

To:	Warden Selwyn and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	September 23, 2021
Subject / Report No:	Addendum to HRR-CW-07-21
Title:	Revisions to Corporate COVID-19 Immunization Policy
Prepared by:	Jennifer Moreau, Director Human Resources
Reviewed by:	Kim Wingrove, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	
Status:	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW156-21;

Recommendation

1. That Report Addendum to HRR-CW-07-21 regarding Revisions to the Corporate COVID-19 Immunization Policy, be received; and
2. That the Corporate COVID-19 Immunization Policy be endorsed, and staff be directed to implement it ahead of Council approval as per Section 25.6 (b) of the Procedural By-law.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide County Council with an update of recent revisions made to the policy, along with the inclusion of Council members.

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 September 9, 2021 Committee Report HRR-CW-07-21 was reviewed by Council. Council directed staff to include Council Members within the scope of the corporate immunization policy.

The following revisions have been added to the COVID-19 Immunization Policy and are highlighted in the policy for ease of reference:

- The Employee Scope section has been updated to include Council Members

- The Definitions section has been updated to include Unvaccinated also includes undisclosed immunization status.
- Section 2.4 has been added to define Council Members responsibilities.
- A new Section has been added called Privacy and Confidentiality to reflect best practice and ensure employees know how, why and for what purpose their information will be used.
- The Employee Immunization section has been updated to state that the person's vaccination status is private and there shall be no reprisal against another employee based on vaccination status.
- The Resources section has been updated with the newly developed Standard Operating Procedure for Rapid Antigen Testing.

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 thru 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

Michael Letourneau, Director of Legal Services & County Solicitor

Appendices and Attachments

Attachment 1: Revised Corporate COVID-19 Immunization Policy

Attachment 2: Standard Operating Procedure – Rapid Antigen Testing

Attachment 1

Corporate Policy

Corporate COVID-19 Immunization Policy

Approved by: CAO

Policy: **2-30**

By-law: N/A
Replaces: N/A
Section: Health & Safety

Date Approved: August 27, 2021
Last Revision Date: September 23, 2021
Scheduled for Review by: November 2021

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 presence 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, **Council Members**, 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 not having had a COVID-19 vaccine, having only a partial vaccine series, **or not having disclosed immunization status**.

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 12th, 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.

2.4 Council Members

- a) The responsibilities listed in section 2.3 for employees shall apply to Council Members except as follows:
 - i.) Any antigen testing requirements for Council Members will be determined on the basis of how often they must attend meetings or events at County facilities.
 - ii.) Any questions of a Council Member's compliance with this policy shall be determined by the Warden, except in the case of committee meetings, in which case it shall be determined by the chair of the committee.

3.0 Privacy and Confidentiality

- 3.1 This information is collected under the legal authority of Section 229 (a) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. c. 25 and Section 25(2)(h) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.
- 3.2 The information, including employee name, COVID-19 vaccination status and contact information, will be used for the purpose of establishing, implementing and administering as required pandemic-related workplace precautions including, but not limited to, building occupancy levels, workplace assignments, staff educational requirements, use of personal protective equipment, and staff vaccination requirements and programs, to protect the health, safety and well-being of County employees; and for any further proceedings, negotiations, meetings, consultation, discussions or communications about the above listed labour relations/employment-related matters. These matters may include confirming an individual's COVID-19 vaccination status.

Questions about this collection can be directed to the Director Human Resources.

- 3.3 The County is committed to taking every precaution reasonable – in meeting our obligations as an employer under the Occupational Health and Safety Act – to protect our employees from workplace hazards, including COVID-19. We recognize that protecting the security and confidentiality of this information is of extreme importance. Only those staff required to review this information for the purposes of determining policy compliance will have access to it.

4.0 Employee Immunization

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 Other than the County representatives tasked with implementing this policy, employees should not ask or require one another to disclose their vaccination status or their reasons for not being fully vaccinated, nor should they engage in any reprisal against one another.

5.0 Access to Vaccination Clinics

- 5.1 Reasonable arrangements will be made to allow for employees to attend COVID-19 vaccination clinics during work time.
- 5.2 Employees will ensure awareness and approval from their supervisor in advance before attending a clinic during work time.
- 5.3 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.

6.0 Continued Diligence

- 6.1 All employees are reminded to continue to practice Public Health measures to control spread regardless of vaccination status.
- 6.2 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.

7.0 Records

- 7.1 The Human Resources department will maintain the immunization records of all employees.
- 7.2 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](#)
- [Standard Operating Procedure - Rapid Antigen Testing](#)

Forms

- [COVID Safety Plan](#)

Standard Operating Procedure – Rapid Antigen Testing

Mandatory screening and/or surveillance testing for COVID-19 will be completed at regular prescribed intervals for all unvaccinated employees. This screening process assists with the implementation of further infection control measures to reduce transmission and spread of COVID-19.

Definitions

Rapid Antigen Test means a point-of-care rapid antigen test for the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19 with results in fifteen (15) minutes.

Asymptomatic means an employee has no COVID-19 symptoms.

Employee for the purpose of this procedure includes Grey County staff, volunteers, interns, co-op students and Council members.

PCR Test means a validated real-time polymerase chain reaction (PCR) assay laboratory test for the novel coronavirus causing the disease known as COVID-19.

Symptomatic All individuals with at least one symptom of COVID-19, even for mild symptoms. Rapid Antigen testing is not appropriate for symptomatic employees.

Unvaccinated means an employee who has not been partially or fully immunized or has received a full course of vaccination however it has been less than 14 days since the final COVID-19 vaccine.

Scope

This procedure applies to all unvaccinated employees including those who have medical exemptions except for Long-Term Care team members who shall follow Team Member Surveillance Testing – COVID-19 (ON) Policy # IX-N.10.42. Paramedic employees may have alternative testing requirements as per Ministry of Health directives.

Rapid Antigen Testing Requirements

Rapid Antigen Testing is required for all employees who have not provided proof of vaccination.

Screening for asymptomatic undisclosed/unvaccinated employees is required at prescribed intervals in non-outbreak conditions:

- The Medical Officer of Health for the Grey Bruce Health Unit has recommended twice weekly rapid antigen testing in non-outbreak conditions for employees who regularly attend County facilities. This frequency may increase in outbreak conditions and/or as recommended by the Chief Medical Officer of Health of Grey Bruce.

- For casual or employees who work onsite less than two times per week, rapid antigen screening is required prior to the start of each scheduled working shift or upon entry to a County facility.
- Employees are required to disclose the results of the Rapid Antigen Testing as required using the County's Covid 19 Screening portal.

An individual who has previously had laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 AND is within 180 days of the test being taken does not require testing. If greater than 180 days since test taken, COVID-19 PCR testing/Rapid Antigen Testing will resume for individuals who have been previously COVID-19 positive. Please contact the County's Disability Manager if you have had laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 within the last six months for further support and direction.

Procedure

1. Employees will participate in a training session to ensure competency in utilizing a Rapid Antigen Testing Kit. Training sessions will be scheduled by the Human Resources Department.
2. Once training has been completed employees will be provided with a Rapid Antigen Testing Kit to perform self-administered testing in their homes/offsite.
3. Screening will be completed at the intervals recommended and the employee will complete a confidential online rapid antigen testing verification following the test completion.
4. Rapid Antigen Testing is only appropriate for Asymptomatic Employees. If employees have COVID-19 symptom(s), do not use the Rapid Antigen Testing Kit, immediately notify their supervisor that they cannot attend work and arrange for a COVID-19 PCR test at the closest COVID-19 Assessment Center at the earliest appointment available.
5. Employees who receive a negative test may attend work as scheduled.
6. Employees who receive a positive test shall immediately notify their supervisor that they are unable to attend work and arrange for a COVID-19 PCR test at the closest COVID-19 Assessment Center at the earliest appointment available.
7. Following the results of the PCR test if the test is negative the employee may return to work if symptom free for 24 hours (48 hours for gastrointestinal illness) and shall resume regular interval rapid antigen testing. If the PCR test is positive the employee shall follow the advice and direction of the Public Health Unit regarding isolation and subsequent approval by the Public Health Unit to return to work.
8. Employees may also attend a Rapid Antigen private testing facility such as a pharmacy or LifeLabs. All costs associated with attending a private testing facility are the responsibility of the employee.

9. Payment for lost time shall be as per the respective Collective Agreement for unionized staff and as per the Sick Days Policy 1-23 for Non-Union staff.

Quick Reference Guide – Rapid Antigen Testing Kits

