an obvious difficult situation and yet you would have us all be tolerant of every other notion that a citizen could come up with. This is not how you lead, this is how you divide. You should be working to bring us all together in the future regardless of vaccination status; not further trying to segregate people based upon their beliefs or your own.

There are many many people that really don't care if someone is vaccinated or not; they trust that their vaccination will protect them against serious illness. Just because they don't all take the time to write a letter doesn't mean they don't exist. I have spoken to many who feel the same way as I do about firing these employees.

Councillors who voted to fire employees need to do the right thing now and bring forward a reconsideration vote. This action of firing unvaccinated people will come to no good end for all concerned. We are all suffering from Covid fatigue and regardless of personal beliefs as well all have them; it's time to put this behind us and move on. Police Services did the right thing and the City of Hamilton should too.

A concerned citizen

Patricia Nicholson