




COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

Issued: October 6, 2021 Team: Human Resources	Revision Dates:	Approved by Senior Management 
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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to continue to protect the health and safety of City of North Bay employees, and members of the public from the spread of COVID-19, and to meet the obligation under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to take all necessary precautions to protect the health and safety of the workforce.

This policy provides expectations and requirements of employees, members of Council and members of Council appointed committees with respect to COVID-19 vaccination, and proof of vaccination.

This policy is a temporary measure to reduce the risks of the hazards of COVID-19 and may be amended as new public health directives and/or provincial or federal government legislation, regulations and/or orders are formalized. Any such directives, legislation, regulations or orders shall take precedence until such time as this policy may be amended to conform to the new requirements.

Scope

The policy applies to all City of North Bay employees including full-time, part-time, temporary, casual, contract, volunteers, and students, and is regardless of an employee's work from home status as well as all contractors who perform work in City facilities. It will also include members of Council and members of Council appointed committees. New employees, members of Council and members of Council appointed committees will also be subject to this policy as a condition of their employment with the City of North Bay.

Definitions

COVID-19: An infectious disease caused by SARS-CoV-2.

Vaccine: A COVID-19 vaccine that has been approved for use by Health

Canada

Fully vaccinated: Having received the completed series of an approved COVID-19 vaccine by Health Canada. An individual is considered fully vaccinated 14 days after receiving their completed dose, including any required booster doses as may be applicable as mandated by Health Canada or Medical Officer of Health.

Proof of vaccination: In Ontario, proof of vaccination, in the form of an official dose administration receipt provided by the Ministry of Health in Ontario. For those vaccinated outside Ontario, acceptable proof is based on the criteria provided by the province/state in which they received their vaccine.

Rapid antigen testing: Rapid diagnostic test for non-symptomatic, unvaccinated individuals that directly detects the presence or absence of an antigen.

Proof of Exemption: Written documentation is required for those not fully vaccinated due to grounds protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code. For guidance, please see the OHRC policy statement: http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/ohrc-policy-statement-covid-19-vaccine-mandates-and-proof-vaccine-certificates. For medical exemptions, a fully completed Statement of Medical Exemption Form must be submitted and signed by a physician or nurse practitioner.

Performance Standards

All persons in A City of North Bay workplace covered by the scope of this policy are required to:

- Disclose their COVID-19 vaccination status to Human Resources by October 15, 2021 at 12:00 p.m., and update if required, unless there is a bona fide medical or religious exemption approved by Human Resources.
- Provide proof of 2nd dose of COVID-19 vaccination by November 15, 2021 at 12:00 p.m., which allows for full vaccination status (2 doses plus 14 days) against COVID-19 by November 29, 2021, unless there is a bona fide medical or religious exemption approved by Human Resources.
- Where an employee, member of Council and/or member of Council appointed committees is not fully vaccinated due to a bona fide exemption, approved by Human Resources, participate in the accommodation process, and undergo regular rapid antigen testing to protect other employees and ensure adequate infection and

prevention control measures.

- Employees, members of Council and members of Council appointed committees without an approved accommodation plan and not fully vaccinated against the hazard of COVID-19, in accordance with the implementation requirements of this policy, will be placed on a leave of absence and may elect to request vacation leave, banked time (if available) or a leave of absence without pay. These will be subject to a review of operational requirements.
- Failure to participate and comply with this policy may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Workplace Responsibilities

Employer

- Provide reasonable accommodation in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code to any employee who presents a bona fide exemption, up to a point of undue hardship.
- Maintain vaccination disclosure information, including verifying receipt of a vaccination, in accordance with privacy legislation and use the information only to the extent necessary for implementation of this policy, for administering health and safety protocols, infection and prevention control measures in the workplace and as required by law.

Management/Supervisors

- Ensure employees, members of Council and members of Council appointed committees attending work have verified their vaccination status with Human Resources.
- Following notification from Human Resources of any employees, members of Council and members of Council appointed committees who is required to submit to rapid antigen testing due to a bona fide religious or medical exemption, ensure compliance with the procedure.
- Follow and comply with all federal or provincial mandates or directives regarding the vaccination of staff.
- Continue to enforce workplace precautions that limit the spread of COVID-19 virus.
- Where operationally feasible, allow for staff to attend COVID-19 vaccination clinics during work time, using existing applicable leave entitlements.

- Ensure those employees, members of Council and members of Council appointed committees without an approved accommodation plan and not fully vaccinated against the hazard of COVID-19, in accordance with the implementation requirements of this policy, may elect to request vacation leave, time off in lieu of overtime (if available) or a leave of absence without pay in accordance with the current provisions in place either by policy and/or within all collective bargaining agreements. These will be subject to a review of operational requirements.
- Discuss and determine the schedule for those with a bona fide exemption undergoes rapid antigen testing, using following parameters:
 - If absent for 48 hours or more, testing prior to returning to the workplace; and,
 - Every 72 hours within a work week or as designated by the operating department in consultation with Human Resources
 - In consultation with Human Resources, areas operating 24/7 or 7 day week operations may need to develop an alternate reporting procedure to ensure operational requirements are met while ensuring protection of privacy of information.

All persons in A City of North Bay workplace covered by the scope of this Policy:

- Submit a "Declaration of COVID-19 Vaccination Status" form and verification of vaccination by October 15, 2021, and update vaccination status as required. Declaration forms must be received by 12:00 p.m. on October 15, 2021.
- Receive both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, unless a there is bona fide exemption, by November 15, 2021 at 12:00 p.m..
- Continue to follow health and safety protocols to ensure personal safety and prevent the spread of COVID-19 before and after vaccination.
- Adhere to any additional mandates or directives or reporting requirements from provincial or federal authorities.
- Identify opportunities to obtain a COVID-19 vaccination through community clinics or from health-care professionals.
- Where applicable, provide additional information and participate in the workplace accommodation process.

- Recognize that there is no requirement under human rights legislation or Ontario Human Rights Code that requires the employer to accommodate a personal refusal to be fully vaccinated arising from political and/or personal principles.
- Employees, members of Council and members of Council appointed committees without an approved accommodation plan and not fully vaccinated against the hazard of COVID-19, in accordance with the implementation requirements of this policy, may elect to request vacation leave, time off in lieu of overtime (if available) or a leave of absence without pay in accordance with the current provisions in place either by policy and/or within all collective bargaining agreements. These will be subject to a review of operational requirements.

Human Resources

- Provide staff with access to information on COVID-19, health and safety precautions, and on the efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Assist management with any labour relations and health and safety issues arising from application of this policy including liaising directly with Union leadership.
- In accordance with all application legislation and provision of privacy requirements, create procedure for collecting and storing documentation on employee vaccination status and providing adequate information to supervisors.
- Receive and record results of the rapid antigen testing of unvaccinated employees, members of Council and members of Council appointed committees due to a bona fide exemption.
- Lead the accommodation process for any employee who submits a request for bona fide exemption, and evaluate it on a case-by-case basis.
- Update recruitment processes to ensure all new offers of employment are conditional upon the incumbent being fully vaccinated for COVID-19 and subject to conditions of any relevant future policy amendments.

Related Procedures

- Pandemic SOP Employee Leaves and Contact Tracing
- Pandemic SOP
- Public Facility Face Covering SOP

Related Forms

- Declaration of COVID-19 Vaccination Status
- COVID-19 Vaccination and Vaccination Declaration FAQ
- Statement of Medical Exemption



COVID-19 Vaccination Policy and Vaccination Declaration

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Why do we need a vaccination policy?

The health and safety of our employees and members of the public remains a top priority and the City is committed to doing our part to help mitigate a fourth wave of COVID-19. This policy contributes to those efforts while meeting obligations through the Occupational Health and Safety Act requiring that employers ensure a safe work environment for their employees, and aligns with public health advice.

Q. When does the policy come into effect?

The policy is effective immediately.

Q. When do I need to be fully vaccinated?

Employees, (including full-time, part-time, temporary, casual, contract, volunteers, and students), members of Council and Council appointed committee members must meet the definition of fully vaccinated under this policy by November 29 2021. This means that employees must receive their second vaccine no later than November 15, 2021. Therefore, to be in compliance with this policy, employees must receive their first dose on or before October 15, 2021.

Q. What is the deadline to provide my vaccination status?

Employees, members of Council and Council appointed committee members are required to provide their vaccination status by completing a "Declaration of COVID-19 Vaccination Status Form" and proof of Vaccination by **October 15, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. and update as required.**

Q. I am vaccinated but I don't feel I should have to disclose my vaccination status. Why is the City asking for this information?

Employees, members of Council and Council appointed committee members are required to disclose and provide proof of vaccination status in the interest of health and safety and to ensure the policy is being followed.

Q. What if I have an exemption?

Written documentation required for those not fully vaccinated due to grounds protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code should be provided to Human Resources. For guidance, please see the OHRC policy statement http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/ohrc-policy-statement-covid-19-vaccine-mandates-and-proof-vaccine-certificates. For medical exemptions, a **fully completed** Statement of Medical Exemption Form must be signed by a physician or nurse practitioner and submitted to Human Resources for review.

Q. How will my privacy be protected?

Information collected regarding vaccination status will be maintained in accordance with all privacy legislation and stored confidentially by Human Resources. Information provided will only be used for implementation of the policy, health and safety protocols, and infection and prevention control measures in the workplace.

Q. How do I provide my vaccination information?

Every employee, member of Council and Council appointed committee members must submit a "Declaration of COVID-19 Status" with their official Vaccination Certificate attached to Human Resources. This documentation can be submitted via email to: humanresources@northbay.ca or placed in a sealed envelope addressed to "Human Resources" and placed in the Inter-office mail. **This form must be received by Human Resources before October 15, 2021 at 12:00 p.m.**

Q. Who sees my medical information and who will know my vaccination status?

The City will maintain this information in accordance with all privacy legislation. This information will only be used to the extent necessary for implementation of this policy, health and safety protocols, and infection and prevention control measures in the workplace. Only those staff required to review this information for the purposes of determining policy compliance will see this information.

Q. What grounds will be considered for an accommodation?

Only bona fide medical or religious exemptions will be accepted for accommodation. Philosophical objections and/or personal principles are not a

protected ground under the Ontario Human Rights Code. For guidance, please see the OHRC policy statement:
http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/ohrc-policy-statement-covid-19-vaccine-mandates-and-proof-vaccine-certificates.

If an employee, member of Council and/or a Council appointed committee members is not vaccinated and has requested an exemption, the individual will be required to:

- Complete the Declaration of COVID-19 Vaccination Status form by October 15, 2021 and attach the following required documentation;
 - Completed Statement of Medical Exemption provided by either a Physician, or Nurse Practitioner that certifies that the employee cannot be vaccinated against COVID-19, the reason, and the length of the exemption or:
 - Information from a Faith Leader confirming; 1) the duration of membership; 2) the Faith's position on opposition of vaccination and; 3) contact information for the Faith Leader.
- Adhere to requirements defined by The City of North Bay relating to necessary testing and the use of personal protective equipment.

Q. What will happen if I do not disclose my vaccination status?

Non-compliance with this Policy may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Q. What will happen if I am not vaccinated?

Employees, members of Council and Council appointed committee members without an approved accommodation plan and who do not provide proof of a first dose by October 15, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. and/or a second dose by November 15, 2021 at 12:00 p.m., in accordance with the implementation requirements of this policy, will be placed on a leave of absence and may elect to request vacation leave, banked time (if available) or a leave of absence without pay until such time that they are fully vaccinated under the definition of the policy.

Q. Do I still need to be vaccinated if I work from home?

Yes. The policy applies to all employees including full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary, casual, volunteers and students, members of Council and Council appointed committee members regardless of an employee's work-from-home status.

Q. Will we still need to wear masks in City facilities if everyone is vaccinated?

Yes, at this time, employees must continue to follow all workplace health and safety policies and directions, including wearing a mask, regardless of their vaccination status.

Q. Will I be allowed to continue to work if I only have one dose of the vaccine?

Employees, members of Council and Council appointed committee members who have their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine by October 15, 2021, and provide proof to Human Resources of that vaccination may continue to work as normal and must provide proof of receipt of their second dose by November 15, 2021 at 12:00 p.m.

Q. Why can't we just submit to regular testing if we don't want to be vaccinated?

Testing is only another screening tool and has its limitations. Mandatory vaccines focus on primary prevention by focusing on eliminating the risk.

Q. Where can I find out more about vaccines and how to get vaccinated?

For more information on the COVID-19 vaccine and vaccination clinics visit <https://www.myhealthunit.ca/en/health-topics/covid-19-vaccine-vaccination-frequently-asked-questions.asp#BookingAppointments>