

Northwest Territories
Housing Corporation
COVID-19 Vaccination Guidelines

PURPOSE

The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (NWT HC) COVID-19 Vaccination Guidelines have been developed to provide direction and information to supervisors and employees about the implementation of the Amended Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) COVID-19 Vaccination Policy (Policy) by the NWT HC. They are also intended to provide employees with the information necessary to arrange for vaccination, if necessary, and to obtain proof of vaccination documentation ahead of the November 30, 2021 implementation date.

Amendments to the Policy have been made to ensure that the GNWT follows evolving best practice standards in management of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to protect employees and members of the public.

POLICY BASE

These Guidelines are consistent with and support the implementation of the Amended GNWT COVID-19 Vaccination Policy and the Amended Corporate COVID-19 Vaccination Policy Guidelines.

SCOPE

The Policy concerns vaccination against COVID-19, or Coronavirus disease, an infectious respiratory illness caused by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), and the implementation of other workplace safety precautions in lieu of vaccination.

This Policy and the present Guidelines apply to all employees of the NWT HC and all individuals engaged to provide services on behalf of the NWT HC.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms apply in these Guidelines:

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 as 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 approved COVID-19 vaccine or an approved combination of Health Canada approved COVID-19 vaccines.

GUIDELINES

General

The NWTHC is committed to ensuring a safe working environment for our employees and the members of the public we serve.

All Employees and Contractors will be required to have received the full series of Health Canada approved COVID-19 vaccine or an approved combination of Health Canada approved vaccines at least 14 full days prior to November 30, 2021.

Submitting Proof of Vaccination

NWTHC Employees must provide documentation setting out their proof of vaccination on or before November 30, 2021.

Acceptable Proof of Vaccination

Acceptable proof of vaccination documentation must be an official record from the public health office in the jurisdiction(s) where the employee received the vaccine dose(s) and must include the following information:

- i. The issuing authority of the vaccination record;
- ii. The Employee's full name;
- iii. The name/brand of the vaccine(s) received; and
- iv. The date(s) of vaccination.

NWTHC Employees may submit their proof of vaccination using the Human Resources Information System (HRIS). For more information about how to submit proof of vaccination documents using HRIS, visit the [MyHR website](#).

The Human Resources Branch of the Department of Finance is responsible for securing personal information submitted by NWTHC Employees in accordance with the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (ATIPPA) and for verification of Employee vaccination information.

Upon submission of the Employee's proof of vaccination documents, the information will be verified and the Employee's direct supervisor notified that the Employee has submitted proof of vaccination.

The information verified will be:

- i. The issuing authority of the vaccination record;
- ii. The Employee's full name;
- iii. The name/brand of the vaccine(s) received; and
- iv. The date(s) of vaccination.

All proof of vaccination documents will be securely stored in the HRIS system.

The Employee's direct supervisor may maintain a record confirming the vaccination status of their direct reports. This record will be for the purposes of monitoring and enforcing workplace safety precautions.

Use of and Access to Employee Information

NWTHC Employee vaccination status information may only be accessed in circumstances deemed necessary by the GNWT and for the purposes set out in the Policy.

In the event of any unauthorized access to an Employee's vaccination status information, the Employee will be immediately advised of the breach and circumstances relating to that breach.

NWTHC Employees may access their vaccination status information through HRIS.

Other Measures to protect the safety of employees and members of the public

NWTHC Employees who do not provide proof of full vaccination by November 30, 2021, will be required to wear NWTHC designated Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at all times in the workplace and to undergo regular testing for COVID-19 as directed by the NWTHC until they provide proof of vaccination.

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

Personal Protective Equipment

NWTHC Employees who have not provided proof of vaccination will be required to wear a NWTHC authorized face mask while completing their duties. These employees may also be required to wear other PPE, such as eye protection and gloves, depending on the employees' duties, level of contact with colleagues and members of the public, and other hazard control measures in place at the worksite.

Providing proof of vaccination does not release Employees from use of PPE or adherence to COVID-19 testing required in their workplace.

COVID-19 Testing

Regular testing for COVID-19 may be required within 48 hours or 72 hours of attendance at a GNWT worksite for all NWT HC Employees who do not provide proof of vaccination. Those Employees will be required to provide proof of a negative test result produced within the preceding 48 hours or 72 hours before resuming work or attending at a GNWT worksite, or as otherwise directed by their Supervisor

COVID-19 testing of NWT HC Employees who have not provided proof of vaccination will be conducted as directed.

- Upon confirmation of a negative COVID-19 Test result, the Employee will be allowed to report to work wearing the required PPE.
- In the event of a positive COVID-19 test, the Employee will immediately begin self-isolating. The Employee will be required to follow all Office of the Chief Public Health Officer requirements in effect at the time of the positive test and may only return to work once cleared to do so by Public Health.

The schedule of NWT HC Employee testing will be set with regard to the work schedule of Employees to ensure that there is an appropriate nexus of time between a negative test result and the Employee performing their duties.

For example:

- If an Employee is providing test results three times per week, testing may be spread out throughout the week depending on the employee's schedule.

Duty Travel by Air

The Government of Canada has announced plans to institute COVID-19 vaccination requirements for all travelers departing by air from some Canadian airports. Duty travel by air may require NWT HC to be fully vaccinated and to have submitted proof of vaccination. Use of PPE and testing for COVID-19 in lieu of vaccination may not be permitted.

Duty Travel by Ground

For the duration of all Duty Travel, Employees who have not provided proof of vaccination shall wear NWT HC designated PPE, except at times when they are alone in their travel accommodations or dining.

All NWT HC Employees will be assigned their own accommodations while on Duty Travel.

NWT HC Employees who have not provided proof of vaccination are required to wear PPE throughout travel to and from Duty Travel destinations.

Accommodations

Accommodations will be made for Employees who are both unable to be vaccinated and unable to wear mandatory PPE or undergo regular testing for verified medical reasons or based on protected grounds under the *Human Rights Act*.

NWTHC Employees seeking accommodation are subject to the *Duty to Accommodate Injury and Disability Policy* and the *Duty to Accommodate Policy Application Guidelines*.

Requests for accommodation due to a medical or human rights exemption to COVID-19 vaccination must be made to NWTHC before November 30, 2021, or as soon as is practicable.

Documentation Required for Medical Exemptions

The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority, Hay River Health and Social Services Authority and Tlicho Community Services Agency released an Approach to Requests for Exemption from COVID-19 guideline, which provides guidance to support NWT healthcare providers in a consistent and evidence-based approach to vaccine exemption requests.

NWTHC Employees requesting an accommodation due to a medical exemption to vaccination will be required to provide a letter from a physician or nurse practitioner or other certified proof of medical exemption from a physician or nurse practitioner in order to claim medical exemption status.

EMPLOYEE, EMPLOYER, AND CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of the Employee

- All Employees of the NWTHC are expected to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms before coming to the worksite.
- Any Employee of the NWTHC, regardless of vaccination status, who develops symptoms of COVID-19 should refrain from attending at their workplace and should promptly advise their direct supervisor.
- All Employees of the NWTHC are expected to follow all Office of the Chief Public Health Officer (OCPHO) and Public Health orders.
- All Employees of the NWTHC are responsible for obtaining copies of their vaccination records.
- All Employees of the NWTHC must provide proof of full vaccination on or before November 30, 2021.

- Employees of the NWT HC who will not provide proof of vaccination by November 30, 2021, should inform their direct supervisor at the earliest possible date so that arrangements can be made for provision of PPE and institution of a testing schedule, or so that other accommodations can be made, where applicable.
- Employees of the NWT HC are responsible for complying with all PPE and testing protocols as directed.

Responsibilities of the Employer

- The NWT HC is responsible for ensuring that all required PPE is provided to Employees required to wear PPE while performing their duties.
- The NWT HC will provide information about COVID-19 vaccination to all NWT HC Employees and ensure that unvaccinated employees who wish to receive COVID-19 vaccination are granted the opportunity to do so. Materials and information about COVID-19 vaccination can be found on the [GNWT's Response to COVID-19](#) website.
- NWT HC hiring managers will include details about the GNWT COVID-19 Vaccination Policy and the NWT HC Guidelines in all job postings.
- The NWT HC will ensure that all NWT HC workplaces follow GNWT Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) standards for COVID-19 safety within the workplace.

Responsibilities of Local Housing Organizations (LHOs)

Local Housing Organizations (LHOs), as direct deliverers of the NWT HC Public Housing program, will require its employees to:

- have received two doses of a Health Canada approved COVID-19 vaccine; or
- wear PPE in the workplace (face mask, eye protection, and gloves) and undergo testing, based on the requirements of the department or agency, for COVID-19 until they have reached full vaccination in accordance with Health Canada rules or guidelines applicable to the vaccine(s) received by the individual; and
- adhere to any additional PPE requirements implemented by the facility operators/management for guests or workers entering the facility.

LHOs are responsible for ensuring their employees meet these requirements and shall bear sole responsibility for all associated costs.

The LHO, at the request of the GNWT, provide the GNWT with proof of vaccination and testing for any employees that are scheduled to perform work or provide services under the Contract in GNWT facilities or work sites.

The NWTHC, under the provisions of community housing service agreements signed with LHOs has the right to take appropriate corrective action when LHOs do not adhere to policies set-out by the NWTHC.

LEGISLATIVE AND OTHER RELATED AUTHORITY

The *Public Service Act* and Regulations, and all relevant policies, and the terms and conditions of employment continue to apply.

All NWTHC Employees will agree to abide by all government and department policies, collective agreements, procedures and legislation, including but not limited to the confidentiality of clients, department information and documentation.

APPENDIX A - Policy Roll-Out: Ensuring Maximum Vaccination

Education and Training for Unvaccinated Employees

The NWTHC encourages all employees who are able to become vaccinated. Vaccine hesitancy can be the result of individuals being unaware of the benefits of vaccination, both for the Employee and societally, and of the safety of vaccination.

NWTHC Employees who are not yet vaccinated are encouraged to review vaccine information and strongly consider the benefits of vaccination. These materials are available at the [GNWT's Response to COVID-19 webpage](#).

NWTHC Employees are able to attend vaccination appointments during their scheduled working hours.

Health and Safety Considerations

Accommodations Procedures and Departmental Preparedness

The NWTHC is prepared to review and if necessary provide accommodations for Employees who are unable to be vaccinated or undergo regular testing, either for medical reasons or based on protected grounds under the *Human Rights Act*.