

COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees, family home providers, respite providers, (collectively, “Personnel”) volunteers and students.

Purpose:

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant morbidity and mortality. COVID-19 is spread primarily through respiratory droplets. Individuals with certain pre-existing medical conditions are at a higher risk for more severe symptoms after contracting COVID-19.¹

There are currently two vaccines approved for use in Canada: the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccines currently approved in Canada have been shown to be safe and effective against symptomatic COVID-19.² A copy of the Ministry of Health’s Information Sheet regarding these vaccines is attached as Appendix 1 to this Policy.

[The Employer] is dedicated to ensuring the health and safety of all Supported Individuals as well as Personnel, volunteers and students who perform services on behalf of **[the Employer]**. To assist **[the Employer]** in providing a safe work environment for not only its Personnel, volunteers and students, but also the vulnerable population we serve, **[the Employer]** has created this Policy.

[The Employer] aims to:

- Give protection to Personnel, volunteers and students in the short-term against symptomatic, confirmed COVID-19 disease in the event that they contract COVID-19.³
- inform Personnel, volunteers and students of their immunization options and the potential consequences for non-immunization.

Policy

¹ Public Health Agency of Canada, “COVID-19 signs, symptoms and severity of disease: A clinician guide” (18 September 2020): <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/guidance-documents/signs-symptoms-severity.html>.

² National Advisory Committee on Immunization, “Recommendations on the use of COVID-19 vaccines” (12 January 2021): <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci/recommendations-use-covid-19-vaccines.html>. (“NACI Recommendations”)

³ NACI Recommendations, *supra*, footnote 2.

When COVID-19 vaccines become available to Personnel, Volunteers or students, **[the Employer]** strongly encourages Personnel, volunteers and students to receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

[The Employer] will provide paid time off to Personnel, up to a maximum of **[x]**, to obtain the COVID-19 vaccination, if the COVID-19 vaccines are not made available to them on site.

Accommodation

Should Personnel, volunteers or students decline the COVID-19 vaccination, once available to them, for reasons related to disability, creed or any other grounds protected by the *Human Rights Code*, **[the Employer]** requests that such personnel identify to **[the Employer]** that declining the COVID-19 vaccine was based on a ground protected by the *Human Rights Code*. **[The Employer]** reserves the right to ask for information to substantiate the grounds, further to **[the Employer's]** normal workplace accommodation process.

[The Employer] is committed to human rights accommodation up to the point of undue hardship where a person is unable to vaccinate for human rights protected reasons. Such situations will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Alternatives to Vaccination (non-Code grounds)

Personnel

If Personnel do not receive the COVID-19 vaccination, once it is available to them, for reasons unrelated to a protected ground under the *Human Rights Code*, the response will be determined with reference to each circumstance. Considerations will include but are not limited to recommendations by Public Health, service agreements or contractual obligations with partnering entities, the type of work performed (whether it is direct support, work in a congregate care setting, individualized support, administration/office work), whether there is an outbreak in the workplace, and the present community risk level (the zone that applies in the region and whether the area has a high rate of infection).

For those Personnel who do not receive the COVID-19 vaccination for reasons unrelated to a protected ground under the *Human Rights Code*, alternatives to vaccination may include one or a combination of the following:

- Enhanced PPE (*only to be included where there are alternatives to PPE presently used at the workplace*)
- Reassignment: the Personnel may not be permitted to work with Supported Individuals (either those at high risk of susceptibility to COVID-19 or all Supported Individuals);
- Temporary remote work;

- Modifications to the work/service/support performed;
- Temporary, unpaid leave of absence [During this time, unvaccinated Personnel may be permitted to use any unused vacation, **[list any other paid leaves such as personal days, lieu time, etc.]**].

Volunteers and Students

If volunteers and students do not receive the COVID-19 vaccine, once it is available to them, for reasons unrelated to a protected ground under the *Human Rights Code*, the volunteer or student will be assigned to tasks that restrict their interactions with Supported Individuals if such tasks are available. If such tasks are unavailable, unvaccinated Volunteers and Students will not be scheduled.

Other COVID-19 Protective Measures

All **[employer]** policies with respect to COVID-19 protective measures continue to apply to all vaccinated and unvaccinated Personnel, volunteers and students, including the following:

- **[list covid-19 policies re: PPE, distancing, etc.]**

[if the employer has COVID-19 protocols that are not documented]: All Personnel, volunteers and students must continue to comply with **[employer's]** policies, protocols and rules with respect to physical distancing, masking, screening, personal protective equipment and any other measures intended to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. **[employer may wish to summarize the protocols]**

Review of Policy

This Policy will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the latest scientific research, guidance and legislation from the Ontario government, the federal government, Ministry of Health, the Public Health Agency of Canada, Public Health Ontario, Local Health Units and any other relevant health bodies.

Updated on **[date]**