

Enhanced Infection Control Practices COVID-19 Pandemic & Safety Plan

Updated: October 13, 2021

This is a comprehensive document that outlines the most current enhanced infection control practices that we have implemented during the COVID-19 Pandemic. It is a fluid document subject to change.

Section 20: COVID-19 Immunization for Staff

1.0 Background:

The purpose of this policy is to outline organizational expectations with regards to COVID-19 immunization of staff, student placements and volunteers. The Home recognizes the importance of immunization of staff, students and volunteers due to the nature of their work with vulnerable seniors and potential for exposure in the community. This COVID-19 immunization policy aims to protect the home's population and define the expectations for COVID-19 protection, including immunization for all staff, students and volunteers.

COVID-19 is an acute respiratory illness caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) virus. It is characterized by fever, cough, shortness of breath and a number of other symptoms. Asymptomatic infection is also possible. COVID-19 is primarily transmitted person-to-person through respiratory droplets. The risk of severe disease increases with age and is elevated in those with underlying medical conditions. The estimated relative reduction of COVID-19 mortality in LTC residents is 96% 8 weeks after introduction of the COVID-19 vaccine program in this population

2.0 Scope:

This policy applies to all Staff, Support workers, Student Placements and Volunteers.

3.0 Objectives:

- 3.1 Immunization against COVID-19 has been shown to be efficacious in preventing COVID-19 illness in LTC homes.

- 3.2 Immunization against COVID-19 will help to reduce the number of new cases of COVID-19 and reduce severe outcomes including hospitalizations and death due to COVID-19 in residents, staff, students and volunteers.
- 3.3 Optimize COVID-19 immunization in LTC.
- 3.4 Ensure that all staff, students and volunteers have access to information required to make informed decisions about COVID-19 vaccination.

4.0 Definitions:

- 4.1 **Fully Vaccinated:** An individual who has received all required doses of COVID-19 vaccine and 14 days has elapsed since the last dose. An individual is considered fully vaccinated once they have provided evidence of full vaccination status to the employer

5.0 Procedure:

In order to ensure that all staff, students and volunteers are adequately educated about COVID-19 and the COVID-19 vaccines, they must provide one of the following:

- 5.1 Proof of COVID-19 vaccine administration as per the following requirements:
 - a) A full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or any combination of such vaccines, **OR**
 - b) One or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada, **OR**
 - c) Three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada.
- 5.2 Written proof of a medical reason, provided by either a physician or nurse practitioner that sets out:
 - a) That the person cannot be vaccinated against COVID-19; **AND**
 - b) The effective time period for the medical reason (i.e., permanent or time limited).

Valid reasons for medical exemption for mRNA vaccine are:

- a severe allergic reaction or anaphylaxis to a component of a COVID-19 vaccine, or following a COVID-19 vaccine, and that allergy was documented and evaluated by an allergist/immunologist and the allergist/immunologist has determined that the individual is unable to receive any COVID-19 vaccine;
- myocarditis prior to initiating an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, if between the ages of 12-17;
- myocarditis or pericarditis following an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine; or
- serious adverse event following COVID-19 immunization, if relevant specialist has determined the individual is unable to receive any COVID-19 vaccine; or

- Actively receiving monoclonal antibody therapy or convalescent plasma therapy for the treatment or prevention of COVID-19 (time limited exemption).

5.3 Proof that the individual has completed an educational program approved by The Home and provided within 30 days of the policy coming into effect and thereafter as required by the employer.

5.4 All staff will complete the COVID-19 Declaration Form upon hire and annually as appropriate.

5.5 Vaccination Lead for The Home is: DOC
Vaccination Backup for The Home is: ADOC

The Home will provide support for staff, students and volunteers to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, including assistance with booking a vaccine appointment, peer-to-peer support etc.

5.6 Staff, students and volunteers who have chosen to decline COVID-19 vaccination or who choose not to provide proof of vaccination or proof of medical exemption, by the required date will not be able to attend a long-term care home to work, undertake a student placement or volunteer.

6.0 Protection and Prevention

- 6.1 To ensure the protection of residents, staff and volunteers from exposure COVID-19, staff and all individuals working in The Home must adhere to the infection prevention and control measures. This includes the requirement to participate honestly in the active screening program, to wear personal protective equipment as prescribed and to be informed of infection control practices.
- 6.2 Staff and all individuals working in The Home must participate in COVID testing as prescribed by the employer.
- 6.3 Staff and all individuals working in The Home must remain vigilant in performing self-monitoring for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- 6.4 Staff working in more than one workplace must immediately report to their supervisor if they have been exposed to COVID-19 or if there is an outbreak declared in either of their workplace settings. Decisions about their ability to work will be made based on their individual immunization status and/or consultation with the Public Health Unit.

7.0 COVID-19 Vaccine Program

It is important that all staff make an informed decision about whether or not to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

In order to ensure that staff are adequately educated about COVID-19 and the COVID-19 vaccine, the following will apply:

Staff must complete their declaration and submit to their manager no later than October 18/21.

Category	Requirements
<p>1. They are fully vaccinated as defined by the Ministry of Health.</p>	<p>Written proof of full vaccination from the Ministry of Health to be provided at time of declaration no later than October 18, 2021.</p>
<p>2. They have or will receive their first dose no later than October 18, 2021 and will be fully vaccinated no later than November 15, 2021.</p>	<p>Written proof of first dose of vaccination from the Ministry of Health to be provided at time of declaration and by or on October 18, 2021.</p> <p>Completion of regular COVID Rapid Antigen Testing three times per week until full vaccination is reached.</p> <p>Written proof of full vaccination from the Ministry of Health to be provided using the declaration tool by November 15, 2021.</p>
<p>3. They are unable to be vaccinated for medical reasons.</p>	<p>After completion of declaration, written proof of the medical reason, to be provided by either a physician or nurse practitioner, that sets out the details below, by October 18, 2021</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the staff member cannot be vaccinated against COVID-19 and; 2. The effective time period for the medical restriction and date by which the restriction will be removed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of the Educational Program required. • Completion of COVID Rapid Antigen Testing three times per week. • If the medical reason is time-limited, within thirty (30) days of expiry, proof of vaccination must be provided using the

	declaration tool or further proof is required. If an extension or proof of vaccination is not received, the staff member will be considered unvaccinated in accordance with Option 4.
4. They elect not to be vaccinated , and are without a medical reason and understand they will be off work without pay effective November 15, 2021.	<p>Completion of the Educational Program required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff member is off without pay and subject to potential discipline up to/including dismissal until full vaccination is reached, consistent with timelines in Option 2. • A change of vaccination status may be submitted using the declaration tool.

In order to ensure compliance, Managers will receive compliance reports. Compliance reports will verify that the COVID-19 program has been completed.

8.0 COVID-19 Education Program

- ✓ COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre
These education programs are available on SURGE and will be assigned to staff members that have declined immunization and do not have a medical certificate from a qualified specialist.

This educational program will include the following:

How COVID-19 vaccines work	Vaccine safety related to the development of the COVID-19 vaccines
The benefits of vaccination against COVID-19	Risks of not being vaccinated against COVID-19
Possible side effects of COVID-19 vaccination	

9.0 Confidentiality

The Home is required, pursuant to the Minister of Long-Term Care's Directive "*Long-Term Care Home COVID-19 Immunization Policy*", to report statistical information to the

Ministry of Long-Term Care. No identifying information will be provided to the ministry in relation to this policy; all statistical information will be provided in aggregate form.

10.0 Change in Status

Any individual who initially selected option 3 or 4 and later becomes fully vaccinated will be able to update their vaccination by using the declaration tool and providing accepted proof.

11.0 Contractors, Support workers, Volunteers

Contractors, Support workers, volunteers and any other individuals who chooses not to be fully vaccinated will not be allowed to physically access the home other than for emergency reasons or when visiting a Resident receiving end of life care.

Contractors must ensure that all their employees accessing the Home and are fully vaccinated or meet the testing requirements.

Individuals not compliant with this requirement will not be allowed to access the Home.

12.0 Non-compliance

The home will remove from duty any staff member who has not complied with this policy by November 15/21

The individual will remain off work on unpaid leave until the policy is complied with. If a medical reason expires the person will remain on unpaid administrative leave from the date of expiration of the medical reason for complying with this policy or be subject to the non-compliance outcomes outlined above, and any human resource or collective agreement policies, as appropriate for the staff member.

If a person has received their first dose of vaccine before October 18, they will be considered to have met the initial obligations of the policy until such time as they become eligible for their second dose, which must be administered by, or before, November 15/21 with the option of a 7 day extension on a case by case basis.

After November 15/21:

If the Staff member demonstrates proof of their first dose by November 29 they will be provided with an additional period of 5 weeks in which to receive their second dose. The staff member will remain on unpaid leave until such a time as they demonstrate proof of their second dose.

If the Staff member does not provide proof of their first dose by November 29/21, their employment with the home will be terminated.

If the staff member does not provide proof second of their dose 5 weeks post first dose; their employment with the home will be terminated.

The Director of Care, or designate, for the program area will track these individuals to ensure the stipulated time frames are being complied with.

Newly hired staff will demonstrate proof of vaccination status prior to first day worked.

For clarity on the medical note, the exemption to vaccination is written proof of a medical reason, provided by either a physician or nurse practitioner that sets out:

- a. That the person cannot be vaccinated against COVID-19; and
- b. The effective period for the medical reason (i.e., permanent or time limited).

Students and volunteers must demonstrate compliance with the policy prior to coming to the Home for educational placement or volunteer hours.

13.0 Statistical Data Collection

The Home will collect, maintain, and disclose to the Ministry of Long-Term Care and the Ministry of Health (as applicable, at a minimum on a monthly basis), in aggregate form and in a manner set out by the Ministries, the following statistical information:

- the total number of individuals subject to the Directive for the reporting cycle;
- the total number of individuals who have submitted the proof as per the requirements in section 2 of the Directive broken down by which type of proof was provided;
- for each type of proof, the number of individuals who submitted each type of proof who are staff, student placements, or volunteers; and
- the total number of individuals who have been granted an extension of not more than seven (7) days and the reason why.

The Home will not provide any identifying information to the ministry and should communicate to all individuals who are subject to the home's policy that information will be shared with the ministry in aggregate form only and without any identifying information.

The Ministry of Long-Term Care may share any and all statistical information provided by licensees pursuant to this Directive with the Ministry of Health, local public health units or the

public, including by posting on a public-facing website of the Government of Ontario, at any time.

14.0 Appendices and References

Recommendations on the use of COVID-19 Vaccines. National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI). January 12, 2021. https://www.ammi.ca/Content/NACI%20COVID-19%20Stmt_Jan%2012%20Update%20Advance%20Copy_EN%5B1%5D.pdf

CNA (Canadian Nurses Association) welcomes the beginning of COVID-19 vaccination programs in Canada. December 17, 2020
<https://cna-aicc.ca/en/newsroom/news-releases/2020/cna-welcomes-the-beginning-of-covid-19-vaccination-programs-incanada>

Early Impact of Ontario's COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout on Long-Term Care Home Residents and Health Care Workers. Science Table COVID-19 Advisory for Ontario. March 8, 2021 reference
<https://covid-19-sciencetable.ca/sciencebrief/early-impact-of-ontarios-covid-19-vaccine-rollout-onlong-term-care-home-resdients-and-health-care-workers/>

MEDICAL EXEMPTION FOR MANDATORY COVID-19 VACCINATION

By submitting this form, I am asking that I be exempted from vaccination requirements due to a medical condition. I certify that the information below was completed by my primary health care physician or nurse practitioner.

Name of Individual Requesting Exemption: (print) _____

Position of Individual: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Declaration of Physician or Nurse Practitioner

I certify that due to medical conditions, the following individual _____ should be exempt from receiving the COVID-19 Vaccine for the following reason:

- an allergist/immunologist-confirmed severe allergy or anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose of a COVID-19 vaccine or to any of its components that cannot be mitigated;
- a diagnosed episode of myocarditis/pericarditis after receipt of an mRNA vaccine.

If the medical condition is temporary, please indicate the expected time period: From: _____ to _____

Please state the reason(s) for the accommodation request here. Please describe the nature of the condition that precludes vaccination. Please state whether or not the condition is expected to be permanent. It is not necessary to provide a diagnosis.			
Name of Physician or Registered Nurse in the Extended Class		Registration/License No.	
How long has the employee been your patient?			
Unit number	Street Number	Street Name	PO BOX
City/town	Province/State/Country		Postal Code
Signature of Physician or Registered Nurse in the Extended Class			Date

More information about Medical Exemptions can be found in the Vaccine Information Sheets and Special Populations Documents available on the Ministry's website.

https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/vaccine/COVID19_vaccination_rec_special_populations.pdf

Vaccination is one of the most effective ways to protect our families, communities, and ourselves against COVID-19. Evidence indicates that vaccine is effective at preventing serious outcomes, such as severe illness, hospitalization, and death due to COVID-19. A growing body of evidence indicates that people fully vaccinated with an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna) are less likely to have asymptomatic infection or to transmit COVID-19 to others.

Once completed please submit form to the Director of Care

COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration

The Home continues to be committed to the safety of our team members and patients, including protecting our population from COVID-19. Along with our existing public health and personal protective measures, the COVID-19 vaccine is the most effective way to protect ourselves and our residents, colleagues and community from COVID-19.

It is important that The Home knows the vaccination status of team members to ensure a safe environment for everyone who works, receives care and visits our home. In the event of an outbreak, your vaccination status may impact your ability to provide safe resident care or continue activities where there is a potential for transmission.

As per the COVID-19 Immunization for Staff Policy, team members are required to submit a record of vaccination and/or declare their vaccination status to the Home by completing this COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration.

If you have questions about the declaration of COVID-19 status policy, please contact your department manager.

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Declaration Decision

- Vaccinated: I have been vaccinated already and have/will provide a record of vaccination to the Director of Nursing.
- Partially vaccinated: I have received my first Dose on _____ and I am scheduled to receive my second dose on _____. I have provided a record of my first dose to the Director of Care.
- Decline – Medical reason: I am declining to be vaccinated due to medical reasons and will provide written proof by either a physician or nurse practitioner to the Director of Nursing.
- Decline – Not getting the vaccine: I am declining to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. I understand that it is recommended I receive the COVID-19 vaccination to protect myself and the residents I care for. I acknowledge that I have completed the COVID-19 Vaccination: e-Learning module(s). I understand that failure to comply with this policy will prevent me from entering or working at the home after November 14 at 23:59 2021.

Signature: _____ Date: _____