

Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

COVID-19 Vaccination Guidelines

PURPOSE

Vaccinations are our best line of defense against COVID-19. The Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC) 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 WSCC. It is also intended to provide Employees with the information required to arrange for vaccination and obtain proof of vaccination documentation ahead of the November 30, 2021 implementation date.

Amendments to the Policy have been made in-line with evolving best practice standards in the management of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to protect Employees and members of the public. WSCC Guidelines will be updated as required.

POLICY BASE

These guidelines are consistent with, and support the implementation of the Policy and the Amended GNWT COVID-19 Vaccination Policy Guidelines, the Government of Canada requirements in regards to commercial travel, and support WSCC's mission to eliminate workplace diseases and injury.

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.

The Policy and WSCC Vaccination Policy Guidelines apply to all WSCC Employees and all persons engaged to provide services on behalf of the WSCC.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms apply in these Guidelines:

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

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

Duty Travel – means an Employee who is authorized to travel on WSCC business.

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

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 COVID-19 vaccines.

GUIDELINES

General

The WSCC is committed to ensuring a safe working environment for our Employees, Supervisors and members of the public whom they serve.

All WSCC Employees are required to be fully vaccinated by November 30, 2021, or will be required to wear WSCC designated Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and comply with WSCC COVID-19 testing protocols.

Proof of Vaccination

All WSCC 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.

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

Submitting Proof of Vaccination

- Employee Proof of Vaccination can be e-mailed to HRverification@wsc.nt.ca - this will go directly to designated Human Resources personnel

The information verified by HR 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.

Upon submission of the proof of vaccination documents, HR will verify the information and notify the direct Supervisor that the Employee has submitted a proof of vaccination.

The Employee's direct Supervisor may maintain a record of which Employees have provided proof of vaccination for the purpose of enforcing PPE use and COVID-19 testing protocols under the Policy.

NT Employees who received their COVID-19 vaccinations in the Northwest Territories can demonstrate their vaccination status with the [electronic Proof of Vaccination](#) Credential or by requesting a copy of their COVID-19 immunization record from Public Health.

NU Employees who received their COVID-19 vaccinations in Nunavut can demonstrate their vaccination status with a proof of vaccination certificate (PVC) that can be obtained in person at the Iqaluit Public Health or Qikiqtani General Hospital.

For more information on vaccination and testing in the NWT please visit <https://www.nthssa.ca/en/covid-testing>

For more information on vaccination and testing in the Nunavut please visit gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-vaccination

Use of and Access to Employee Information

WSSC Employee vaccination status information may only be accessed as necessary for implementation of 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. The WSSC will follow the appropriate steps set out in the ATIPPA to review and report the privacy breach.

WSSC Employees may access their vaccination status information by contacting HR.

Other Measures to protect the safety of Employees and vulnerable members of the public

WSSC Employees who do not provide proof of full vaccination by November 30, 2021, will be required to wear WSSC designated PPE in accordance with its Exposure Control Plan at all times in the workplace and to comply with COVID-19 testing protocols as directed by the WSSC until they provide proof of vaccination.

Employees who refuse to wear PPE or participate in testing protocols as directed by the WSSC will be directed to take leave without pay (LWOP) until they are in compliance with the Policy.

Personal Protective Equipment

Employees who have not provided proof of vaccination will be required to wear a WSSC authorized face mask while completing their duties in the workplace. These Employees may also be required to wear other PPE, as designated by the WSSC, 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. Specific PPE

requirements must be discussed with the Supervisors and Employee Safety Officer and will be supplied by the WSCC.

Required PPE will be provided by the WSCC. Employees who prefer to use their own face masks may do so providing the masks are [one-time use non-medical masks or masks consisting of at least three layers of cloth](#). Employees who choose to provide their own masks will not be reimbursed costs. Face shields, buffs, neck gaiters, scarfs, bandanas, or masks with exhaust valves are not acceptable for use under this Policy.

Providing proof of vaccination does not release Employees from directed use of PPE or adherence to COVID-19 testing which may be required in their workplace including that based on Chief Public Health Officer orders, public health advisories and/or WSCC Exposure Control Plans.

COVID-19 Testing

Regular testing for COVID-19 may be required within 48 hours of attendance at a WSCC worksite for all 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 before resuming work or attending at a WSCC worksite.

- 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 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.

Duty Travel

Duty travel may require WSCC Employees 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.

Where permitted, Employees who have not provided proof of vaccination shall wear WSCC designated PPE for the duration of all duty travel, except at times when they are alone in their travel accommodations or dining. This includes travel time to and from Duty Travel destinations.

Employees will be required to have their own accommodations while on Duty Travel.

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*.

WSCC Employees seeking accommodation are subject to the [GNWT 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 WSCC 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, which provides guidance to support NWT healthcare providers in a consistent and evidence-based approach to vaccine exemption requests.

Employees requesting an accommodation due to a medical exemption to vaccination will be required to provide a letter to their Supervisor 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 are expected to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms and to follow all orders issued by the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer (OCPHO) and/or Public Health
- Any Employee, regardless of vaccination status, who develops symptoms of COVID-19 should refrain from attending their workplace and should promptly advise their direct Supervisor.
- All Employees are responsible for obtaining copies of their vaccination records and submitting them to HR on or before November 30, 2021.
- Employees who will not provide proof of vaccination by November 30, 2021, should inform their 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 are responsible for complying with all PPE and testing protocols as directed.

Responsibilities of WSCC/Human Resources

- Human Resources is responsible for providing the Policy and the WSCC COVID-19 Vaccination Guidelines to all incumbents of all positions within the WSCC.
- WSCC is responsible for ensuring that all required PPE is provided to Employees who are required to wear PPE during the performance of their duties.
- WSCC will provide information about COVID-19 vaccination to all 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.
- Human Resources will include details about the Policy and the WSCC Guidelines in all job postings.
- WSCC will ensure that all workplaces follow WSCC Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) standards for COVID-19 safety within the workplace.

Responsibilities of Contractors

A Contractor, its Employees and any Subcontractor Employees performing work or providing services in WSCC facilities or worksites are required to adhere to the Policy and WSCC Vaccination Guidelines. This includes:

- Ensuring their Employees meet these requirements and bear sole responsibility for all associated costs for such;
- Providing the WSCC with proof of vaccination or testing for any Employees that are scheduled to perform work or provide services under the Contract in WSCC facilities or work sites, if requested;
- Adhering to any other PPE requirements implemented by the facility operators/management for guests or workers entering the facility.

The WSCC has the right at any time, in its sole discretion, without incurring any liability whatsoever, to:

- Take the Work out of the hands of the Contractor,
- Terminate the Contract;
- Or consider the Contractor as ineligible (not responsible) with respect to future WSCC tender or proposal requests,

in the event the Contractor is in default of these requirements during the performance of the work, is unable to perform the work, or is unable to provide proof of vaccination or testing for any Employee when requested by the contract authority.

LEGISLATIVE AND OTHER RELATED AUTHORITY

The Policy and WSCC COVID-19 Vaccination Guidelines are issued under the authority of the Financial Management Board and WSCC President. The [Public Service Act and Regulations](#), and all relevant policies, and the terms and conditions of employment continue to apply.

The Policy and WSCC COVID-19 Vaccination Guidelines are drafted and will be implemented in adherence to the *Access to Information Protection of Privacy Act*, the *Safety Act*, the *Human Rights Act*, and any other legislation, regulations, and policies referenced within the Policy, WSCC COVID-19 Vaccination Guidelines or applicable to the Policy.

All WSCC 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.