



AMENDED COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY (October 18, 2021)

1. Statement of Policy

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is committed to ensuring a safe working environment for all of our employees and the members of the public that they serve.

The GNWT will promote and ensure effective practices, training and supports are in place to protect the physical and mental health, safety and well-being of its employees, as well as the safety of its residents, and to ensure the provision of services to members of the public.

2. Principles

The GNWT will adhere to the following principles when implementing this Amended Policy:

- (1) As an employer in the Northwest Territories (NWT), the GNWT is committed to protecting the safety of all members of society served by the GNWT.
- (2) In accordance with the *Safety Act*, the GNWT has a duty to take all reasonable precautions and to adopt and carry out all reasonable techniques and procedures to ensure the health and safety of its employees and workplaces.
- (3) GNWT management and employees share the right and responsibility to be part of and maintain healthy and safe government workplaces. This includes the prevention and mitigation of hazards in the workplace, the prevention of harm, and the promotion of well-being.
- (4) The GNWT recognizes that privacy and trust are particularly important where health information is concerned. Personal information is protected by provisions of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (ATIPPA) associated with its collection, use, disclosure and protection.

3. Scope

This Policy and the applicable guidelines apply to all GNWT departments and agencies, except for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation.



Definitions

The following terms apply to this Policy:

COVID-19 – or Coronavirus disease is an infectious respiratory illness caused by a newly discovered coronavirus, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

Deputy Head – the Deputy Minister of a department, the Chief Executive Officer of a public committee, board or council, or such a person may be appointed or designated as Deputy Head.

Employees – means all members of the public service as defined by the *Public Service Act*.

Contractors – means all individuals engaged to provide services with or without remuneration on behalf of the GNWT.

Fully Vaccinated – for the purposes of this Policy, a person is considered Fully Vaccinated 14 days after receiving the final dose of a Health Canada authorized COVID-19 vaccine or an approved combination of Health Canada authorized vaccines.

4. Authority and Accountability

General

This Policy is issued under the authority of the Financial Management Board. The authority to make exceptions and approve revisions to this Policy rests with the Financial Management Board.

Authority and accountability are further defined as follows:

(a) Minister of Finance (Minister)

The Minister of Finance is accountable to the Financial Management Board for the implementation of this Policy.

(b) Deputy Minister

The Deputy Minister of Finance is accountable to the Minister for the administration of this Policy.

Specific

(c) Financial Management Board

The Financial Management Board may approve the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy and amendments to it.

(d) Minister of Finance

The Minister may recommend amendments and exceptions to the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy to the Financial Management Board.



(e) Deputy Minister of Finance

The Deputy Minister of Finance may recommend to the Minister of Finance appropriate corporate guidelines and propose amendments to the guidelines. Guidelines may include:

- i. Measures to protect the safety of employees and members of the public where GNWT employees have not provided proof of vaccination; and
- ii. Procedures to be put in place to protect the security and confidentiality of records, specifically those including personal information, in accordance with the *ATIPPA*.

(f) Minister Responsible for the *Public Service Act*

The Minister responsible for the *Public Service Act* is accountable for the management and direction of the Public Service and for ensuring that GNWT departments and agencies operate in accordance with this Policy and associated guidelines.

(g) Deputy Heads

- i. Ensure the development, implementation and operation of appropriate departmental vaccination guidelines and procedures in their respective departments and agencies' workplaces;
- ii. Ensure appropriate communication of the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy and accompanying corporate and departmental guidelines and procedures to staff;
- iii. Ensure that the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy is implemented in accordance with corporate and departmental guidelines and procedures; and
- iv. Monitor the effectiveness of the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy and accompanying departmental guidelines and procedures.

5. Provisions

(1) Proof of Vaccination

All GNWT Employees and Contractors will be required to provide proof of vaccination, such as a [COVID-19 vaccination record](#) from GNWT Public Health or an equivalent record from another jurisdiction, which will be used to verify vaccination status. Contractors will be required to follow corporate and departmental guidelines setting out provision of proof of vaccination under the Policy.

All documents and information relating to an Employee's or Contractor's vaccination status are to be treated with the utmost confidentiality. In handling medical information, the Employer will abide by applicable privacy legislation.

All Employees will be required to be fully vaccinated by November 30, 2021.



Proof of vaccination showing dates of vaccination must be provided on or before November 30, 2021.

(2) Other Measures

Employees who choose not to be vaccinated, who are not fully immunized or do not provide proof of vaccination by November 30, 2021, will be required to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in the workplace and undergo regular testing for COVID-19 until they have provided proof of full vaccination. Regular testing may be required up to three times a week for employees and includes the requirement to provide proof of a negative test result before they can resume working.

Employees who refuse to wear PPE or participate in testing protocols when directed will be asked to take a leave without pay until they do so.

(3) Accommodations will be made for Employees and Contractors who are unable to be vaccinated or undergo regular COVID-19 testing for medical reasons or based on protected grounds under the *Human Rights Act*.

(4) Confidentiality

The confidentiality of information obtained through the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy will be handled in accordance with the provisions of the *ATIPPA* associated with the collection, use, disclosure and protection of personal information.

Access to documents and information relating to an Employee's or Contractor's vaccination status will be on a need-to-know basis and restricted to only the specific individuals necessary to carry out the implementation of this Policy and associated guidelines.

(5) Adherence to Auxiliary Policies and Regulations

Nothing in this Policy shall excuse, impair, or vary the requirement of any Employees whose position or duties are Federally regulated to comply with applicable Federal Regulations.

(6) Policy Review

This Policy and amendments to it will be reviewed by the Department of Finance no later than six months after it comes into force. This Policy will continue to be updated as required and as reasonable given the evolving nature of the pandemic, vaccine availability and government and public health authority direction.



6. Prerogative of the Financial Management Board

Nothing in this Policy shall in any way be construed to limit the prerogative of the Financial Management Board to make decisions or take action with respect to the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy.