

<b>Policy</b>	O-9	<b>Review Cycle</b>	
<b>Section</b>	Health and Safety	<b>Date Approved</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Vaccination Policy	<b>Next Review</b>	

## Mandatory Workplace Vaccination Verification Policy

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### POLICY PURPOSE

March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic. The first case in the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit region was reported March 26, 2020. As the pandemic evolves, variants of the virus have circulated globally as well as locally in Ontario and in the Nipissing and Parry Sound districts. Some variants, for example, the delta variant, have proven to be more easily transmissible and/or cause more severe illness than the original strain.

They have required more robust public health measures, including high vaccination rates. COVID-19 vaccines, in combination with public health measures, are effective in reducing disease spread and severe outcomes. Data has shown that only a small proportion of fully vaccinated people have become infected with COVID-19, compared to unvaccinated individuals.

The North Bay Public Library (the Library) has an obligation under provincial legislation to take all necessary precautions to protect the health and safety of its workforce and is committed to providing excellent service to our community and to building trust and confidence.

To help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, this Mandatory Workplace COVID-19 Vaccine Verification Policy is an important measure that complements other workplace health and safety measures in place in accordance with any applicable governing legislation.

Our policy is in line with the North Bay Parry Sound District Health District Unit guidance and supports the direction that vaccines provide a high level of protection against COVID-19 and related variants. Receiving two doses of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series or one dose of a one-dose COVID-19 vaccine series in accordance with current public health and/or provincial requirements as prescribed is the best defense against the virus.

The Library is demonstrating its commitment to promoting vaccinations to ensure the health and safety of all members of its workforce and the broader City of North Bay community.

### SUMMARY

The purpose of this policy is to outline the Library's requirement with regard to COVID-19 vaccination and provide direction to employees on the requirement to receive the COVID-19 vaccination, provide proof of vaccination or a bona fide medical exemption and conditions for attending work without vaccination.

### POLICY DETAILS

This policy applies to all employees of the Library, including full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary, casual, volunteers, students, and any other persons deemed reasonable in the circumstances. New employees will be subject to this policy as a condition of their employment

contract with the Library. It requires employees to be fully vaccinated from the COVID-19 virus, unless otherwise provided for in this policy, and complete any subsequent required doses and requires employees to provide acceptable proof of vaccination.

Vaccination requirements are subject to bona fide medical exceptions. As well, medical exemptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and would be subject to the Library's accommodation process.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission's official policy statement of September 22, 2021, says "Receiving a COVID-19 vaccine is voluntary. At the same time, the OHRC's position is that a person who chooses not to be vaccinated based on personal preference does not have the right to accommodation under the Code. The OHRC is not aware of any tribunal or court decision that found a singular belief against vaccination or masks amounted to a a creed within the meaning of the Code.

"While the Code prohibits discrimination based on creed, person preferences or singular beliefs do not amount to a creed for the purposes of the Code. Even if a person could show they were denied a service or employment because of a creed-based belief against vaccinations, the duty to accommodate does not necessarily require they be exempted from vaccine mandates, certification or COVID testing requirements. The duty to accommodate can be limited if it would significantly compromise health and safety amounting to undue hardship—such as during a pandemic."

The following applies to this Policy:

## **1. Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccinations**

- All Library employees are required to receive all required doses for a one-dose or two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series and any subsequent required boosters, except where it is medically contraindicated, to access the Library for the purpose of conducting work.
- Unvaccinated employees will only be allowed into the Library for the purposes of working if they have a documented medical exemption and they submit to regular antigen testing for COVID-19 and demonstrate a negative result, at intervals to be determined by the employer.

## **2. Providing Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination Status**

- Employees are required to provide proof of their vaccination series authorized or approved by Health Canada or the World Health Organization.

*Proof of COVID-19 vaccine administration as per the following requirements:*

- If the individual has only received the first dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccination series authorized or 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
- Proof of all required doses of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized or approved by Health Canada.
- Without proof of vaccination or a substantiated exemption by the predetermined due date,

employees will not be permitted to enter the Library for the purpose of conducting work.

### **3. Library Clients Require Proof of Vaccination**

- Beginning November 1, 2021, all visitors to the Library will have to show proof of identification and proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 before they can enter the Library. Screening will take place at the Library entrance.
- Validation of identification must show the name of the identification holder and date of birth as well as verify that the date of administration of the final shot is at least 14 days prior to the client being permitted to enter the Library.
- All other public health measures, including face covering requirements and physical distancing, continue to apply.
- The requirements outlined in this section also apply to contractors, suppliers, and others who may on occasion enter the Library.

### **4. Providing Proof of Exemption**

- The Library will comply with its human rights obligations and accommodate employees who are legally entitled to accommodation.
- Exemptions will be made for grounds protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code which includes confirmed medical reasons.
- Employees are required to provide written proof of a medical exemption, provided by either a physician, nurse practitioner in the extended class, or physician specialist as deemed reasonable that sets out:
  - a) The nature of the medical condition 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).
- The Library will work with those who receive an exemption to ensure they are connected with the appropriate resources to develop a reasonable and appropriate accommodation plan and that the Library can put in place appropriate alternative health and safety measures.

### **5. Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Education**

- In order to ensure that all employees subject to this policy are adequately educated about COVID-19 and the COVID-19 vaccines, unvaccinated employees, except where it is medically contraindicated, and those who do not disclose their vaccination status are to complete a mandatory COVID-19 vaccination education program that has been approved by the Library on the risks of being unvaccinated in the workplace. Employees are required to submit proof that they have completed the education program. Management reserves the right to assign employees where required to complete the mandatory COVID-19

vaccination education program.

- Upon completion of the COVID-19 vaccination education program, employees are required to declare in writing their intention on becoming vaccinated and if applicable, the date of their scheduled COVID-19 vaccination appointment.

## **5. Vaccination status Reporting and Documentation**

- Vaccination status information will be collected and protected in accordance with privacy legislation.

## **6. COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Testing**

- Employees with a documented medical exemption who wish to access the Library will be required to submit to ongoing testing and provide proof of negative COVID-19 tests.

## **7. Non-compliance with the Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Verification Policy**

- In accordance with Library Human Resources policies, collective agreement and applicable legislation, directives, and policies, any non-compliance with the Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Verification Policy will result in a meeting with the employee, including their union representative if applicable. Non-compliance is subject to possible discipline, up to and including termination.

## **8. Access to COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics**

- Reasonable arrangements will be made to allow for staff to attend COVID-19 vaccination appointments/clinics during work time.
- Employees must have approval from their manager in advance before attending an appointment/clinic during work time.
- All efforts should be made to allow the employee to use time at the beginning or end of their shift day or to extend lunch and break times as operationally feasible with work schedules to attend vaccination clinics.
- Where employees are unable to attend a vaccination appointment/clinic during their regularly scheduled work hours, the Library will, on a case-by-case basis, compensate staff for a period of 30 minutes outside of work time to receive a vaccination subject to any limitations under a collective agreement or policy.

## **9. Continued Adherence to Public Health Measures**

- All employees are required to practice Public Health measures to control the spread of COVID-19 regardless of their vaccination status.
- Employees must adhere to the Library's health and safety protocols at all times while in the workplace, including but not limited to handwashing, physical distancing where possible, and the use of Personal Protective Equipment as required by their position.

## **COMPLIANCE**

- In accordance with Library Human Resources policies, collective agreements and

applicable legislation, directives, and policies, any non-compliance with the Mandatory Workplace COVID-19 Vaccination Verification Policy will result in a meeting with the person, along with a union representative if applicable. Non-compliance is subject to possible discipline, up to and including termination.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

The following related documents were referenced in this policy:

1. *Hamilton Public Library Mandatory Workplace Vaccination Verification Policy*
2. *Toronto Public Library Mandatory Vaccination Policy*
3. *North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit COVID-19 Vaccination Policy Toolkit*
4. *Ontario Human Rights Commission Policy Statement on COVID-19 Vaccine Mandates and Proof of Vaccine Certificates*
5. *Ontario Ministry of Health Questions and Answers under the Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act*

## DEFINITIONS

### COVID-19

A virus belonging to a large family called coronavirus which includes the virus that causes the common cold and more severe disease such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-COV). The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus, named SARS-CoV-2.

### Vaccine

For the purposes of this Policy, a Vaccine is defined as a substance used to stimulate the production of antibodies and provide immunity against SARS-CoV-2.

### Fully Vaccinated

Having received the full series of a COVID-19 vaccine or combination of COVID-19 vaccines authorized or approved by the World Health Organization (e.g., two doses of a two-dose vaccine series, or one dose of a single-dose vaccine series); having received the final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago; and any subsequent required boosters.

### Partially Vaccinated

Having received the one dose of a two-dose series of a COVID-19 vaccine or combination of COVID-19 vaccines authorized or approved by the World Health Organization; having received the final dose of a single-dose or two-dose series of the COVID-19 vaccine less than 14 days ago; and/or failure to receive subsequent required boosters.

### Unvaccinated

Has not received any doses of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized or approved by the World Health Organization.

### Proof of Vaccination

Documentation issued by the Ontario Ministry of Health, other provinces or territory or international equivalent indicating individual immunization status against the COVID-19 virus.

### Proof of Medical Exemption

Written proof of a medical reason provided by a physician, nurse practitioner in the extended class, or physician specialist as deemed necessary that sets out: (i) the nature of the medical condition that the

person cannot be vaccinated against COVID-19, and (ii) the effective time-period for the medical reason.

#### Educational Program

An educational program that has been approved by and/or provided by the Library and addresses 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
- Possible side effects of COVID-19 vaccination