

Vaccination Policy

Sub-Topic: Vaccination

Topic: COVID-19

Applies to: All Employees, Students & Volunteers

Policy Statement and Purpose

The health and safety of Town employees is a priority. The Town of Newmarket is committed to 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 Town employees against the hazard of COVID-19. This Policy is designed to maximize COVID-19 vaccination rates among Town employees as one of the critical control measures for the hazard of COVID-19. To this end Town employees, students and volunteers are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Background

Full vaccination has been shown to be effective in reducing COVID-19 virus transmission and protecting vaccinated individuals from severe consequences of COVID-19 and COVID-19 variants including the Delta variant currently circulating in Ontario.

Given the continuing spread of COVID-19, including the Delta variant, within Ontario, the compelling data demonstrating a higher incidence of COVID-19 among the unvaccinated population and the increasing levels of contact between individuals as businesses, services, and activities have reopened, it is important for Town employees to be fully vaccinated in order to protect themselves against serious illness from COVID-19 as well as to provide indirect protection to others, including colleagues.

Scope

This policy applies to all Town employees, volunteers and students. 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 employees are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as a condition of being hired by the Town.

Support for Vaccinations

The Town supports employees in obtaining their COVID-19 vaccination. If operationally feasible and with the permission of their immediate supervisor, Town employees can be released on work time to be vaccinated without loss of compensation.

Continued Compliance with all Health and Safety Precautions

Unless a legislated or regulatory exemption applies, all Town 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. screening), wearing a mask or face covering, using provided PPE, maintaining appropriate physical distancing and self-monitoring of potential COVID-19 symptoms when at work or otherwise engaged in Town business.

Employees who remain unvaccinated due to a substantiated Human Rights Code related accommodation request under the Town's Accommodation Request Process, 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.

Responsibilities

All levels of management are responsible for the administration of this policy.

Managers are expected to:

- lead by example, and;
- ensure employees complete any required education or training about COVID-19, including regarding vaccinations and safety protocols.

Employees are expected to:

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

Vaccination Requirement

All Town employees are required to be fully vaccinated with a Health Canada or World Health Organization approved COVID-19 vaccine series by November 1, 2021 to ensure the best protection possible. For a two dose vaccine series, employees must receive one dose of COVID-19 vaccine by October 1, 2021 and two doses of COVID-19 vaccine by November 1, 2021. For a single dose vaccine series (e.g. Johnson and Johnson), employees must receive the dose by October 1, 2021.

Proof of Vaccination

The Town requires proof of vaccination from all employees. Proof means documentation verifying receipt of a vaccination series approved by Health Canada or the World Health Organization.

Employees must disclose their vaccination status to the Town in accordance with the established process no later than September 24, 2021.

Employees who, by September 24, 2021, disclose that they have not received two doses of COVID-19 vaccine (or a single dose in the case of a single dose vaccine series), or

who have not disclosed their vaccination status as required, shall attend mandatory education on the benefits of vaccination, in addition to the obligations identified under “Vaccination Requirement” above.

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.

The Town will maintain vaccination disclosure information, including documentation verifying receipt of a vaccination series approved by Health Canada or the World Health Organization, in accordance with privacy legislation. This information will only be used to the extent necessary for implementation of this policy, for administering health and safety protocols, and infection and prevention control measures in the workplace.

Employees may also be required to disclose their vaccination status by law or to otherwise give effect to this policy, including, but not limited to, situations where employees are directed to stay home as a result of the daily screening tool in order to comply with the clearance criteria to return to work (e.g. after experiencing symptoms, a COVID-19 exposure, or a travel quarantine exemption).

Accommodations in Accordance with the Human Rights Code

Employees who are not able to obtain a COVID-19 vaccine for a reason related to a protected ground set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code can request accommodation by using the Town’s Accommodation Request Form and cooperating in the accommodation process.

All accommodation requests require written proof of the need for accommodation to be submitted along with the Request Form (e.g. in the case of a request for a medical accommodation, medical documentation from a physician or nurse practitioner, including whether a medical reason is permanent or time-limited).

Ongoing Monitoring and Assessment of COVID-19 Workplace Safety Measures

The Town will continue to monitor its COVID-19 risk mitigation strategy and the evolving public health information and context, to ensure that it continues to optimally protect the health and safety of employees in the workplace and the public that they serve. To that end, and in consultation with York Region Public Health and occupational health and safety experts, the Town will continue to assess other available workplace risk mitigation measures, including, for example, requiring proof of a negative COVID-19 test, etc. If it is determined that additional precautions are necessary, the Town may decide to deploy new measures (including at an individual level) to protect employees and the public from COVID-19, and may amend this policy accordingly and/or communicate the required precautions to impacted employees.

Consequences of Non-Compliance with Policy

Employees who do not comply with this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

Cross-References

Health & Safety Standard: COVID-19 Vaccination
Employee Code of Conduct CAO.3-01
Progressive Discipline Policy HR.4-01

Contact

Human Resources Department or at hr@newmarket.ca

Details

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