



MEMORANDUM

Memo No. 21-094

TO: Trustees
Student Trustees

FROM: Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board
Brett Reynolds, Associate Director
Michele Giroux, Executive Officer, Corporate Services
Janice McCoy, Superintendent of Human Resources

DATE: 24 August 2021

RE: Covid-19 Vaccination Disclosure Policy

With the start of the new school year just two weeks away, there have been several provincial announcements providing guidance to school districts.

1. On August 3, 2021, the Ministry of Education released [Guidance to Re-opening Ontario's Schools](#) (updated on August 13th). This document informed our back to school planning, but did not establish vaccine requirements.
2. On August 18, 2021, the Minister of Education announced a [vaccination disclosure policy](#). The policy will require that all school board employees and other individuals regularly in school settings:
 - Provide proof of full vaccination against COVID-19; or
 - Provide a formal/official documented medical reason for not being vaccinated against COVID-19; or
 - Participate in an educational program approved by the Ministry.

Regular rapid antigen testing requirements will be in place for staff who are not fully vaccinated.

3. On August 20, 2021 the Ministry released a guidance document for school boards and reporting template (attached as Appendix A). These documents provide initial guidance on implementation planning, and in particular, to support the establishment of any necessary data collection and reporting processes.

Provincial or Local Policy

Initially, the announcements suggested that school boards and other affected organizations would need to develop a policy in accordance with the provincial guidance. With that in mind and short timelines, staff began work on a local vaccination disclosure policy to align with the provincial direction. However, more recent communications seem to indicate that the Ministry is establishing a provincial policy directive for implementation by local school districts. It is now expected that the policy directive will be confirmed in regulation and that additional, detailed guidance from the ministry will follow including information on educational sessions, testing requirements, communication with staff and frequently asked questions. There appears to be limited opportunity for local discretion or interpretation of this policy directive.

The Ministry communication has focused exclusively on the vaccine disclosure policy and has been silent on local policy decisions including local policy regarding mandating vaccines for staff.

Implementation Planning and Key Dates

The provincial directive is very ambitious in terms of timelines:

- By September 7, 2021: Individuals covered by the policy are expected to submit a formal attestation that they are “fully vaccinated” against COVID-19 and provide proof of vaccination (i.e. upload or provide vaccination receipt(s)).
- By September 10, 2021: School boards are expected to share aggregated, depersonalized attestation statistical information with the ministry in an electronic format and continue doing so on a monthly basis.
- By September 15, 2021: School boards are expected to publicly post aggregated, depersonalized attestation statistical information and continue doing so on a monthly basis.

Work is underway to develop an electronic attestation and proof of vaccine application using a licensed software tool which is already in place at the District. Staff is also collaborating with other districts to find efficiencies in this process. Our goal is to create one application that includes the workflows for attestation, proof of vaccine, submission of evidence of medical exemption, links to educational programs and reporting. The application must be designed to accommodate employees including casual employees (teachers, ECEs, EAs, custodians), trustees, occasional teachers, students on a work placement, volunteers, transportation service providers, professional service providers, and frequent visitors including third-party contractors. With over 10,000 employees alone, it is a significant undertaking to design, build and implement this type of system in order to meet a reporting deadline which is only 14 days away. The completion of an attestation is relatively straightforward, but accessing and submitting the proof of vaccine is a multi-step process which is more complex for anyone who resides and/or was vaccinated outside of the province of Ontario.

At this time, we expect we could have an application ready to use in the first week of September. However, with limited time for testing and awareness, we are concerned that completion of the attestation on or before the September 7th deadline may be low. This could mean that vaccine compliance rates could initially appear low, and grow quickly as users adapt to the system. (Given the relatively high vaccine rate coverage in Ottawa (78% of the +12 population and 68% of the total population) and the keen interest in vaccines by educators and educational support workers, we anticipate that vaccine rates for our employee population will mirror and possibly exceed the local average, but the data will confirm this.)

Considering Mandatory Vaccine Policies

In light of the trustee motion regarding a mandatory employee vaccine policy, staff has been considering how such a policy could be implemented in conjunction with the required vaccine disclosure policy. The District has a duty to comply with the provincial policy direction, including the stipulated timelines. While there may be legal authority to implement a mandatory vaccination policy for staff, there are a number of possible risks associated with the implementation of such a policy, including grievances under collective agreements, lawsuits and/or complaints under the Human Rights Code. Some of these risks could be mitigated if there were sufficient time to consider implementation strategies, consequences of non-compliance and to discuss these matters with the federations. The challenge is that time is limited, and compliance with the Ministry policy directive by September 7th is already a considerable undertaking. Expanding the provincial directive to include mandatory vaccines at this time could threaten our ability to accomplish either the Ministry mandated policy directive or any Board policy in the required timeframe.

As an alternative, staff is recommending that we proceed with the Ministry directive and collect the information which will inform our understanding of current vaccine rates. That information could help to shape next steps in policy direction and possibly identify areas where a targeted focus would be impactful. At the same time, discussions with the federations and other stakeholders could be undertaken. Staff could then be better informed to report back to the Board in late September.

Similarly, operationalizing any decision regarding mandatory vaccines for visitors would need careful consideration about legislative authority, proof of vaccine, method of collection, document retention, exemptions, etcetera. On re-opening, schools will continue to have restrictions on visitors to buildings. It may be prudent to consider the operational impacts of such a policy prior to adoption.

Staff will be available at the meeting to provide any additional information and/or clarification of the many operational issues that arise from the Ministry directive and any consideration of mandatory employee vaccine policies.

Attach.

cc Senior Staff
Nicole Guthrie, Manager, Board Services
Corporate Records

School Board Implementation Resource: Data Collection & Reporting

Covid-19 Immunization Disclosure Policy for the Education Sector

Introduction

As announced on August 17, 2021, the Government of Ontario will implement an immunization disclosure policy (“the policy”) for all publicly funded school board employees, staff in private schools and licensed child care settings and other individuals regularly in these settings, for the 2021-22 school year. Regular rapid antigen testing requirements will be in place for staff who are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Individuals who do not intend to be vaccinated, without a documented medical reason, will be required to participate in an educational session about the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination.

Achieving high immunization rates in Ontario’s schools through vaccination is part of a range of measures and actions that can help prevent and limit the spread of COVID-19 in schools and supports our goal of keeping schools open and safe for in-person learning.

The objectives of the forthcoming policy are to:

- support safer schools for Ontario’s students and education workers;
- set out a provincially consistent approach to COVID-19 immunization disclosure policies in schools;
- optimize COVID-19 vaccination rates in schools;
- ensure that individuals have access to information required to make informed decisions about COVID-19 vaccination; and
- ensure that individuals not vaccinated for COVID-19 are being routinely tested for COVID-19.

The ministry is committed to working collaboratively with its school board and education partners and will continue to provide its support to help employers understand the government’s policy intent and requirements, and support implementation planning.

Key Dates

- **By September 7, 2021:** Individuals covered by the policy are expected to submit a formal attestation if they are “fully vaccinated” against COVID-19 and provide proof of vaccination (i.e. upload or provide vaccination receipt(s)).
- **By September 10, 2021:** School boards are expected to share aggregated, depersonalized attestation statistical information with the ministry in an electronic format and continue doing so on a monthly basis.
- **By September 15, 2021:** School boards are expected to publicly post aggregated, depersonalized attestation statistical information and continue doing so on a monthly basis.

Purpose and Use

This document¹ is meant to provide early guidance to school boards in preparing to implement the forthcoming policy, and in particular, to support the development of any business/human resources processes and/or Information & Information Technology (I&IT) tools that a school board may wish to put in place to support data collection and reporting.

The ministry will provide an updated, comprehensive guidance document shortly that will include further information on topics such as: educational sessions and testing requirements.

Individuals Covered by the Policy

The requirements in the forthcoming policy will apply to all school board employees/staff, as well as frequent school visitors and other professionals who deliver services in schools and interact with students and staff, including third-party contractors.

Subject to Lieutenant Governor in Council (LGIC) approvals, this may include:

- School board trustees;
- Occasional teachers on a supply list;
- Students on an educational placement, including professional services students on a placement / work-integrated learning visit (e.g., teacher candidate practicums, nurse, psychologist, behavioural therapist, speech-language pathologist, etc);
- Volunteers;

1. The application and use of this document are the responsibility of the user. The Ministry of Education assumes no liability resulting from any such application or use. This document is not intended as a substitute for any applicable legislation, directives, or orders and does not constitute legal advice. In the event of any conflict between this document and any legislation, directive, or order, the legislation, directive, or order prevails. Additionally, this document is not intended to take the place of medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

- Those who provide professional services to children at school;
- Student transportation drivers; and
- Frequent visitors, including third-party contractors, who regularly interact with or are in the presence of students and/or school board staff.

Based on these parameters, school boards are asked to determine the total number of individuals subject to the school board's policy. School boards are also asked, in their reporting to the ministry, to be explicit on categories of individuals captured, including any deviations from the above the list.

The ministry recognizes that some individuals covered under this policy are employed by, volunteer at, or provide services to multiple school boards. Individuals will be expected to provide separate attestations to each school board. Each school board should report all of these individuals. Where these individuals are not fully vaccinated, they will be required to identify a single school board for the purposes of participating in an education program and testing.

Attestation Requirements

By September 7, 2021, individuals covered by the policy are expected to submit a formal attestation if they are "fully vaccinated" against COVID-19 and provide proof of vaccination (i.e. upload or provide vaccination receipt(s)). This attestation process is envisioned to take approximately 15 minutes.

For the purposes of this document, "fully vaccinated against COVID-19" means having received all of the doses required for a COVID-19 vaccine(s) approved by the World Health Organization (e.g., two doses of a two-dose vaccine, or one dose of a single-dose vaccine); and having received the final vaccine dose at least 14 days ago.

Individuals can submit their attestations at any time, as soon as they meet the definition of "fully vaccinated" outlined above.

Attestation Collection Guidance

It is recommended that school boards consider the use of a secure electronic system or tool to collect attestation information from staff and other individuals to whom this policy applies. The ministry recognizes that many school boards are considering the use of the attestation function in their existing Human Resources (HR) system. If a school board is unable to, or prefers to use an alternate means of collection, it is free to do so and share its approach with the ministry. School boards are encouraged to obtain their own privacy advice to ensure they are in compliance with their privacy obligations under applicable legislation.

The following language may be considered as part of a school board’s attestation form. This language is provided for illustrative purposes only and there is no requirement to use it.

I affirm that I am fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

In this attestation, “fully vaccinated against COVID-19” means having received all of the doses required for a COVID-19 vaccine(s) approved by the World Health Organization (e.g., two doses of a two-dose vaccine, or one dose of a single-dose vaccine); and having received the final vaccine dose at least 14 days ago.

I affirm that all of the information and answers provided herein and any accompanying supporting documentation are complete, true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief as required by law. I understand that any misrepresentation, falsification, or omission of any material facts may render this attestation void.

Providing Proof

Proof of vaccination

After vaccination, individuals with an Ontario photo health card can log in to the provincial portal to download or print an electronic COVID-19 vaccine receipt (PDF) for each dose received.

Receipts are available:

- for first and second doses received in Ontario regardless of where you were vaccinated in Ontario (for example, at a mass immunization clinic, hospital, pharmacy, or primary care setting)
- for doses received out of province, if reported to the local public health unit (and if approved international vaccines²)

To log in to the **provincial portal** and download vaccine receipt(s), individuals will need the following:

- a **green photo health (OHIP) card** (you will need numbers from both the front and back of the card, expired cards will be accepted)
- date of birth
- postal code

2. Receipts for Health Canada-approved vaccines are currently available online; after August 24, 2021, all receipts for World Health Organization approved vaccines will be available.

Steps to download receipt(s):

- Scroll to the bottom of the page and acknowledge that you have read and understood the terms of use;
- Enter the requested personal information and press “Continue”;
- Select “Continue” under the header: “Vaccination Receipts”; and
- Click “Download the Receipt” for the desired vaccination date.

If you have a **red and white health card**, call the Provincial Vaccine Booking Line at 1-833-943-3900. The call centre agent can email you a copy of your receipt.

Individuals in the following circumstances should contact their **local public health unit** for further information:

- Individuals without an Ontario health card (or who did not provide their Ontario health card at the time of vaccination) should contact public health for a copy of their receipt.
- Individuals who did not receive a Canadian approved vaccine
- Individuals who have received an out-of-province vaccination and have not yet contacted their local public health unit should do so to ensure their records are validated and recorded.
- Individuals who have questions or concerns about the information supporting their COVID vaccine receipt.

The physical/hard copy receipt and email version of the receipt a person would have received will resemble the following:

Ontario 
Ministry of Health
Ministère de la Santé

Name/Nom: [REDACTED]
Health Card Number/Numéro de la carte Santé: [REDACTED]
Date of Birth/Date de naissance: [REDACTED]
Date/Date: 2021-06-24, 2:08 p.m.
Agent/Agent: COVID-19_mRNA
Product Name/Nom du produit: MODERNA COVID-19 mRNA-1273
Diluent Product: Not Applicable / Ne s'applique pas
Lot/Lot: [REDACTED]
Dosage/Dosage: 0.5 ml
Route/Voie: Intramuscular / intramusculaire
Site/Site: Left deltoid / deltoïde gauche
You have received 2 valid dose(s) / Vous avez reçu 2 dose(s) valide(s)
Vaccine Administered By/Vaccin Administré par: [REDACTED]
Authorized Organization/Organisme agréé: [REDACTED]

Note: Only valid doses are counted / Remarque: Seules les doses valides sont comptées

Please remain on the premises for the next 15 minutes for observation. You are free to leave the vaccination clinic at: 2:23 PM / Veuillez rester sur place pendant les 15 prochaines minutes aux fins d'observation. Vous pouvez quitter la séance de vaccination à 2:23 PM.

The majority of people who were vaccinated in Ontario were provided a receipt from the Ministry of Health (MOH) with the individual's name, date of vaccination and product name (i.e., Pfizer, Moderna, etc.).

However, there may be some exceptional instances where an individual cannot easily present or upload a digital copy of their vaccine receipt. The MOH encourages school boards to work with individuals on a case by case basis to collect acceptable proof of vaccination.

Proof of a medical reason for not being vaccinated

Proof must be provided by either a physician or a nurse practitioner (note: A nurse practitioner is a registered nurse who holds an extended certificate of registration under the Nursing Act, 1991).

More information on this subject will be provided to school boards shortly.

Proof of completion of an educational program

Individuals who do not intend to be vaccinated, without a documented medical reason, will be required to participate in an educational session about the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination.

School boards are encouraged to plan a way for people to provide proof that they have completed an educational program, where required. Options could include having the person sign a form digitally or in-person saying they completed the educational program (i.e. an attestation) or having them answer questions that confirm they have understood the program's content.

More information on this subject will be provided to school boards shortly.

Statistical Information and Reporting

As announced on August 17, 2021, all school boards must collect, maintain, and disclose key data metrics that relate to this policy to the Ministry of Education on a monthly basis.

School boards will need to provide the following information:

- a.** the number of individuals that provided proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19;
- b.** the number of individuals that provided a documented medical reason for not being fully vaccinated against COVID-19;
- c.** the number individuals that completed an educational session about the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination as an alternative to (a) or (b);
- d.** the total number of individuals to which this policy will apply; and
- e.** Categories of individuals captured that deviate from the list above under "Individuals Covered by the Policy" on page 2.

The summarized attestation information should be submitted as an excel attachment to the following email: vaccinationattestation.edu@ontario.ca. Please see Appendix A for the Excel template to be used. The naming convention for the completed template is: **VaccinationAttestation_School Board Name.xls**. For questions on the Excel template, please submit them to vaccinationattestation.edu@ontario.ca.

School boards will also be required to post aggregated, depersonalized board-level data on a monthly basis.

School boards must not provide any identifying information to the ministry and should communicate to all individuals who are subject to the school board's policy that information will be shared with the ministry in aggregate form only and without any identifying information.

Additional Guidance

Additional, detailed guidance from the ministry will follow once this policy is confirmed in regulation, and provide information on topics such as:

- Educational sessions for individuals who do not intend to be vaccinated;
- Testing requirements for individuals who are not fully vaccinated;
- Draft employer policy;
- Guidance with respect to communicating with staff about the policy; and
- Frequently asked questions.

APPENDIX A: 2021-22 COVID-19 VACCINATION ATTESTATION SUMMARY / ANNEXE A : RAPPORT CONCERNANT LES ATTESTATIONS SUR LA VACCINATION CONTRE LA COVID-19 POUR 2021-2022

(Please enter data in white cells only) /
(Veuillez saisir les données dans les cellules blanches uniquement) /

**PART I: CONTACT INFORMATION /
PARTIE I: INFORMATION SUR LES CONTACTES**

School Board Name: / Nom du conseil scolaire :		(Please select from the drop down menu) / (Veuillez choisir dans le menu déroulant)
School Board Contact Name: / Nom de la personne contacte au conseil scolaire :		
School Board Contact Email: / Adresse courriel de la personne contacte:		
Shool Board Contact Phone Number: / Numéro de téléphone de la personne contacte:		

**PART II: ATTESTATION SUMMARY INFORMATION /
PARTIE II : INFORMATION SUR LE RÉSUMÉ D'ATTESTATION**

- I. Total number of individuals to which this policy will apply /
I. Nombre total de personnes auxquelles la présente politique s'appliquera
- II. Total number of individuals that provided proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 /
II. Nombre total de personnes ayant fourni la preuve de leur vaccination complète contre la COVID-19
- III. Total number of individuals that provided a documented medical reason for not being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 / III. Nombre total de personnes ayant fourni une raison médicale documentée pour ne pas être complètement vaccinées contre la COVID-19
- IV. Total number individuals that completed an educational session about the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination as an alternative to II. or III. above, where applicable / IV. Nombre total de personnes ayant suivi une séance d'information sur les avantages de la vaccination contre la COVID-19 comme alternative à II. ou III. ci-dessus, le cas échéant.
- V. Percentage of individuals who have attested to being fully immunized / V. Pourcentage de personnes qui ont attesté être complètement vaccinées
- VI. Information presented as of this date / VI. Informations présentées à cette date

(Please enter as mm/dd/yyyy) / (Veuillez saisir sous la forme mm/jj/aaaa)