

# COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Policy

## Diocesan Commitment

As Christians, and through our baptismal covenant, we promise to seek and serve Christ in all persons, love our neighbour, and respect the dignity of every human being. We have a moral obligation to protect others and to set an example to the communities we serve. There is one crucial way we can love our neighbours, and that is to vaccinate ourselves against COVID-19 if we are able to do so.

As our parishes are looking towards reopening in the Fall of 2021, the Diocese hopes that conditions will be such so that some will be fully returning to in person ministry and work. The Diocese and our parishes are committed to providing and maintaining a safe environment for the Clergy, Employees, Volunteers, and those who come to us for ministry in its many forms. The Diocese and parishes have a legal obligation to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of the people of this Diocese. (s. 25 (2)(h) *Occupational Health and Safety Act*).

The purpose of this policy is to outline what is required of all Clergy, Employees, and Volunteers with respect to COVID-19 and vaccinations. This policy takes into account the risks the highly contagious and dangerous nature of the COVID-19 variants and the publicly available information provided by government sources about the safety and efficacy of vaccines. That information indicates that being fully vaccinated has been shown to be effective in reducing COVID-19 virus transmission and protecting vaccinated individuals from severe consequences of COVID-19. It is our best way to prevent transmission in our workplaces and ministry contexts.

## Access to Policy and Program

The policy shall be posted on the Diocesan website and Bulletin Board. It will be distributed by email to Diocesan Employees, Clergy and Volunteers. Parishes are expected to ensure that all parish Employees, Volunteers, and parishioners are made aware of the policy and to also post this policy in a public place so that all members of the parish community are aware of the policy.

## Scope

This policy applies to every bishop, priest, deacon, and lay person under the jurisdiction of the Diocesan Bishop of the Diocese of Toronto engaged as an office holder, Employee, service provider, or Volunteer. For further clarification, it applies to those appointed or hired to work in the Church, and Volunteers at all levels of the Diocese. For the purposes of this policy:

- Employees refers to Synod Office Employees, parish Employees, independent contractors, and service providers.
- Volunteers refers to Synod Office and parish Volunteers in all capacities and that function on behalf of the church (whether on or off its premises). Any participants in the worship services in any church, including visiting Clergy and Bishops, and including those with unpaid singing and speaking roles are considered Volunteers. It also includes the Clergy appointed as Honorary Assistants.
- Examples of Volunteers includes but not are limited to committee and group members, greeters, children's and youth ministry leaders, those who arrange coffee fellowship, audio-visual controllers, bulletin folders, flower arrangers, adult Bible study leaders, collection

# COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Policy

counters, nursing home visitors, camp leaders, Christian education coordinators, counselors, home visitors, parish nurses, server instructors, Sunday school teachers, etc.

Clergy refers to all ordained individuals under the jurisdiction of the Bishop.

Workplace refers to all locations whether indoors or outdoors where work, ministry, or Volunteer engagements are carried out in person on behalf of the Diocese, parishes, and/or ministries of the Diocese.

## **Policy Statement**

All Clergy, Employees, and Volunteers are to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 unless a Volunteer is less than 12 years old. All new Clergy, Employees, and Volunteers are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as a condition of appointment, being hired, or beginning a new volunteer engagement. The Diocese, parishes and Diocesan Ministries will continue to comply with the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (OHRC) and provide accommodation up to the point of undue hardship to anyone who is unable to be vaccinated on the basis of a substantiated protected ground under the OHRC (e.g. medical or religion/creed).

It is important that the implementation of this policy happen quickly so that we can offer our best protection to the Diocesan community. Therefore, effective **September 30, 2021**, any Employee, member of the Clergy or Volunteer who attends at a Workplace must show proof of being vaccinated with two doses of a vaccine or combination of vaccines approved by Health Canada, with the second dose having been administered at least two weeks prior to the in-person attendance.

All Clergy, Employees, Volunteers, and lay members of the Anglican Church of Canada and/or guests attending a Workplace shall comply with applicable health and safety measures to reduce the hazard of COVID-19, including but not limited to compliance with Workplace screening, wearing a mask or face covering, using provided PPE, maintaining appropriate physical distancing and self-monitoring for potential COVID-19 symptoms when on site or otherwise engaged in Diocesan, parish or Diocesan Ministry business.

### Licensees (Outside Groups Using Church Property)

All licensees will be required to follow this policy and represent to parishes that they are in compliance. It is necessary that the church inquire into the vaccination policy of the groups using the facilities. Where the policy of an outside organization does not meet the standards outlined in this policy, a discussion should take place between the churchwardens and the user organization to determine an appropriate course of action. If the licensee is unable or unwilling to follow this policy the church must consider terminating the relationship for safety reasons.

## **1. Policy**

### **A. Mandatory Vaccination**

All Clergy, Employees, and Volunteers who are engaged in work/ ministry must provide proof of full vaccination (currently 2 doses) by submitting the dose administrations receipt from their second dose. This receipt will contain your name, confirmation that the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of the vaccine was received and the

# COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Policy

date of the second dose. (Vaccination booking and receipt details can be found at <https://covid19.ontariohealth.ca/> or obtained by calling 1-833-943-3900).

- a. Vaccinations must have been fully completed at least 14 days before entering a Workplace.
- b. The vaccines received and the vaccination schedule received must be Health Canada approved.
- c. Proof of full vaccination must be provided as per the procedures below and updated as per any future amendments to the vaccination schedule adopted by the secular Province of Ontario.
- d. Exemptions:
  - Those under 12 years old.
  - Those with substantiated Human Rights Code exemptions will be addressed as per section 1.C.

## B. Support for Vaccinations

If you have not yet received your full vaccine and require accommodation during work time to be able to obtain the vaccination, please seek the permission of your immediate supervisor. It is the expectation that Employees (that work full time) be given paid time during a workday to be vaccinated.

## C. Exemptions

### For Medical Exemptions

Those who are not able to obtain a COVID-19 vaccine for medical reasons can request an exemption by:

- a. Providing written proof, from a medical doctor, licensed by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, confirming that the individual is unable to be vaccinated for medical reasons, as well as the effective time period of the exemption. Only contraindications that are clinically recognized are acceptable.
- b. It is the responsibility of the person to whom proof is submitted (either Diocesan Human Resources or the Churchwarden) to follow-up with individuals who have a time-limited exemption.
- c. Those who remain unvaccinated due to a substantiated medical exemption are required to take additional infection and prevention control measures, including providing proof of a negative COVID-19 test (with that result having been obtained no more than 48 hours old prior to entry in the Workplace). Thus, a test is required every 3 days for full-time engagements.

### Other Human Rights Code Protected Grounds

Those who are not able to obtain a COVID-19 vaccine for a reason related to another protected ground in the Ontario Human Rights Code can request an exemption by:

- a. Providing a written request for the need for an exemption setting out the ground upon which the exemption is sought.
- b. Those who remain unvaccinated due to a substantiated Human Rights Code related exemption request are required to take additional infection and prevention control measures, including providing proof of a negative COVID-19 test (with that result having been obtained no more than 48 hours old prior to entry in the Workplace). Thus, a test is required every 3 days for full-time engagements.

# COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Policy

Where a medical or human rights code exemption is requested by a parish Employee or Volunteer, the Churchwardens are to contact the Diocesan Human Resources department for assistance in determining if the exemption is acceptable and the appropriate course of action to ensure the ongoing health and safety of the Diocesan community.

Volunteers under the age 12

Those who are under the age of 12 are required to take additional infection and prevention control measures, including providing proof of a negative COVID-19 test (with that result having been obtained no more than 48 hours old prior to entry in the Workplace).

## **D. Ongoing Monitoring and Assessment of COVID-19 Safety Measures**

To ensure that we continue to optimally protect the health and safety of the Diocesan community and those we serve, this policy and its individual requirements are subject to review and revision as the pandemic progresses and public health guidance, including that relating to immunization, continues to change.

To that end, and in consultation with the appropriate Public Health Unit and occupational health and safety experts, the Diocese will continue to assess other available workplace risk mitigation measures. If it is determined that additional precautions are necessary, the Diocese may decide to deploy new measures to protect the Diocesan community from COVID-19 and may amend this policy accordingly and/or communicate the required precautions to those impacted.

## **2. Procedures**

### **A. Awareness**

Education and awareness about COVID-19 and the importance of vaccinations continues to be an important part of our ministry. It is recommended that parishes continue to actively communicate about vaccinations and strongly encourage parishioners to be vaccinated. One way this can be done is by including a strong statement saying that the church encourages and recommends vaccinations for COVID-19 on all parish communications. Include short education paragraphs about the vaccine, alongside the fact that being vaccinated protects children under 12 who don't yet have vaccinations available to them and the vulnerable that are unable to be vaccinated.

### **B. Record Keeping and Confidentiality**

Vaccination status is Personal Health Information which is held to a very high standard of privacy. All information is to be collected and stored in accordance with the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA). Therefore, it is important that each Workplace ensure that the information is submitted to a confidential, designated group as outlined below. No information is to be requested or stored in a hard copy.

The Diocesan Human Resources (HR) department will only be receiving records electronically (by email sent to [hr.covid@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:hr.covid@toronto.anglican.ca)). Only members of the HR department will have access to this email account and the email will be permanently deleted as soon as the proof has been recorded (typically this will be within 6 business days).

Churchwardens are to collect information as outlined below.

# COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Policy

Information collected will only be used to the extent necessary for implementation of this policy, for administering health and safety protocols; infection and prevention control measures in the workplace; outbreak management; contact tracing; or legal reasons.

## C. Submitting Proof of Vaccination Status, or Exemption and Negative Test

### Clergy

This includes Incumbents, Priests-in-Charge, Interim Priests-in-Charge, Associate Priests, and Assistant Curates.

- a. This group will submit their proof to HR of the Diocese by emailing it to [hr.covid@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:hr.covid@toronto.anglican.ca).
- b. Should follow up be required with those who have not submitted proof, HR will notify the Area Bishop.
- c. The Area Bishop will follow up with the individual and notify HR should further action be required. HR and the Area Bishop will determine the appropriate next steps for those not in compliance with this policy.

### Vocational Deacons

- a. The active Vocational Deacons will submit their proof to HR by emailing it to [hr.covid@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:hr.covid@toronto.anglican.ca)
- b. Should follow up be required with those who have not submitted proof, HR will notify the Coordinator of Deacons) and the Area Bishop.
- c. The Coordinator of Deacons will follow up with the individual and notify HR and the Area Bishop should further action be required. HR and the Area Bishop will determine the appropriate next steps for those not in compliance with this policy.

### Synod Office

- a. Diocesan staff, Volunteers, and committee members will submit their proof to HR of the Diocese by emailing it to [hr.covid@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:hr.covid@toronto.anglican.ca).
- b. Should follow up be required with those who have not submitted proof, HR will notify the Employee's supervisor or the Volunteer's department contact, i.e. the Secretary of Synod for Diocesan Council members.
- c. The supervisor or department contact will follow up with the individual and notify HR should further action be required. HR and the Executive Director will determine the appropriate next steps for those not in compliance with this policy.

### Parishes

- a. Employees, Volunteers, and Honorary Assistants are only to show their proof to the Churchwardens of the parish. This responsibility cannot be delegated to the Deputy Churchwardens, other Employees or Volunteers.
- b. Churchwardens are to visibly verify the proof of vaccination or negative test in person or via video chat (i.e. Teams, FaceTime, or Zoom) and record on a confidential tracking sheet. Those with proof of exemption are to submit it in writing to the Churchwardens as outlined in section 1.C.

# COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Policy

- c. The Churchwardens are also required to follow up with those who have not submitted proof and implement appropriate next steps for those not in compliance with this policy.
- d. Where a Diocesan Mission or Ministry does not have Churchwardens, the Chair of the Board of Management serves in the role of Churchwarden for the purpose of this policy.

## Chaplains

Chaplains are to follow the vaccination policy and COVID protocols of their workplace. Should a Chaplain not be in compliance with their employer's policy, the Bishop will withdraw their support for the position.

## **3. Responsibilities**

### **Clergy, Laypeople (Employees and Volunteers)**

- Be familiar with this policy and adhere to it.
- Submit proof of vaccination within the required timeline (or proof of exemption and negative test).
- Follow all health and safety protocols.
- Complete any required training.

### **Incumbents and Churchwardens**

- Ensure that parish Employees, Volunteers and Licensees are aware of this policy and that it is posted in a public place for the parish community.
- Continue to strongly encourage all in our community to get vaccinated.
- Ensure that parish Employees are given paid time during a workday to be vaccinated, if required.
- Answer questions about this policy that arise from your parish community and seek clarification from the Diocesan Human Resources department when needed.
- Ensure that Licensees have represented that they are following our vaccine policy.

### **Churchwardens (additional responsibilities)**

- Ensure a secure and confidential method of storing tracking records required under this policy.
- Maintain the confidential tracking sheet consistent with the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA).
- Collect the required proof from parish Employees, Volunteers, and Honorary Assistants.
- Follow up with parish Employees, Volunteers and Honorary Assistants who have not submitted proof and implement the appropriate next steps for those not in compliance.
- Contact Diocesan Human Resources for assistance with accommodations pursuant to the Human Rights Code.

### **Coordinator of Deacons**

- Follow up with the Vocational Deacons who have not submitted proof and notify the Diocesan Human Resources department if further follow up is required.
- Answer questions about this policy that arise from the Vocational Deacons and seek clarification from the Diocesan Human Resources department when needed.

# COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Policy

## Area Bishops

- In consultation with the Diocesan Human Resources department, follow up with the Clergy who have not submitted proof and implement the appropriate next steps for those not in compliance.
- Answer questions about this policy that arise from the Clergy and seek clarification from the Diocesan Human Resources department when needed.

## Diocesan Executive Director

- In consultation with the Diocesan Human Resources department, Chancellor, and Diocesan Bishop, follow up with Diocesan Employees and Volunteers who have not submitted proof and implement the appropriate next steps for those not in compliance.
- Answer questions about this policy that arise from the Diocesan Employees and seek clarification when needed.

## Department Contact for Diocesan Volunteers

- Submit the names of all active Volunteers that will be conducting ministry in-person to the Human Resources department.
- Follow up the Volunteers who have not submitted proof and notify HR if further follow up is required.
- Answer questions about this policy that arise from active Volunteers and seek clarification from HR when needed.

## Human Resources Department

- Responsible for overseeing the administration of this policy.
- Support the Churchwardens, Coordinator of Deacons, College of Bishops, and Diocesan Employees in the implementation of this policy.
- Ensure that Diocesan Employees are given paid time during a workday to be vaccinated, if required.
- Ensure a secure and confidential method of storing tracking records required under this policy.
- Maintain the confidential tracking sheet consistent with the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA).
- Collect the required proof of vaccination, exemption, and/or negative COVID-19 test from Clergy, Diocesan Employees and Volunteers.
- Follow up with Diocesan Employees and Volunteers who have not submitted proof of vaccination, exemption, and/or negative COVID-19 test and implement the appropriate next steps for those not in compliance.
- Answer questions about this policy and offer clarification on its interpretation.