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| Section: | Infection Prevention and Control/ Occupational Health and Safety |
| Subject: | COVID-19 Vaccination Policy |
| Issue to:  | All Staff | Pages:  |
| Issued by:  | [Director or Executive at your site.]  | Developed: August 2021  |

1. **PURPOSE**

[Organization name] is committed to the health and safety of its clients, employees, and visitors. [Organization name] employees (including any other workers as defined by the Occupational Health & Safety Act), will adhere to policies, precautions and best practices while working at [Organization name]

The purpose of this policy is to implement health and safety measures that reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 to participants and staff at [Organization name] programs and offices and to outline organizational expectations with regards to COVID-19 immunization of staff, student placements, and volunteers.

This policy will provide [Organization name] employees with guidance and education around receiving one of the approved COVID-19 vaccines. Vaccination against COVID-19 helps reduce the number of new cases and most importantly, severe outcomes including hospitalizations and death due to COVID-19 in both residents and others who may be present in a congregate care setting.

[Organization name] reserves the right to amend this policy at any time. Amendments to the policy may be required due to changes in risk assessment, public health, government or program funder guidance/directions and applicable laws.

1. **DEFINITIONS**

**Fully vaccinated:** A person is fully immunized against COVID-19 if: they have received the total required number of doses of a COVID-19 vaccine approved by Health Canada (e.g., both doses of a two-dose vaccine series, or one dose of a single-dose vaccine series); and, they received their final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago.

1. **POLICY**

As an infection prevention and control measure to protect the safety of participants and staff from potential exposure to COVID-19 in [Organization name] programs and offices:

1. Frontline essential services onsite staff, student placements and volunteers are strongly encouraged to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine in a [Organization name] essential services program, unless contraindicated for medical reasons.
2. All other [Organization name] staff, student placements and volunteers are also strongly encouraged to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine, unless contraindicated for medical reasons.
3. Participants are strongly encouraged to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine unless contraindicated for medical reasons.

At a minimum all persons to whom the policy applies to select to provide **one** of the following:

1. Proof of COVID-19 vaccine administration as per the following requirements:
	1. If the individual has only received the first dose of a two-dose COVID-
	19 vaccination series approved by Health Canada, proof that the first dose was administered and, as soon as reasonably possible, proof of administration of the second dose

**OR**

* 1. If the individual has received the total required number of doses of a COVID- 19 vaccine approved by Health Canada, proof of all required doses
1. Written proof of a medical reason (see **Section 6.0** for list of vaccine contraindications), provided by either a physician or registered nurse in the extended class at the expense of the staff, that sets out:
	1. That the person cannot be vaccinated against COVID-19 **and**
	2. The effective time period for the medical reason
2. Proof that the individual has completed an educational program approved by [Organization name] and addresses the following components:
	1. How COVID-19 vaccines work;
	2. Vaccine safety related to the development of the COVID-19 vaccines;
	3. Benefits of vaccination against COVID-19;
	4. Risks of not being vaccinated against COVID-19; **and**
	5. Possible side effects of COVID-19 vaccination.
3. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION SURROUNDING POLICY**

**Procedures for Providing Proof of Vaccination**

For employees that fall under option A. above, eligible proof of vaccination includes:

* The vaccination receipt slip you received post-vaccination (copy of receipt or email of receipt).
* You can also print your vaccination confirmation receipt from the following website: https://covid-19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/ (enter your personal information then choose the option to print your vaccination receipt).

Eligible proof of vaccination must be provided to the [department/individuals responsible for information gathering]. They will advise Program Managers/Directors if additional controls/ measures are required for individual staff/students/volunteers if/when necessary.

For individuals who have received the first dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccination series and have provided proof [Organization name] shall consider the person to have met the requirements of the policy until such time as they are eligible for a second dose. At that time, [Organization name] shall collect proof of the individual’s second dose, or proof of a medical reason for not receiving, or proof that the individual has completed the approved educational program.

If Option B. is selected and the effective time period of a medical reason has expired, the individual will provide proof of vaccination within 30 days of the medical reason expiring, or proof of completion of the approved education program.

**Other Infection Prevention and Control Measures**

In accordance with public health advice, staff that obtain the vaccine are required to continue to follow site-specific infection prevention and control measures including screening, physical distancing, wearing the appropriate PPE and hand hygiene.

**Non-compliance with the policy**

Failure to comply with the policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis, which may include performance review and/or disciplinary action until satisfactory remediation is determined or the conditions of the policy are met.

All individuals are expected to comply with the policy, for those not in compliance with the policy they will be subject to a performance review which may include disciplinary action.

**Vaccine Support for Staff**

[Organization name] will participate in vaccine clinics for staff and participants as they are available. [Organization name] will work towards providing access to the vaccine to all staff and participants.

Time spent travelling to and from and while obtaining the vaccine will be considered work time.

[Organization name] will distribute credible information related to the vaccine to staff and participants and will arrange for informational sessions related to the vaccine.

1. **TESTING REQUIREMENTS**

**In the situation where** an employee, staff, contractor volunteer, or student does not provide proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 in accordance with **Section 3 Option A.** but instead relies upon the medical reason described at **Section 3 Option B**. or the educational session at **Section 3 Option C,** the employee, staff, contractor volunteer or student shall either:

* 1. Submit to regular antigen point of care testing for COVID-19 and demonstrate a negative result, at intervals to be determined by the [organization name], which must be at minimum once every seven days.

**OR**

* 1. Provide verification of the negative test result in a manner determined by the [organization name] that enables the [organization name] to confirm the result at its discretion.
1. **COVID-19 VACCINE CONTRAINDICATIONS**

**List of Vaccine Contraindications**

**Anaphylaxis and Allergies to a COVID-19 vaccine**

An authorized COVID-19 vaccine should not be offered routinely to individuals with a history of severe allergic reaction (e.g., anaphylaxis) after previous administration of a COVID-19 vaccine using a similar platform (mRNA or viral vector). If a risk assessment deems that the benefits outweigh the potential risks for the individual; and if informed consent is provided, an authorized COVID-19 vaccine using a different platform may be considered for re-immunization (i.e., individuals with anaphylaxis post mRNA vaccine may be offered a viral vector vaccine and individuals with anaphylaxis post viral vector vaccine may be offered a mRNA vaccine). If immunization with a different platform is offered, individuals should be observed for at least 30 minutes after immunization.

An authorized COVID-19 vaccine should not be routinely offered to individuals who are allergic to any component of the specific COVID-19 vaccine or its container. For a comprehensive list of components in each authorized COVID-19 vaccine and its container, please consult the corresponding product leaflet or information contained within the product monograph available through Health Canada's Drug Product Database.

**Thrombosis and Thrombocytopenia following vaccination**

Patients who have experienced venous or arterial thrombosis with thrombocytopenia following vaccination with a viral vector COVID-19 vaccine should not receive a second dose of a viral vector COVID-19 vaccine.

**Capillary leak syndrome**

As a precautionary measure following the international cases that have been reported, individuals with a history of capillary leak syndrome should not receive the AstraZeneca /COVISHIELD COVID-19 vaccine.

**7.0 REFERENCES and RELATED STATEMENTS of POLICY and PROCEDURE**

In accordance with Accreditation standard(s):

Ministry of Health. (2021). Minister’s Directive #6: Vaccination Policy in Health Settings.https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/directives/vaccination\_policy\_in\_health\_settings.pdf

Ministry of Long-Term Care. (2021). Minister’s Directive: Long-term care home COVID-19 immunization policy. https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministers-directive-long-term-care- home-covid-19-immunization-policy?\_ga=2.225921369.250447272.1622753438- 2117500728.1614987392

Public Health Agency of Canada (2021). An Advisory Committee Statement (ACS) National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI). Recommendations on the use of COVID- 19 Vaccines. Available from: https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac- aspc/documents/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization- naci/recommendations-use-covid-19-vaccines/recommendations-use-covid-19-vaccines- en.pdf

Sunnybrook COVID-19 Vaccine Education Resource: https://360.articulate.com/review/content/e77b56e0-45ed-42d0-9d9f-1b51eb8277ed/review