

## COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION POLICY

Policy No.	PP-IP-312	Date Approved	September 21, 2021
Prepared by	Senior Leadership Team	Date Implemented	September 07, 2021
Approved by	Senior Leadership Team	Date Reviewed	
		Date(s) Revised	September, 2021
		Scheduled Review Date	September, 2022
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### INTRODUCTION

Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities (SCHC) recognizes the importance of immunization of staff, students, volunteers, health services provider partners, and contractors who are at risk for exposure to and/or contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of their work and potentially transmitting COVID-19 to others in the workplace.

As per Directive #6, issued August 17, 2021 by Dr. Kieran Moore, Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health (OCMOH) and in keeping with SCHC Mission, Vision, and ICARE Values, SCHC is accountable to provide a COVID-19 immunization policy.

In order to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, everyone has a role to play. SCHC will take any reasonable measures to respond to, prevent and alleviate the COVID-19 pandemic. While SCHC has a responsibility to implement precautionary care principles for all staff, students, volunteers, health services provider partners, and contractors there is also the responsibility as a health care provider to continue to provide essential services.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline SCHC expectations concerning COVID-19 immunization of staff, students, volunteers, health services provider partners, and contractors with the aim of protecting our community which includes clients, staff, students, volunteers, health services provider partners, and contractors. This policy is consistent with public health guidelines and Ontario legislation.

### RESPONSIBILITIES / APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

This policy is applicable to all programs and services of SCHC.

Regardless of how often an individual is at an SCHC work location\* and how much time they spend there, this policy applies to:

- All SCHC staff
- All SCHC volunteers
- Students on an educational placement
- Health services provider partners and contractors including people on contract, and people employed by an employment agency or other third party

For students, health services provider partners, and contractors the supplying school/agency is responsible that their personnel are in compliance with this policy and the protocol outlined herein.

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\*SCHC work location includes but is not limited to an SCHC office, facilitating a group/program in a community setting, or conducting a home visit.

### POLICY

Providing a safe work environment seeking to protect the health and wellbeing of SCHC staff, students, volunteers, health services provider partners, contractors, and clients is of critical importance. Having a safe work environment aids in reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19. The Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health has directed SCHC to develop and implement a vaccination policy and confirm compliance by all SCHC staff, students, volunteers, health services provider partners, and contractors.

SCHC is committed to following an evidence based program to identify staff, students, volunteers, health services provider partners, and contractors exposed to or infected with COVID-19, treat them with compassion during any interactions, and implement best practices to protect the safety of others. SCHC follows legislated reporting guidelines with all communicable illnesses including COVID-19.

It is important that all staff, students, volunteers, health services provider partners, and contractors make an informed decision about whether or not to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. SCHC **strongly recommends** that all staff, students, volunteers, health services provider partners, and contractors at SCHC receive the COVID-19 vaccine, unless it is medically contraindicated.

**The SCHC COVID-19 Immunization Policy is effective as of Friday, October 15, 2021.**

### PROCEDURE

#### *Staff and Volunteers*

To facilitate this policy all staff and volunteers are required to provide **ONE** of the following:

1. Proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 provided to SCHC Human Resources for staff and to the Volunteer Coordinator for volunteers.
  - a) Current definition of fully vaccinated can be found on the Ontario Ministry of Health / Ministry of Long Term Care COVID-19 Vaccine-Relevant Information and Planning Resources website: [https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/covid19\\_vaccine.aspx](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/covid19_vaccine.aspx)

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2. Submit to Human Resources or Volunteer Coordinator a “Certificate of Exclusion from COVID-19 Vaccination” form (See Forms), completed by a physician or nurse practitioner providing written proof of a medical reason that sets out:
  - a. A documented medical reason for not being fully vaccinated against COVID-19, and
  - b. The effective time-period for the medical reason
3. The Certificate of Exclusion from COVID-19 Vaccination form will be held in a confidential file.

Staff and volunteers who are not fully vaccinated, who decline to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination and/or who have provided written proof of a medical reason for not being vaccinated for COVID-19 are required to complete rapid antigen point of care testing for COVID-19 at a frequency of not less than twice (2 times) per week which is in alignment with provincial guidance. A negative test result is required for the staff / volunteer to attend an SCHC work location. **(Refer to SCHC Rapid Antigen Point of Care Testing section below and the SCHC Rapid Antigen Point of Care Testing policy for detailed information)**

### *Students and Health Services Provider Partners*

To facilitate this policy all students and health services provider partners are required to:

- Provide proof of compliance with the immunization policy of the supplying school/agency and with the SCHC COVID-19 Immunization Policy by signing a Declaration Acknowledging SCHC COVID-19 Immunization Policy
- All students or health services provider partners who attend an SCHC work location are required to adhere to SCHC mandatory screening protocols as per public health guidelines, City of Toronto and Government of Ontario legislation.
- Any student or health services provider partner who requires rapid antigen point of care testing for COVID-19 and cannot access it elsewhere, may complete testing at the SCHC testing clinic. The individual is responsible for reporting the test results to their school/agency.

### *Contractors*

- To facilitate this policy all contractor agencies/employers are required to complete a declaration their employees are compliant with the SCHC COVID-19 Immunization Policy
- Any employees of contractors who attend an SCHC work location are required to adhere to SCHC mandatory screening protocols as per public health guidelines, City of Toronto and Government of Ontario legislation.

### *Rapid Antigen Point of Care Testing*

Rapid antigen point of care testing for COVID-19 provides an added layer of protection in seeking to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. While many individuals infected with COVID-19 experience

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symptoms, asymptomatic infection is possible. Rapid antigen point of care testing for COVID-19 is done to identify potentially unsuspected cases of COVID-19 that would have otherwise been missed.

For all staff and volunteers who are not fully vaccinated, who decline to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination and/or who have provided written proof of a medical reason for not being vaccinated for COVID-19, the following is applicable:

- Will submit to and complete rapid antigen point of care testing a minimum of two times per week
- Immediately prior to completing the testing, have completed and passed the mandatory screening
- At the time of testing **MUST** be asymptomatic showing no symptoms of COVID-19 and not a close contact of someone with COVID-19
- Testing is to be completed on own time, no exceptions
- SCHC will provide the rapid antigen point of care testing at no charge
- Testing can be completed any time during the testing clinic hours of operation, it is not required to complete testing prior to the start of the work day
- Any individual who receives a positive result on a rapid antigen point of care test **MUST** seek a confirmatory lab-based PCR test within 24 hours and self isolate until the results of the confirmatory test are known

### *Continuing Surveillance*

SCHC's COVID-19 immunization policy requires all staff, students, volunteers, health services provider partners, and contractors, regardless of vaccination status to adhere to the mandatory screening protocols as per public health guidelines, City of Toronto and Government of Ontario legislation.

### *Documentation*

SCHC Human Resources staff will maintain all staff information including COVID-19 immunization status and Certificate of Exclusion from COVID-19 Vaccination in the electronic human resources documentation system.

The Volunteer Coordinator will maintain student and volunteer information.

Corporate Services staff will maintain the information obtained from health services provider partners and contractors.

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR UNVACCINATED STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

It is important that all staff and volunteers have evidence-based information about the COVID-19 vaccines. Having the information allows for staff and volunteers to make an informed decision about whether or not

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to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. In addition, staff and volunteers will be able to educate others about COVID-19 vaccines.

Directive #6 requires that SCHC have, as a component of the Immunization Policy an educational program for unvaccinated staff and volunteers.

SCHC will provide the educational program to all staff and volunteers. The educational program includes at a minimum the following:

- How COVID-19 vaccines work
- Vaccine safety related to the development of the COVID-19 vaccines
- The benefits of vaccination against COVID-19
- Risks of not being vaccinated against COVID-19
- Possible side effects of COVID-19 vaccination

### SUPPORT FOR VACCINATION

SCHC will provide the following supports for staff, students, volunteers, health services provider partners and contractors subject to this policy:

- Assistance with booking a vaccine appointment as requested
- Peer to peer support as requested

### CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

SCHC is required, pursuant to the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health's Directive #6 to report statistical information to the OCMOH or the Ontario Ministry of Health. No identifying information will be provided to the OCMOH or the Ontario Ministry of Health in relation to this policy; all statistical information will be provided in aggregate form.

### RELATED DOCUMENTS

Daily Protocol for Employees, Students and Volunteers COVID-19 Self-Assessment document

Rapid Antigen Point of Care Testing policy

Certificate of Exclusion from COVID-19 Vaccination form

Declaration Acknowledging SCHC COVID-19 Immunization Policy form

### AUTHORIZATION

Jeanie Argiropoulos, Chief Executive Officer

September 2021

Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities

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