

CORPORATE POLICY



Policy Title: **Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy**
Policy Category: **Human Resources**
Policy No.: H-009
Department: Corporate Services
Approval Date: September 13, 2021
Revision Date: N/A
Author: Human Resources
Attachments: N/A
Related Documents/Legislation:
COVID-19 Vaccination Program
COVID-19 Vaccination Program – Ministry of Health Directive #6
Occupational Health and Safety Act
Ontario Human Rights Code
Key Word(s): vaccination

POLICY STATEMENT:

The City of Waterloo is committed to providing the safest possible environment for its employees, students, Council, contractors and volunteers, by taking every precaution, reasonable in the circumstances, for the protection of the health and safety of workers from the hazard of COVID-19. Vaccination is a key element in the protection of individuals against the hazard of COVID-19. This mandatory policy is designed to maximize COVID-19 vaccination rates among City employees, students, Council and volunteers as one of the critical control measures for the hazard of COVID-19.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Waterloo recognizes the importance of COVID-19 immunization to mitigate exposure and transmission within the community. This policy aims to protect the City of Waterloo's internal community including employees, students, Council, contractors, and volunteers.

COVID-19 is an acute respiratory illness caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). It may be characterized by fever, cough, shortness of breath, and several other symptoms. Asymptomatic infection is also possible. The risk of severe disease increases with age but is not limited to the elderly nor those with underlying medical conditions. In addition, the variants are highly transmissible and causing rising case rates in Ontario.

Mandatory Policy, *Municipal Act*: No
Policy Administration Team, Review Date September 10, 2021
Corporate Management Team, Review Date September 10, 2021

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to define the expectations for COVID-19 protection and immunization for all employees, students, Council, contractors and volunteers. This policy is implemented through the COVID-19 Vaccination Program.

Contingent upon vaccine availability, all eligible staff, students, Council, contractors and volunteers are strongly encouraged to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, unless it is medically contraindicated or exempt under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

DEFINITIONS:

Fully Vaccinated is an individual who has received all required doses of COVID-19 vaccine series approved by the World Health Organization 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.

Partially Vaccinated is an individual who has received one dose of COVID-19 vaccine series approved by the World Health Organization, or less than 14 days have elapsed since their final dose.

Unvaccinated is an individual who has not received any doses of the COVID-19 vaccine series as approved by the World Health Organization, or those who have not provided proof of vaccine.

Contractors is any person(s) or firm(s) that provides goods or services to the City under terms specified in a contract or other agreement and is not paid through the City's payroll. Within the scope of this policy, this definition only includes contractors who are working within indoor City facilities for continuous and sustained work of more than one day. Exemptions may be given for emergency work.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all City of Waterloo employees, students, Council, contractors and volunteers, regardless of work location except those covered by the *COVID-19: Vaccination Program – Ministry of Health Directive #6*.

For the purpose of this policy only, reference to "employees" shall also be read to include volunteers and students.

Employees in certain divisions may have obligations in addition to this policy under division-specific policies regarding COVID-19 vaccination or under regulations, legislation or guidelines applicable to them.

New City of Waterloo employees are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as a condition of hire.

POLICY COMMUNICATION:

This policy will be made available through the City's website and for staff through the City's intranet.

POLICY:**1.0 CONTINUED COMPLIANCE WITH ALL HEALTH AND SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

Unless a legislated or regulatory exemption applies, all City employees are expected and required to continue to comply with applicable health and safety measures to reduce the hazard of COVID-19, including but not limited to compliance with established workplace access controls (e.g. active screening), wearing a mask or face covering, using provided personal protective equipment (PPE), maintaining appropriate physical distancing and self-monitoring for potential COVID-19 symptoms when at work or otherwise engaged in City business.

Employees who remain unvaccinated, may be required to take additional infection and prevention control measures, including providing proof of a negative COVID-19 test, as well as self-isolate if exposed to COVID-19.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

All levels of management, including supervisors, are responsible for the administration of this Policy.

Management is expected to:

- lead by example following policy guidelines.

Health, Safety and Wellness is expected to:

- ensure employees complete the initial vaccination data collection;
- ensure employees complete any required education or training about COVID-19, including regarding vaccinations; and,
- ensure employees are completing the rapid antigen testing according to the policy and program.

Employees are expected to:

- follow all health and safety policies and protocols;
- follow policy guidelines;
- complete any required education or training about COVID-19, including regarding vaccinations and safety protocols.

Contractors are expected to:

- sign an attestation that they have implemented a mandatory vaccination policy that is equivalent to or more stringent than the City of Waterloo Mandatory

Vaccination policy and that this attestation be signed by the project manager, superintendent or designate; OR,

- sign an attestation that they will strictly adhere to the requirements of the City of Waterloo's Mandatory Vaccination policy.

3.0 POLICY

To facilitate this policy all employees will be required to provide one of the following:

1. Proof of COVID-19 vaccine administration as per the following requirements:
 - a. If the individual has only received the first dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccination series approved by the World Health Organization proof that the first dose was administered and, as soon as reasonably possible, proof of administration of the second dose; or
 - b. Proof of all required doses of a COVID-19 vaccine approved by the World Health Organization.
2. Written proof of a medical reason, provided by either a physician, nurse practitioner or health professional that sets out:
 - a. why 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).
3. Written proof of an exemption based on one of the prohibited grounds defined under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.
4. Proof that the individual has completed an educational program approved by the City of Waterloo.

Employees who elect not to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination per 1 above, and rely on 2, 3 or 4, are required to perform asymptomatic rapid antigen testing. Testing shall be at a frequency of not less than once a week, and provide verification of negative test results as specified by the City of Waterloo. This testing will be performed outside of work hours and may be at the expense of the employee. Employees with an approved medical exemption are not required to complete the educational program.

Employees will be required to update their vaccination status in accordance with the established process and by the dates set out in this policy, as they obtain each dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

4.0 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The educational program has been approved by an approved vendor and/or provided by the City of Waterloo and addresses all of the following learning components:

- how COVID-19 vaccines work;
- vaccine safety related to the development of the COVID-19 vaccines;

- benefits of vaccination against COVID-19;
- risks of not being vaccinated against COVID-19; and
- possible side effects of COVID-19 vaccination.

5.0 CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY

In cases of policy violation, the City may investigate and determine appropriate corrective action.

In accordance with City of Waterloo's Human Resources policies, collective agreements and applicable legislation, directives, and policies, any non-compliance with this mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policy will result in a meeting with the employee, including their Union representative if applicable. Non-compliance is subject to possible discipline.

Examples of non-compliance include not declaring vaccine status, not participating in the education program, not adhering to the testing requirements, etc.

6.0 DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD KEEPING

The City is committed to limiting the collection, use and disclosure of personal information to the minimum required to administer the COVID 19 Vaccination Program. Personal information within the vaccination program will be collected under the legal authority of Section 25(2)(h) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and is subject to the provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), 2004.

The City will take every reasonable precaution to safeguard the personal information collected through the COVID 19 Vaccination Program, and securely destroy it, in accordance with the City's Records retention By-Law.

See Also:

- COVID-19 Vaccination Program
- Human Rights Accommodation Request Procedure
- Respectful Workplace Policy and Program
- Relevant Health and Safety Policies. Procedures

For Further Information, Please Contact:

- **Director, Human Resources**