

Manual:	Common Policies and Procedures		
SECTION:	Health & Safety	Policy #:	8-100
Policy Name:	Safety & Risk Management	Revised:	

## SECTION 8: Health & Safety

### COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration Policy

#### **Background**

Full vaccination has been shown to be effective in reducing virus transmission and protecting vaccinated individuals from severe consequences of COVID-19 and its variants. Compelling data demonstrate a higher incidence of COVID-19 among the unvaccinated population. As businesses, schools, services, and activities have reopened, it is important for George Hull Centre employees to be fully vaccinated in order to protect themselves and others, including clients and colleagues, against serious illness caused by COVID-19.

#### **Policy**

The health and safety of clients, staff members, placement students, and visitors are a significant priority at the George Hull Centre. In accordance with Ontario Public Health guidelines and the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Centre is committed to taking every reasonable precaution to ensure the protection of our clients, staff members, placement students, and visitors from the health hazard of COVID-19. This policy is designed to maximize COVID-19 vaccination rates among George Hull Centre employees as one of the critical control measures to contain the spread of this infection.

To this end, and subject to the Ontario Human Rights Code, George Hull Centre employees (including contract and fee for service contractors), members of the Board, placement students, and volunteers are required to provide one of the following:

1. Proof of full vaccination against COVID-19, **OR**
2. Written proof of a medical exemption, provided by a physician or nurse practitioner that sets out a documented medical reason for not being vaccinated AND the effective time period for the medical reason, **OR**
3. Proof of completing an educational session approved by the George Hull Centre about the benefits of the COVID-19 vaccination prior to declining vaccination for any reason other than a medical reason. The approved session must at minimum address:
  - How COVID-19 vaccines work
  - Vaccine safety related to the development of the COVID-19 vaccines
  - The benefits of vaccination
  - Risks of not being vaccinated
  - Possible side effects of COVID-19 vaccinations
  - Antigen Testing training

See [COVID-19 Vaccination: Understanding the Benefits and Risks](#) Module

Manual:	Common Policies and Procedures		
SECTION:	Health & Safety	Policy #:	8-100
Policy Name:	Safety & Risk Management	Revised:	

Upon completion of the educational session, staff will submit confirmation via e-form which will be filed in their employee file by Human Resources.

Where an employee, student, volunteer or Board member does not provide proof of full vaccination, but relies instead upon the medical reason or the educational session described in points 2 and 3 above, they will be required to:

- Submit to regular antigen testing for COVID-19 (tests supplied by the George Hull Centre) and demonstrate a negative result at a minimum of two times a week. The frequency of the testing is at the discretion of the Centre and is subject to change and may vary based on program specific considerations.
- Provide verification of the negative test result in a manner determined by the George Hull Centre.
  - o The test must be conducted upon arrival at the Centre before the staff's shift.
  - o Proof of the result (photo) is sent to the program manager.
  - o If the results of the rapid antigen testing are positive, individuals are required to submit to a laboratory-based PCR test to confirm the results immediately, and self-isolate until their results have been received.

Rapid antigen tests can be performed by health professionals or any individual who is [trained](#) (including self-swabbing). An individual is considered "trained" when they have consulted the [Provincial Antigen Screening Program training materials](#).

### **Application**

This policy applies to all George Hull Centre employees (including contract and fee for service contractors), members of the board, placement students, and volunteers. Employees must comply with specific protocols within each program regarding COVID-19 in addition to this policy. Employees are subject to all other Centre policies and/or guidelines, and/or subject to government/public health regulations, legislation, or guidelines.

### **Support for Vaccinations**

George Hull Centre employees can be released on work time to be vaccinated while on duty, without loss of compensation. Employees who may experience side effects or aftereffects of the vaccination are entitled to use their sick days as required.

Manual:	Common Policies and Procedures		
SECTION:	Health & Safety	Policy #:	8-100
Policy Name:	Safety & Risk Management	Revised:	

### **Continued Compliance with Applicable Health and Safety Precautions**

Vaccinated George Hull Centre employees are required to continue to comply with applicable health and safety measures to further reduce the risks of COVID-19 transmission, including but not necessarily limited to: screening, mask wearing, using PPE, physical distancing, self-monitoring, and respecting occupancy limits in treatment rooms, meeting rooms, and other locations.

Unvaccinated employees are also required to comply with applicable health and safety measures, including but not limited to the measures listed above for vaccinated employees.

Unvaccinated employees may be required to follow different and/or additional protocols that vaccinated employees are not required to follow.

### **Accommodation of Unvaccinated Employees**

The George Hull Centre will attempt to accommodate those unvaccinated employees. This may require among other adjustments:

- The use of PPE that may be different from vaccinated employees.
- A change in working conditions, work locations, and working times.
- Antigen (or other Health Canada approved) COVID-19 testing.
- Temporary unpaid leave.

### **Vaccination Requirement Timeline**

All George Hull Centre employees are required to have fulfilled the policy requirements 1 or 2 or 3 above by October 31, 2021. For a two dose vaccine series, employees must receive one dose by September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021, and the second dose by October 31, 2021. New employees must also have fulfilled the policy requirement 1 or 2 or 3 above before they can commence employment at the Centre.

### **Proof of Vaccination and Disclosure of Vaccination Status**

The George Hull Centre requires proof of vaccination from vaccinated employees, students, volunteers and Board members. 'Proof' means documentation, approved by the George Hull Centre, verifying receipt of a vaccination series approved by Health Canada. An example of an approved 'proof of vaccination' is the Vaccine Receipt/Certificate that is issued by the Ontario Ministry of Health immediately after vaccination, or by email within a few days after vaccination.

Employees must disclose their vaccination status to the Centre no later October 1st, 2021. The George Hull Centre Human Resources department will maintain vaccination disclosure information, and documentation verifying vaccination, in accordance with applicable privacy legislation. This information will be disclosed to management who

Manual:	Common Policies and Procedures		
SECTION:	Health & Safety	Policy #:	8-100
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have a need to know it, and be used for implementation of this policy, for administering health and safety protocols, and infection and prevention measures in the workplace.

### **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-reference:** Epidemic/Pandemic, 8-40  
 Communicable Diseases in the Workplace, 8-45  
 Unpaid Leave, 9-770  
 Leave of Absence – Pandemic Leave, 9-780  
 Sick Leaves, 9-810

**Date of Approval:** September 10, 2021



Manual:	Common Policies and Procedures		
SECTION:	Health & Safety	Policy #:	8-100
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