

FAQ for Stakeholders

On August 24, 2021, the Manitoba government announced new public health orders that will require frontline public service employees to be fully vaccinated by October 31, 2021, or undergo regular testing as a reasonable accommodation. The following positions are subject to the vaccination or testing requirements: education workers, child care workers, health care workers and frontline public sector employees and funded agency employees. More information can be found at <https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=52163&posted=2021-08-24>

SECTION 1 General Inquiries

Are municipalities and other organizations required to implement a proof of vaccination policy for their employees?

No. At this time, public health officials recommend that others follow the province's lead in implementing a proof of vaccination policy for their employees. However, the current public health orders do not implement a requirement to do so. Future amendments to the public health orders may implement a requirement, but no further information is available at this time.

What is required for vaccination / proof of vaccination?

Everyone subject to the order must become fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and provide their employer with proof they are fully vaccinated to continue working. Fully-immunized individuals are those who have received both doses (any combination) of an approved two dose COVID-19 vaccine (AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Moderna), or a single dose of an approved single dose COVID-19 vaccine (Janssen/Johnson & Johnson) with more than 14 days having passed since the final vaccination was received.

What will happen if I or my employee are not fully immunized, or if we do not provide proper proof of vaccination?

If proper proof of vaccination is not provided, employees will only be permitted to continue working in their designated position if they get tested for COVID-19 at intervals specified in the order, which could be up to three times a week for full time employees. Further details on testing intervals will be provided in the weeks ahead.

Is my employment conditional on being fully vaccinated?

The policy does not require vaccination as a condition of employment. Rather, employees will have a choice between being fully vaccinated and showing proof of vaccination, or undergoing frequent COVID-19 testing to work.

How will the testing process work?

More detailed work is underway on the public health order and on the guidance to support it. We'll be sharing more details in the weeks ahead.

What are the acceptable forms of proof of vaccination?

Acceptable forms of proof will include the Manitoba Immunization Card (digital or physical), or a secure printed provincial immunization record from either public health or the Shared Health online portal that shows immunization dates.

How does public health define “fully vaccinated?”

Fully-immunized individuals are those who have received both doses (any combination) of an approved two dose COVID-19 vaccine (AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Moderna), or a single dose of an approved single dose COVID-19 vaccine (Janssen/Johnson & Johnson) with more than 14 days having passed since the final vaccination was received.

When does the order take effect?

Effective dates and all other details will soon be announced with the order.

If I have a medical reason for not getting vaccinated, what should I do?

The public health order was developed with input from medical experts in various medical specialties including oncology, allergy, immunology, transplant medicine, neurology, obstetrics, etc., to ensure the policy is fair to all, including those with medical concerns about vaccination.

Expert opinion was provided, based on existing and evolving evidence and clinical practice, about whether there are patient populations that cannot be immunized for medical reasons. It was determined that medical exemptions are not warranted for the COVID-19 vaccine.

There are specific situations, however, where vaccination may be delayed, typically no longer than three months. Please connect with your health care provider for more information.

Can I or my employee(s) refuse to be vaccinated for personal or religious reasons?

The policy offers a choice between immunization and testing. Public health must accommodate those who cannot receive a vaccine to the point of undue hardship, and employers must support employees to get vaccinated and help to work around any obstacles or access issues.

Is it a human rights violation to require vaccination as a condition of employment? What are the ethical implications here?

In law, discrimination is defined as treating a person differently on the basis of some characteristic that goes to the root of who they are as a human being (where there is no reasonable cause to do so), such as age, race, sexual orientation, sex, ethnicity, gender identity, religion, disability, etc.

Vaccination requirements are not discriminatory in Manitoba or Canada. Public health laws may restrict our freedoms, but are temporary and with justification behind them.

What if I don't want to be vaccinated because it's my body, and my choice?

Many public servants are public facing employees who directly serve the public. As such, many are at a higher risk of contracting or transmitting COVID-19, starting transmission chains that will affect those at greater risk.

While people do have the right to choose not to get vaccinated, they also have a professional and personal responsibility to help protect public health. If they refuse to be vaccinated, they will have to undergo regular COVID-19 testing to help mitigate the risk.

If the province can mandate vaccinations for public sector employees, then why not mandate it for everyone as a province-wide public health order?

Beginning with the public service is a good starting point. However, as more data and information becomes available, we'll look at it to see if we need to make further adjustments.

What if a public servant refuses to get tested for COVID-19? Will they be fired from their job?

As we noted, more detailed work is underway on the public health order and on the guidance to support it. We'll be sharing more details in the weeks ahead.

What if a public servant is on leave? Will they need to get vaccinated before they return to work?

As we noted, more detailed work is underway on the public health order and on the guidance to support it. We'll be sharing more details in the weeks ahead.

Why is government doing this now?

For many months, there was a limited supply of the vaccine. Once more vaccine arrived, there was very good uptake.

But now, the delta variant is changing things. This pandemic is quickly becoming one of the unvaccinated. We want to make sure as many people as possible, particularly those under 12 who may not yet be able to get vaccinated, are protected. This is a step we can take to make this happen.

SECTION 2

Community and Recreation Facilities

How do community and recreation facilities verify vaccination status?

To verify immunization status for Manitobans, operators use the Manitoba Verifier Application to confirm a person's immunization status, and then confirm the individual's identity against government-issued identification. For further very detailed information, including information on proof of immunization for people from other provinces, please visit this link:

<https://manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/immunizationrecord/businesses.html>

There is an app that can be downloaded to scan QR codes. The Manitoba Immunization Verifier Application is available on the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store. The following documents are considered valid proof of immunization in Manitoba:

- Manitoba Immunization Card
- National Defence Canada Covid-19 Vaccine Record / Card
- Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) Travel Vaccination Record
- An official document issued by a Canadian province or territory containing information of a person's COVID-19 vaccination history

Immunization documentation submitted to Canadian border service officials and government-issued photo identification can be used to confirm an international traveller's citizenship and vaccination status.

If there are no staff to verify vaccinations, is it recommended to keep the facility closed?

It is the responsibility of the facility operator to ensure the public health orders are complied with, if the facility is open or operating.

Are vaccination requirements in effect for outdoor events?

Information on requirements is subject to change and can be found here:

<https://manitoba.ca/covid19/prs/orders/index.html#current>

How do we deal with people who use our services and do not have ID?

Residents who have lost ID can connect with the Government of Manitoba Resident's Portal at https://residents.gov.mb.ca/lost_id.html Residents needing help to get a birth certificate or other foundational identification etc. can contact Citizen's Bridge in Winnipeg at 204-927-2332 or Manitoba 211 at 1-855-275-1197.

If organizations provide social services and recreational activities in their facilities, are the orders applied on a program to program basis or as facility-wide approach?

The public health orders require the operator of a facility to apply a facility-wide approach.

Does vaccination status need to be checked each time a person enters a community public space such sporting and recreation facilities and fitness centres?

To ensure consistency, people should show proof of vaccination each time they enter the facility.

Do facilities have the responsibility to check vaccination status for a private rental?

It is the responsibility of the facility operator to ensure that all orders are addressed in public and private rental use. Some events have specific recommendations in the orders such as weddings and funerals. Further information can be found here -

<https://manitoba.ca/covid19/prs/orders/index.html#current>

If a meeting is held in an indoor sporting or recreation facility, are people permitted to enter the facility to attend a meeting if they are not vaccinated?

Anyone over 18 years of age entering a sporting or recreation facility is required to be fully vaccinated or produce proof from the Government of Manitoba that there is a medical reason for the person not to receive a vaccine for COVID-19.

Is there a capacity limit when only vaccinated persons attend a facility?

Information on gathering sizes is subject to change and can be found here

<https://manitoba.ca/covid19/prs/orders/index.html#current>.

Do we need to check parent/caregiver vaccination status if they are attending child's the activity?

Children under 12 are not currently eligible for vaccination. Public health restrictions on attendance at facilities apply to spectators. Parents/caregivers entering a facility are required to produce proof of vaccination or produce proof from the Government of Manitoba that there is a medical reason for the person not to receive a vaccine for COVID-19.

SECTION 3

Other

How do the orders affect museums and art galleries?

Museums and art galleries may open if the operator restricts admission to indoor areas to people who:

- produce proof that they are fully immunized;
- produce proof from the Government of Manitoba that there is a medical reason for the person not to receive a vaccine for COVID-19;
- are under 12 years of age.

How do the orders impact public libraries?

Under the current Public Health Orders, basic library services may continue without restrictions. Mask use is required.

Programming that involves outside individuals or agencies as organizers or presenters must follow the public health orders for those activities. Outside organizations renting space in the library must follow restrictions based on the type of activity they are planning.

Instructional programming offered by library staff may continue without restriction. Recreational programming (eg. arts and crafts) must follow the public health orders for those activities.

Recreational programming and/or programming offered by external individuals or organizations, must restrict admission to members of the public who:

- produce proof that they are fully immunized;
- produce proof from the Government of Manitoba that there is a medical reason for the person not to receive a vaccine for COVID-19; or
- are under 12 years of age.

Live performing arts events or movie screenings must also restrict admission as outlined above.

Organizations seeking clarification on how the orders apply to specific programs and/or services and/or whether or not a programming is deemed recreational should contact Manitoba Government Inquiry at:

Tel: 204-945-3744

Toll Free in North America: 1-866-626-4862

Email: mgi@gov.mb.ca