

TITLE: COVID-19 VACCINATION PROCEDURE

ADOPTION DATE: NOVEMBER 15, 2021

REVISION DATE: JANUARY 24, 2022

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Municipality of Kincardine values the health and safety of every individual, and is committed to building, and maintaining, a safe and healthy work environment. The Municipality of Kincardine 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 employees against the hazard of COVID-19. This procedure is designed to align with the policy and encourage COVID-19 vaccination to maximize the protection of employees as one of the critical control measures for the hazard of COVID-19.

PURPOSE & SCOPE:

The Municipality of Kincardine values the health and safety of every individual, and is committed to building, and maintaining, a safe and healthy work environment. Vaccination against COVID-19 is one of the best ways to protect workers who work in locations with common areas or where workers can have close contact with other workers or members of the public.

The purpose of this policy is to outline organizational expectations with regards to COVID-19 vaccination for employees, students, contract employees, volunteer firefighters, and members of Council ("Employees"). The Municipality of Kincardine has adopted this procedure to increase the protection and safety of our employees by stressing the importance of vaccination in order to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 within the workplace consistent with our obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

GENERAL PROCEDURE:

The Municipality of Kincardine strongly encourages that all employees who are eligible become vaccinated against COVID-19 as a measure to protect their health and the health of the community.

It is important that individuals make an informed decision about whether to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. In order to ensure that all individuals subject to this procedure have received adequate education about COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccines, employees must complete one of the following:

1. Provide Proof of Vaccination

Employees who have been fully vaccinated for COVID-19 as defined and approved by Health Canada are asked to submit proof of vaccination (the Ontario Ministry of Health receipt) to the Human Resources department. A receipt of vaccination can be obtained by logging into the Ontario COVID-19 portal at <https://covid19.ontariohealth.ca/>

Fully vaccinated means having received all the required doses as approved by Health Canada for the vaccination received at least 14 days prior.

The Municipality of Kincardine will follow the guidelines of Public Health on easing the use of personal protective equipment and other control measures for those who are fully vaccinated.

In alignment with Public Health guidelines, Vaccination Declarations may also be used in order for the Municipality of Kincardine to provide direction to employees on isolation periods based on individual circumstances.

2. Provide Exemption from Vaccine

Medical

Employees who believe they have a valid medical reason that would preclude them from being vaccinated should consult with their healthcare provider for personal medical advice in order to make an informed decision about the risks and benefits of vaccination. If the Employee's physician determines that the Employee should not be vaccinated, the Employee will be required to provide written proof of a medical reason for not being vaccinated which sets out the following:

- That the Employee cannot be vaccinated against COVID-19; and
- The effective time period for the medical reason (i.e. permanently or time-limited)

Employees will have the *Appendix A - Medical Exemption Form* completed by either a physician or nurse practitioner and submit it to the Human Resources department. Any fees associated with completing the Medical Exemption Form is the responsibility of the Employee. This information will be used to ensure safety and will be retained confidentially.

The Municipality will review the request for exemption and advise the employee as to whether such exemption has been approved based upon the medical information provided. All medical information will be used to ensure safety and will be retained confidentially.

Creed/Religion

Employees who believe that they have a valid non-medical reason that would preclude them from being vaccinated based on creed/religion or any other protected ground under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* shall provide a written declaration including the description of the need for protection and accommodation. Further information may be requested from the Municipality of Kincardine in order to assess the accommodation request. Employees will submit *Appendix B - Statement of Creed/Religion Belief* completed by the Creed/Religion leader to the Human Resources department.

The Municipality will review the request for exemption and advise the employee as to whether such exemption has been approved based upon the information provided. All information received will be used to ensure safety and will be retained confidentially.

3. Complete Vaccine Education Declaration

Employees who are not fully vaccinated and who do not provide a valid exemption under Section 2 above will be required to individually complete an education program approved by the Municipality of Kincardine and complete *Appendix C - Vaccine Education Declaration*. For the purposes of this procedure, Employees who care not to disclose their vaccination status will be deemed not fully vaccinated. Employees will be required to complete the education program on their own time.

The following are the learning components of the education program:

- 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

Failure to complete the education program, as outlined in this procedure, will be subject to disciplinary action or may result in rescinding an offer of employment. If vaccination status changes, please contact the Human Resources department to provide confirmation of proof of vaccination.

New Employees

New employees will be subject to the COVID-19 Vaccination policy and procedure as a condition of their employment with the Municipality of Kincardine. Candidates will be provided this information prior to accepting a position with the Municipality of Kincardine and the requirements will be outlined as part of the job advertisement.

Other Control Measures

Employees will be required to continue wearing personal protective equipment and continue to follow other safety measures, consistent with guidance from Public Health for non-vaccinated people. Employees who are not fully vaccinated may be prohibited from attending in-person conferences, training sessions, or other events as a safety precaution when necessary.

Other measures may be implemented by Management as the pandemic status changes and may differ for Employees who are not vaccinated in order to maintain the safety of the workplace. This may include: COVID-19 testing, personal protective equipment, redeployment, work exclusion or a leave of absence. These alternative measures will be based on the work of the Employee, type of workplace or other factors in consideration of the duty to accommodate.

Workplace Prevention Measures

All Employees must continue to adhere to the established COVID-19 prevention procedures irrespective of vaccination status. This includes complying with prevention practices, such as daily active screening for symptoms, hand hygiene and sanitization of equipment, wearing a masks and other personal protective equipment, and physical distancing.

Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy or by providing false information about vaccination status will be considered misconduct. Non-compliance with this policy could result in discipline action up to and including termination of employment.

Collection of Information & Privacy

All information gathered as part of the Vaccination Policy will be handled confidentially and will be safeguarded for the purposes outlined in the policy.

All information, including personal health information, will be treated in compliance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA) and the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004* (PHIPA).

Staff Contact

Employees who require additional information or workplace accommodations related to this policy will contact the Human Resources Manager for clarification.

REFERENCES:

1. GG 6.17 - Vaccination Policy
2. Appendix A - Medical Exemption Form
3. Appendix B - Statement of Creed/Religion Belief
4. Appendix C - Vaccine Education Declaration