

Corporate Policy & Procedure



Policy Title: Employee and Volunteer COVID-19 Vaccination

Policy Number: 01-07-16

Section: **Human Resources**

Effective Date: **November 11, 2021**

Approved by:

Leadership Team

Subsection: **Health and Safety**

Last Review Date:

Owner Division/Contact:

**Human Resources/Senior Manager,
Healthy Workplace**

Policy Statement

The City of Mississauga is committed to ensuring a safe working environment for City Employees and Volunteers. The risk of infection with COVID-19 in City workplaces poses a significant threat to City Employees and Volunteers. In order to appropriately mitigate this risk and meet the City's obligation under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect the health and safety of its Employees and Volunteers, the City is implementing mandatory measures and protocols.

Purpose

This policy outlines:

- The requirement for all Candidates, Employees and Volunteers to provide proof of being Fully Vaccinated against COVID-19
- Acceptance of approved Health Canada vaccines as well as alternative vaccine regimes approved by the Province of Ontario as "fully vaccinated" status
- The validation process for proof of vaccination
- The process to request an exemption under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* for medical and/or creed grounds for Candidates, Employees and Volunteers
- The process for current employees and active volunteers to participate in regular testing, including the frequency, test type and responsibility for the cost
- The ongoing safety requirements for all Candidates, Employees and Volunteers, and Responsibilities for Candidates, Employees, Volunteers, managers/supervisors and Human Resources

Scope

This policy applies to all City Employees and Candidates, as defined in the Definitions section of this policy and Volunteers acting on behalf of the City, including citizen members appointed to

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committees of Council and boards. While Volunteers are not Employees of the City, they are also subject to this policy.

Note: This policy is supported by a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document that provides additional guidance, links to protocols and supports.

Legislative Authority

This policy complies with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the *Personal Health Protection of Privacy Act* (PHIPA) and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, all as amended.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

“Candidate” means any one applying to be an Employee or a Volunteer, this includes previously employed individuals and previous volunteers.

“City” means the Corporation of the City of Mississauga.

“Creed Exemption” refers to an exemption from receiving a COVID-19 vaccine, including based on the Employee’s/Volunteer’s religious beliefs and practices, as required by the Ontario *Human Rights Code*.

“Employee” means all union and non-union employees (full time, part time, probationary, temporary/contract/seasonal/students and those on an internship program), including those performing the majority of their work remotely.

“Fully Vaccinated” is defined by the Province of Ontario and currently means 14 days have passed since receiving:

- The second in a two-dose series of a Health Canada approved COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca or a combination of any two), or
- A single-dose of the Health Canada approved Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine, or
- 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
- Three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, and
- Receiving a mandated booster dose

“Fully Vaccinated Confirmation” means confirmation that you are Fully Vaccinated (all required doses plus 14 days from date of vaccination) from the Province of Ontario.

“Medical Exemption” means an exemption from receiving a COVID-19 vaccination for medical reasons approved by Employee Health Services, as required by the Ontario *Human Rights Code*.

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“Volunteer” means individuals registered with the City who give their time freely to the City of Mississauga, i.e. on a voluntary basis and are not considered employees of the Corporation. This would not include drop-in Community Volunteer events, which would follow Provincial Guidelines for participation.

“Workplace” means any place where employees work that is outside of their home, such as but not limited to City facilities/buildings, offices, shops, yards, community centers, Fire Stations, Libraries, parks, roads, fields, City vehicles, construction sites and inspection locations.

Background

Establishing a Workplace vaccination policy is a key action that employers, including the City, can take to keep Employees/Volunteers safe. At this time, full vaccination against COVID-19 remains the single most important intervention in reducing the transmission of the COVID-19 virus, including new variants, and protecting vaccinated individuals from severe consequences of COVID-19. Full vaccination also provides indirect protection to others, including fellow Employees. Ensuring Employees/Volunteers are vaccinated will reduce the likelihood that they contract the virus and, if they do, reduces the likelihood that they pass it along to other Employees and that they suffer significant health effects from the virus. These measures are key to avoiding and containing any outbreak of COVID-19 in the Workplace.

Proof of Vaccination

To support a safe and healthy work environment, all Employees and Volunteers must confirm their Fully Vaccinated status to their manager/supervisor. The City accepts Health Canada approved COVID-19 vaccines (Pfizer, Janssen (Johnson & Johnson), Moderna and AstraZeneca), 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 and three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada. Employees and Volunteers who were vaccinated outside of Ontario or through another agency will have their proof of vaccination reviewed by Employee Health Services (with direction from Peel Public Health) for approval; Employees/ Volunteers may be subject to further evaluation.

All Fully Vaccinated Employees and Volunteers must show proof of COVID-19 vaccinations to their manager/supervisor in the form of a Fully Vaccinated Confirmation.

All external Candidates must submit their Fully Vaccinated Confirmation or apply for and receive confirmation of a Creed or Medical Exemption from the City before their first day in the Workplace.

Note: 1. Fully Vaccinated Candidates, Employees and Volunteers can log onto [the provincial portal](#) and download or print their electronic COVID-19 receipt for each dose administered.

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2. Candidates/Employees/Volunteers who have been vaccinated outside of Ontario or Canada are to submit their vaccination records for review through their local health unit, so that it is included in the provincial database.

Employees/Volunteers Requesting an Exemption

Employees/Volunteers requesting an exemption under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* ground of creed should contact their departmental Human Resources representative.

Employees/Volunteers requesting an exemption on medical grounds should contact their Employee Health Services (EHS) Consultant in Employee Health Services, Human Resources Division.

All requests for accommodation are reviewed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with City policies and the Ontario *Human Rights Code*. Documentation satisfactory to the City will be required in all circumstances. Employees receiving approval for an exemption from vaccination must adhere to the requirements set out below.

Employees and Volunteers - Unvaccinated by Choice or Refusing Disclosure

Employees and Volunteers who choose not to disclose their vaccination status or who have chosen to remain unvaccinated against COVID-19 must:

- Wear a medical grade mask in the workplace, even if the indoor masking requirement is lifted
- Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet (1.83 meters) from other individuals while removing their mask to eat or drink
- Participate in a mandatory COVID-19 e-learning session within 2 weeks of employment or upon return from any Leave of Absence, Disability Benefit Absence or Long Term Disability
- Submit to COVID-19 rapid antigen testing at regular intervals, as determined by the City, at their own cost and on their own time, as directed by their manager/supervisor before entering the Workplace. All negative test results must be documented by the Employee in the Testing Results Tile (TRT) or as otherwise directed prior to attending work. Photos of self-administered tests must clearly show test results with the test date written on the test strip, as well as the name/manufacturer of the rapid antigen test
- Employees who receive COVID-19 rapid antigen test kits through the Provincial Antigen Screening Program (while this program is available) must follow the Program terms and conditions and regularly submit their test results with photos through the Testing Results Tile (TRT)
- Should the Employee or Volunteer have a positive COVID-19 rapid antigen test, they will:
 - Initiate self- isolation
 - Advise their manager/supervisor that they are unable to attend work or their volunteer position

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- Immediately seek a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test e.g. through a COVID-19 test centre
- An Employee will provide their EHS Consultant with a photo of the positive rapid test results and test date and time and follow COVID-19 related absence protocols
 - As soon as the PCR results are known, they must be shared with the manager/supervisor and EHS (unless they test positive *and* were not recently in the Workplace i.e. within 48 hours of positive test or start of symptoms). An employee who remains well, receives a negative PCR test and passes daily COVID-19 screening questions, may resume work. Those who test positive will continue to follow COVID-19 absence protocols and may seek further direction by EHS

Note: Following a positive rapid antigen test, if an employee does not seek PCR testing as soon as possible, and the self-isolation period is potentially prolonged as a result of not having timely PCR test results, pay, where applicable, may be impacted.

Employees/Volunteers must have access to rapid antigen tests at all times in order to come into the Workplace as required.

Employees and Volunteers may be required to disclose their vaccination status, including, but not limited to, situations where Employees, in order to comply with the clearance criteria for returning to work, are directed to stay home, e.g. as a result of the daily screening tool, a COVID-19 exposure, new COVID-19 symptoms, positive COVID-19 test or a travel quarantine directive. Employees must keep a record of the test and its specific identification details as outlined by the City.

The City will maintain vaccination disclosure information, including documentation verifying receipt of a COVID-19 vaccination, in accordance with privacy legislation. Information will only be disclosed to the extent necessary to comply with the purposes of this policy and applicable legislation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Human Resources

Human Resources are responsible for:

- Communicating all health and safety requirements related to COVID-19 vaccinations and related health and safety measures to all Employees/Volunteers
- Maintaining confidentiality of all Employee/Volunteer personal health information, in accordance with PHIPA, and only disclosing as much as is reasonably necessary for the purposes of this policy and any applicable legislation, and
- Approving an exemption to provisions of this policy, in accordance with the Ontario *Human Rights Code* for Medical and Creed Exemptions

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Managers/Supervisors

Managers/supervisors are responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with this policy, including participating in regular compliance audits by reviewing COVID-19 rapid antigen test results and photos submitted as necessary and taking appropriate action where compliance is not achieved
- Ensuring compliance with all health and safety requirements, policies and procedures
- Ensuring their staff are educated on this policy
- Confidentially obtaining from Candidates, Employees or Volunteers Fully Vaccinated status or requests for an exemption and proof that Employees and Volunteers are Fully Vaccinated in accordance with this policy
- Accurately reporting Employee/Volunteer vaccination status as directed by the City
- Ensuring that all Employees/Volunteers who choose not to be vaccinated, or choose not to share their vaccination status, complete any required education sessions or training about COVID-19
- Checking the results of regular rapid antigen tests for all Employees/Volunteers, as required, and directing Employees/Volunteers to PCR testing, if required, and
- Promoting, monitoring and ensuring a respectful workplace free of harassment for Employees and Volunteers, regardless of vaccination status

All Candidates

All Candidates are responsible for:

- Following all health and safety policies and procedures
- Disclosing their Fully Vaccinated status to the hiring manager/supervisor, as requested
- Providing proof of vaccination to the hiring manager/supervisor, and
- Requesting an exemption to provisions of this policy, in accordance with the Ontario *Human Rights Code* for Medical and Creed Exemptions, through Human Resources

All Employees and Volunteers

All Employees and Volunteers are responsible for:

- Following all health and safety policies and procedures
- Disclosing their Fully Vaccinated status to their manager/supervisor, as requested
- Providing proof of vaccination to their manager/supervisor
- Requesting an exemption to provisions of this policy, in accordance with the Ontario *Human Rights Code* for Medical and Creed Exemptions
- Completing any required education sessions or training about COVID-19 (e.g. vaccinations and safety protocols) if not Fully Vaccinated or approved for Exemption status
- Participating in regular COVID-19 testing, as directed by their manager/supervisor and reporting results of testing, as required by this policy, and
- Following directions from managers/supervisors and EHS, as required, if rapid antigen and/or PCR tests are positive and/or the need for self-isolation is identified.

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Disciplinary Action

Any Employee who violates this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Volunteers who fail to comply with this policy will no longer be eligible to volunteer with the City.

Exceptions to the Policy

Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the City Manager, in consultation with the Director, Human Resources.

Revision History

Reference	Description
Leadership Team – 2021 09 16	Effective September 27, 2021
June 13, 2023	Housekeeping revision to update Owner Division/Contact.