

**GENERAL MANUAL PROCEDURE      TOPIC:      Vaccine Policy**

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**GENERAL MANUAL POLICY**

**APPROVED BY:**

  
Executive Director

**CATEGORY:                      Human Resources**

**TOPIC:                              Vaccine Policy**

**POLICY:**

COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY strongly encourages all Employees and Visitors to receive the COVID-19 vaccination and expects Employees, Students, Volunteers, and Essential Visitors who provide direct support or work in an area where direct support is provided to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this Policy is to reduce the risk of exposure to and transmission of COVID-19 in the workplace by providing occupational protection to all employees and thereby preventing exposure to the people we support. Vaccination for COVID-19 is both safe and effective in preventing COVID-19. This Policy has been developed in consultation with COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY Pandemic Team as a reasonable and necessary measure to prevent, respond to, and alleviate the outbreak of COVID-19 and the associated risk to the people we support, many of whom are medically fragile and/or cannot comply with social distancing and infectious disease transmission prevention protocols.

This Policy also reflects our obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) to take every reasonable precaution in the circumstances to protect a worker and to comply with our obligation under applicable emergency orders (O. Reg 177/20 and O. Reg. 121/20) and current Public Health advice/recommendations.

This Policy is based on the significant risk factors for COVID-19 infection that are present in COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY'S workplaces given the nature of support and as described in Ontario's Response Framework including close contact, closed spaces, crowded places, forceful exhalation, and prolonged exposure, with the most serious risk factor being close contact.

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This Policy will be updated regularly to reflect any changes in the degree of risk and any advice or recommendations from public health authorities.

**PROCEDURE:**

**A. Proof of Immunization and/or Consideration for Accommodation - Prospective Employees**

1. Prior to their employment start date a Prospective Employees will be expected to produce vaccination receipt showing proof of full COVID-19 vaccination status (see definition). If this is not possible; a determination will be made as to their employment which may include withdrawal of the offer. The following will be taken into consideration:
  - 1.1 Documentation to substantiate a medical or religious reason for not being vaccinated is provided for consideration for accommodation.
2. Confirmation by the Prospective Employees of full vaccination status, and this confirmation uploaded to the COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY Vaccination tracker within ten (10) days of hire.

**B. Proof of Immunization and/or Consideration for Accommodation - Existing Employees**

1. Upon issue of this Policy, and with due regard for availability of the COVID-19 vaccine, Existing Employees will be expected to provide proof of vaccination to Frances Talarico, Human Resources Advisor
2. COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY will provide accommodation to the point of undue hardship, to Existing Employees who are unable to be vaccinated for medical or religious reasons. Existing Employees not vaccinated for any reason will be asked to complete and submit the **Employees COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration Form** and provide, where requested, substantiated proof to Frances Talarico, Human Resources Advisor, or designate immediately.
3. Where accommodation is requested, an assessment will be conducted by Frances Talarico, Human Resources Advisor, based on the information provided. Through use of the **Risk Assessment Framework**, the reason for non-vaccination, the nature of work being performed, the risk to the work environment, and the current risk of community transmission of COVID-19 will be considered
4. Completion of a COVID-19 vaccination educational session. Individuals who do not provide proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 will be required to attend an educational session and also undertake regular antigen testing. These settings will be required to track and report on the implementation of their policies to the provincial government.

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**C. Proof of Immunization and/or Consideration for Accommodation - Essential Visitors (excluding family)**

1. As part of scheduling an appointment or visit, the COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY Supervisor will alert the Essential Visitor that they will be asked as part of screening if they have been vaccinated prior to entry to a COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY residence or other COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY premise.
2. For any Essential Visitor who identifies that they have not been vaccinated, either as part of visit scheduling or at the point of on-site screening, the site Supervisor along with Frances Talarico, Human Resources Advisor, will assess whether accommodation is required and/or possible. Through use of the **Risk Assessment Framework**, the nature of work being performed, the risk to the work environment and any other relevant factors will be considered.

**VACCINATION OPPORTUNITIES AND REIMBURSEMENT**

COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY employees who are able to schedule an appointment at any hosted vaccination clinic or at an offsite vaccination clinic during a scheduled shift are expected to work collaboratively with their supervisor/manager to schedule appropriate time to receive the vaccination(s). If you are not vaccinated due to a medical or a religious status you must provide written validation of this exemption from a Physician/Nurse Practitioner and or Religious Authority. If it is determined that you have a valid medical/religious exemption then the cost of the Rapid Antigen Testing will be covered by Community Living Thunder Bay. All other employees who do not have a bona fide exemption for receiving the vaccine will be responsible for the cost of the semi-weekly Rapid Antigen Testing after October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

**REPORTING AND RECORD KEEPING**

All records about COVID-19 vaccinations and accommodations for COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY Employees (Existing and Prospective) will only be collected, used, or disclosed as may be necessary for legitimate operational purposes or as directed or requested by governmental authorities. All records will be kept in a secure manner consistent with COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY'S privacy policies and practices.

**DEFINITIONS:**

All COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY employees (full-time, part-time, relief and/or on contract), Volunteers, Students, and any person who perform work for COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY are considered employees.

**Essential Visitors** includes third-party contractors, healthcare providers, and other visitors with a specific purpose for individuals served or their environment (e.g., cleaning, maintenance).

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**Fully Vaccinated** greater than or equal to 14 days after receiving the second dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series or the first dose of a one-dose COVID-19 vaccine series that is listed for emergency use by the World Health Organization or approved by Health Canada. Proof of vaccination is required.

**GENERAL PRINCIPLES:**

**1. Expectation of Vaccination**

1.1 COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY expects all **Employees and Essential Visitors** who provide support or work in an area where individuals are supported to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as per Ministry of Health standards. This is necessary given the extreme risk associated with COVID-19 and is designed to keep all Employees and the people we support safe and healthy.

1.2 During the recruitment process, Prospective Employees will be informed that anyone applying to be an Employee will be asked to show proof of full vaccination status against COVID-19 as a condition for hire/placement. As part of induction, Prospective Employees will be expected to provide a copy of their Ministry of Health receipt as proof of COVID-19 vaccination. In the case of vaccination obtained outside of Ontario, satisfactory documentation should include the date, location, type of vaccine and name of authorized administrator/ agency.

1.3 Existing Employees must submit a copy of their Ministry of Health vaccination record to the Health and Safety Coordinator including the dates of vaccination (dose 1 and dose 2, where applicable) against COVID-19. Existing Employees are encouraged to download a copy of their Ministry of Health COVID-19 vaccination record if they are unable to locate the original. In the case of vaccination obtained outside of Ontario, or equivalent satisfactory documentation should include the date, location, type of vaccine administered and name of authorized administrator/agency. The link to download the vaccination record is <https://covid19.ontariohealth.ca>

1.4 Essential Visitors who provide direct support or work in an area where direct support is provided will be asked to attest to being fully vaccinated. As part of Active Screening, Essential Visitors will be asked if they have been vaccinated prior to entry to a COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY residence or other COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY premise.

1.5 Employing Agencies contracted to provide personal support employment services to COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY, as outlined in their contract, will ensure agency employees are fully vaccinated before providing service.

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**2. Accommodation**

2.1 COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY will comply with the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) and provide accommodation up to the point of undue hardship to the organization to any Prospective Employees, Existing Employees and Essential Visitors who are unable to be vaccinated for substantiated medical or religious reasons.

2.2 To determine whether accommodation is required and/or possible without undue hardship, COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY will use the **Risk Assessment Framework** adapted from the Public Services Health and Safety Association's *General Infectious Disease Risk Assessment and Management Tool*. The Framework will be used to consider the nature of an individual's work, the location/ environment where work is performed, and the current community risk associated with transmission of COVID-19.

2.3 The determination of the probability and severity of harm will be made in consultation with Occupational Health and Safety and based on information provided. The accommodation provided will be dependent on both internal and external factors that will be considered in the assessment of the accommodation request.

2.4 Due to the seriousness of COVID-19 and its impact on the health and safety of COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY work environments and the people we support, accommodation may not be possible in all circumstances.

2.5 Existing employees who fail to submit proof of vaccination will be considered not vaccinated.

**Failure to show proof of Vaccination**

Failure to submit proof of vaccination will result in the employees to be considered "unvaccinated" and will be subject to enhanced screening and additional precautionary measures including, but not limited to:

- wearing enhanced PPE including facial protection at all times;
- will be subject to frequent Rapid Antigen Testing and provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test result to Frances Talarico, Human Resources Advisor, at a minimum 1 test per 72 hours (twice per week when working) dependent on shift/visitation schedule;
- prevented from working in a location that is experiencing an outbreak until the outbreak is declared over by Public Health.
- Unvaccinated employees may be restricted from working in high-risk environments and/or limited to working in one location or cluster within COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY and/or one employer within the Developmental Services Sector for the duration of the Pandemic. High-risk environments include situations in which there is:
  - A risk of exposure to other unvaccinated people and/or people who are positive with COVID-19
  - Any area currently experiencing an outbreak.

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**Testing**

For those employees who have chosen not to receive the Covid-19 Vaccine or have chosen not to show proof of vaccination, Rapid Antigen testing will be mandatory, and proof of a negative COVID-19 Rapid Antigen test result must be provided.

- A recent negative test is required, the date of the negative Rapid Antigen test must be no longer than 72 hours (3 days) old before attending the shift
- If it has been more than 72 hours since your last Rapid Antigen test, you must have a test completed and submitted 24 hours before attending your shift
- If it is determined that you have a valid medical/religious exemption, then the cost of the Rapid Antigen Testing will be covered by Community Living Thunder Bay. All other employees who do not have a bona fide exemption for receiving the vaccine will be responsible for the cost of the Rapid Antigen Testing after October 31st, 2021.
- The time required to receive the test will not be considered paid time.
- It is the sole responsibility of the employee to be tested on a timely basis, and show proof of the completed test (date and results) to the Director of Human Resources, Frances Talarico, Human Resources Advisor, or designate. Any loss of time due to failure to submit Rapid Antigen testing will not be covered by COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY.
- Failure to be tested will result in an immediate unpaid leave from their duties at COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY;
- Any production of a fake test result will result in termination of employment from COMMUNITY LIVING THUNDER BAY.