



# Committee Report

<b>To:</b>	Warden Hicks and Members of Grey County Council
<b>Committee Date:</b>	September 9, 2021
<b>Subject / Report No:</b>	HRR-CW-07-21
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Corporate COVID-19 Immunization Policy</b>
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Jennifer Moreau, Director Human Resources
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	
<b>Lower Tier(s) Affected:</b>	
<b>Status:</b>	

## Recommendation

1. That Report HRR-CW-07-21 regarding the Corporate COVID-19 Immunization Policy, be received for information.

## Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide County Council with organizational expectations regarding COVID-19 immunization of employees, student placements, and volunteers.

## Background and Discussion

The County has a responsibility to its employees and stakeholders to prevent the transmission of the COVID-19 Virus, and strongly encourages that all employees who are able become vaccinated against COVID-19 as a measure to protect their health, the health of colleagues and the health of the community.

On August 24, 2021, the Ontario government filed a regulation (O. Reg. 577/21) amending the Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step with respect to the establishment and implementation of vaccination policies by businesses or organizations.

Specifically, O. Reg. 577/21 requires businesses or organizations to operate in compliance with “any advice, recommendations and instructions” issued by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, or by a medical officer of health after consultation with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health:

- (a) requiring the business or organization to establish, implement and ensure compliance with a COVID-19 vaccination policy, or

- (b) setting out the precautions and procedures that the business or organization must include in its COVID-19 vaccination policy.

This requirement came into force on August 24, 2021 and applies to both Step 3 and the Roadmap Exit Step. All of Ontario is currently in Step 3.

To ensure a safe working for all staff we have implemented a mandatory COVID Vaccination policy which meets the legislated direction of the Province of Ontario and meets our obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, to take every reasonable precaution in the circumstances for the protection of workers.

Our COVID-19 Immunization Policy requires all employees to provide proof of vaccination, a medical exemption if applicable, or if unvaccinated, must complete a mandatory education session and screen for COVID-19 at regular intervals using a Rapid Antigen Test.

## Legal and Legislated Requirements

- [Minister's Directive: Long Term Care Home COVID-19 Immunization Policy](#)
- [Minister's Directive: Vaccination Policy In Health Settings](#)
- [Rules of Reopening Requires a Vaccination Policy O. Reg.577/21](#)

## Financial and Resource Implications

The COVID-19 vaccination is provided through the Public Health Unit and the Province provides Rapid Antigen Testing kits for essential workers. Tracking of immunization status will be completed by the Human Resources department. Mandatory education courses will be assigned utilizing our Learning Management Systems (LMS).

## Relevant Consultation

Internal

Kim Wingrove, CAO

## Appendices and Attachments

**Attachment:** Corporate COVID-19 Immunization Policy

## Corporate COVID-19 Immunization Policy

**Approved by:** CAO

**By-law:** N/A

**Replaces:** N/A

**Section:** Health & Safety

**Policy:** 2-30

**Date Approved:** April 19, 2021

**Last Revision Date:** August 27 2021

**Scheduled for Review by:** November 2021

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## Policy Statement

The County of Grey has a responsibility to its employees and stakeholders to prevent the transmission of the COVID-19 Virus. Meeting all aspects of this policy is a condition of employment or serving as a volunteer/intern. Employees refusing to comply with this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment. The COVID-19 virus presents is an ever changing environment and this Policy will be updated as often as required to continue to ensure a safe environment for our employees, clients, and community.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline organizational expectations with regards to COVID-19 immunization of employees, student placements, and volunteers. Contingent upon vaccine availability, all eligible employees, student placements, and volunteers are required to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, unless it is medically contraindicated, and/or complete the education program and undergo regular testing.

## Employee Scope

This procedure applies to all employees of the County of Grey, including full-time, part-time, casual, contracted personnel, volunteers, and students. It applies to the initial dose of a vaccine and the administration of any subsequent doses. This policy excludes Long-Term Care Employees who shall follow Long Term Care Policy IX-D-20.20 COVID-19 Immunization Policy.

Any employees required to be vaccinated through legislation or mandate from the Federal or Provincial government will follow directives under their respective mandate.

### 1.0 Definitions

- 1.1 'COVID-19' refers to a disease caused by a virus belonging to a large family called coronavirus, which includes the virus that causes the common cold and more severe respiratory diseases. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus, named SARS-CoV-2.

- 1.2 'Vaccine' is a substance used to stimulate the production of antibodies and provide immunity against specific diseases.
- 1.3 'Proof of Vaccination' is documentation issued by the Ministry of Health, other province or territory or international equivalent indicating individual immunization status against the COVID-19 virus.
- 1.4 'Fully Vaccinated' means having the full series of a COVID-19 vaccine or a combination of COVID-19 vaccines approved by the World Health Organization (WHO) (e.g., two doses of a two-dose vaccine series or one dose of a single-dose vaccine series); and having received the final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago.
- 1.5 'Unvaccinated' means having not had a COVID-19 vaccine or having only a partial vaccine series.
- 2.0 Responsibilities
- 2.1 **Managers & Supervisors**
- a) Ensure that employees are aware of the importance of getting vaccinated against COVID-19.
  - b) Provide employees with access to information on COVID-19, health, and safety precautions, and on the efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine.
  - c) Provide employees with information on location and scheduling of vaccination clinics when available.
  - d) Where feasible, support time from regular duties for employees to attend vaccination clinics in accordance with relevant collective agreement language and/or Corporate Policy.
  - e) Follow and comply with any federal or provincial mandates or directives regarding the vaccination of employees.
  - f) Continue to enforce workplace precautions that limit the spread of COVID-19 virus.
  - g) Communicate and educate employees on the contents of this policy.
  - h) Support unvaccinated employees in obtaining the necessary education required in this policy.
  - i) Participate in any disciplinary action required for non-compliance with this policy.
- 2.2 **Human Resources**
- a) Assist management with any labour relations and health and safety issues arising from application of this policy including liaising directly with Union leadership.
  - b) Receive immunization records and track all employees' vaccination status.
  - c) Ensure that all employees have provided either proof of immunization, medical exemption or have completed a mandatory education session for unvaccinated employees.

- d) Support and participate in discipline meetings as required.
- e) Provide information and guidance to leaders and employees on COVID-19 immunization as requested.
- f) Provide disability management services for employees as required.

### 2.3 **Employees**

- a) Review provided information and remain informed about COVID-19 and COVID-19 immunization as it relates to your role, personal health and/or professional requirements.
- b) Continue to follow health and safety protocols to ensure personal safety and prevent the spread of COVID-19 before and after vaccination.
- c) Adhere to this policy, federal or provincial mandates or directives requiring vaccination.
- d) All current employees shall provide proof of immunization to Human Resources by September 7, 2021. Should an employee's immunization status change, provide the information to Human Resources in a timely manner.
- e) Identify opportunities to obtain COVID-19 vaccination through community clinics or from health care professionals.
- f) If multiple doses of the vaccine are required, ensure subsequent doses are also received.
- g) If unable to receive the vaccination for medical reasons provide proof of medical exemption to Human Resources by October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- h) If unvaccinated by choice complete a mandatory education session within the timelines assigned.
- i) Unvaccinated employees shall complete rapid antigen testing at regular intervals to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- j) All new hires of Grey County shall provide proof of immunization prior to beginning employment with the County. Unvaccinated new hires will be provided this policy and will provide proof of medical exemption or will complete a mandatory education session within thirty (30) days of hire. Failure to complete the education session within 30 days will result in immediate termination of probationary employment.

### 3.0 **Employee Immunization**

- 3.1 The County strongly encourages that all employees who are able become vaccinated against COVID-19 as a measure to protect their health and the health of the community.
- 3.2 Employees required to be vaccinated as a result of federal or provincial mandate, directive or legislation must adhere to the requirements outlined within the applicable mandate, directive, or legislation, in addition to the provisions of this policy.

### 4.0 **Access to Vaccination Clinics**

- 4.1 Reasonable arrangements will be made to allow for employees to attend COVID-19 vaccination clinics during work time.
  - 4.2 Employees will ensure awareness and approval from their supervisor in advance before attending a clinic during work time
  - 4.3 Supervisors will ensure continued flexibility in scheduling employees to attend vaccination appointments. 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.
- 5.0 **Continued Diligence**
- 5.1 All employees are reminded to continue to practice Public Health measures to control spread regardless of vaccination status.
  - 5.2 Employees must adhere to the health and safety protocols at all times while in the workplace, including handwashing, physical distancing where possible, and the use of Personal Protective Equipment as required by their position and task.
- 6.0 Records
- 6.1 The Human Resources department will maintain the immunization records of all employees.
  - 6.2 The Health & Safety Manager can be consulted for advice and guidance on developing a process to meet requirements. The Clerk should be consulted as the authority for establishing formal records retention periods and holds responsibility for personal information protection under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

## Resources

- [COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sheet](#)

## Forms

- [COVID Safety Plan](#)