

POLICY



COVID-19 Vaccination

Approved November 2, 2021
Revised November 5, 2021

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to continue to protect the health and safety of North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority (NBMCA) employees, members of the Board and Board-appointed Committees, 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, volunteers, contractors, Members of the Board, and members of Board-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. The CAO may modify or amend this policy (or application of this policy) provided such modifications conform with the intent of the direction given by the Board Members.

Scope

The policy applies to all North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority employees including full-time, parttime, temporary, casual, and contract. Volunteers and contractors who are entering NBMCA facilities to perform work will also be required to conform with this policy. It will also include members of Board. New employees and members of the Board will also be subject to this policy as a condition of their employment with and/or appointment to the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority. Board-appointed Committee members will be required to provide proof of vaccination when entering NBMCA facilities but are exempt from provisions of this policy while meeting virtually.

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, including the Ontario Enhanced Vaccination Certificate and QR code,

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-%20vaccine-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 covered by the scope of this policy are required to:
 - Disclose their COVID-19 vaccination status to the CAO by submitting a completed Declaration of COVID Vaccination Status Form by November 15, 2021 at 12:00 p.m., and update if required, unless there is a bona fide medical or religious exemption approved by the CAO.
 - If fully vaccinated as of November 15, 2021, provide proof no later than November 30, 2021 to CAO via the Ontario Enhanced Vaccination Certificate QR Code.
 - If not fully vaccinated as of November 15, 2021, provide proof to the CAO as soon as fully vaccinated no later than January 5, 2022 12:00 noon that they have received their 2nd dose of COVID-19 vaccination by December 15, 2021 at 12:00 p.m., which allows for full vaccination status (2 doses plus 14 days) against COVID-19 by December 29, 2021, unless there is a bona fide medical or religious exemption approved by the CAO.
 - If applying for a bona fide exemption, provide by December 15, 2021 the following to the CAO:
 - 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.
- Where a person to whom this policy applies is not fully vaccinated due to a bona fide exemption approved by the CAO, the employee must participate in the accommodation process, and undergo rapid antigen testing every 72 hours to protect other employees and ensure adequate infection and prevention control measures.
- Persons to whom this policy applies 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 or may elect to request vacation leave, overtime (if available), sick time, 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

All persons in an NBMCA workplace covered by the scope of this Policy

- Comply with the Performance Standards in this policy.
- 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.

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 verification of 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 all persons to whom this policy applies have verified their vaccination status with the CAO.
- 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 contractors and volunteers entering NBMCA facilities provide valid proof of vaccination or a negative antigen test result obtained within the last 72 hours under exemption conditions provided for in this policy.

CAO

- In accordance with all application legislation and provision of privacy requirements, verify vaccination status using the Ontario Enhanced Vaccination Certificate QR Code and note same in a record to be secured in accordance with all applicable legislation and provision of privacy requirements.
- Lead the accommodation process for any employee who submits a request for bona fide exemption and evaluate it on a case-by-case basis.
- Receive and record antigen testing results of persons to whom this policy applies.
- 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. (Offers to returning contract employees are not considered new offers of employment.)

Related Procedures Remain Applicable

Administrative Office Procedures (North Bay) During COVID-19
Administrative Office Procedures (Parry Sound) During COVID-19
Lands Management – Field Operations Staff Procedures During COVID-19
Planning & Development – Inspections on Private Property During COVID-19
Watershed Management – Monitoring Program During COVID-19

Related Forms

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

Related Information on COVID-19 Vaccinations and Precautions

- North Bay-Parry Sound District Health Unit
<https://www.myhealthunit.ca/en/health-topics/coronavirus.asp>
- Government of Ontario
<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/index.html>
- Government of Canada
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>
- Ontario Human Rights Commission – Policy Statement on Mandatory Vaccinations
http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/ohrc-policy-statement-covid-19-vaccine-mandates-and-proof-vaccine-certificates