


Title:	COVID-19 Vaccination Policy			
Category:	Administration	Policy Number:	ADMIN-825	
Sub-Category:	General	Pages:	Page 1 of 5	
Issued by:	Executive Committee	Issue Date:	September 7, 2021	
Owner:	Chief Human Resources Officer	Last Approved:	07-Sept-2021	

POLICY STATEMENT

GBHS recognizes that high vaccination rates are the most effective, evidence-based approach to protecting all individuals from COVID-19, including our patients, staff, volunteers, learners and contractors.

The purpose of this policy is to outline organizational expectations with regards to COVID-19 immunizations for employees, credentialed staff, contractors, volunteers, students and learners. This policy aligns with Directive #6, issued by the Chief Medical Officer to all Public Hospitals on August 17th, 2021.

All employees and credentialed staff are expected to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, unless there is an approved medical exemption.

A mandatory vaccination policy for contractors, students/learners and volunteers is in place, and anyone in these categories must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 prior to commencing work or placement as of September 7, 2021.


This is an interim policy and mandatory vaccination may be extended to include all employees and credentialed staff.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all employees, credentialed staff, volunteers, students/learners and contractors carrying on activities or other business in the hospital regardless of how often they are on site.

DEFINITIONS

- **Employees** – all individuals who are paid by the hospital.
- **Credentialed Staff** - all physicians and others with privileges, at the hospital.
- **Contractors** – all Service Providers/Tenants/Lessees who direct their employees to attend work on GBHS property, including tenants and lessees.
- **Students/Learners** – all unpaid or paid learners.
- **Volunteers** – all volunteers, including the GBHS Board of Directors, members of the Five Foundation Boards, and Auxiliary members
- **Fully Vaccinated** means having received the full series of a COVID-19 vaccine or combination of COVID-19 vaccines approved by the World Health Organization (ex. Two doses of a two-dose vaccine series, or one dose of a single-dose vaccine series);

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and having received the final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago. *This may include booster vaccine(s) in the future.*

PROCEDURE

Current Employees, and Credentialed staff:

Individuals must declare their vaccination status.

Proof of full vaccination against COVID-19; or written proof of a medical exemption must be provided to the Occupational Health and Safety Department.

Medical Exemptions


Medical exemptions must be provided by a physician or nurse practitioner that sets out: (i) a documented medical reason for not being fully vaccinated against COVID-19, and (ii) the effective time-period for the medical reason.

There are very few medical exemptions to the COVID-19 vaccine. These include:

- Severe allergic reactions or anaphylaxis to a previous dose of a COVID-19 vaccine or to any of its components and who have been assessed by an allergist/immunologist to review methods for possible (re)administration of a COVID-19 vaccine.
- Diagnosed episode of myocarditis/pericarditis after receipt of an initial dose of an mRNA vaccine may result in a delayed dose of second dose due to this medical exemption
- Time-limited medical reason causing a delay in receiving the vaccine (ex. Medical procedure or treatment)

Note: Individuals who have had an allergic reaction within 4 hr and/or anaphylaxis that occurred with a vaccine or injectable medication that does not contain a component or cross-reacting component of the COVID-19 vaccines can receive the COVID-19 vaccine followed by observation for a minimum of 30 min.

Individuals with a history of significant allergic reactions and/or anaphylaxis to any food, drug, venom, latex or other allergens not related to the COVID-19 vaccine can receive the COVID-19 vaccine followed by observation for a minimum of 15 minutes. Individuals with allergy issues like allergic rhinitis, asthma and eczema can receive the vaccine followed by observation for a minimum of 15 minutes

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Regular Testing

GBHS shall require that where an employee or credentialed staff is not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 for any reason, they must submit to regular testing for COVID-19 and demonstrate a negative result, in compliance with a process outlined by GBHS. Testing results will be recorded and audited.

Employees and credentialed staff are required to make arrangements to meet testing requirements outside of scheduled work time and are not paid for any time or costs related to testing.

Those who test positive on a rapid antigen test must undergo a follow-up PCR test immediately (same day if possible) to confirm the results. Individual must notify their Manager they are unable to attend work. The employee will be on unpaid leave and must follow all Public Health directions related to reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Manager will be responsible to audit compliance of testing of their employees.

Education

An educational program has been provided by GBHS and addresses all of the following learning components:


- How COVID-19 vaccines work
- Vaccine safety related to the development of the COVID-19 vaccines
- Benefits of vaccination against COVID-19
- Risks of not being vaccinated against COVID-19; and
- Possible side effects of COVID-19 vaccination.

Requirements for New Hires:

New hires must provide proof of full vaccination status prior to the first date of work. Vaccination proof will be provided to Human Resources and/or Occupational Health and Safety (OHS).

Requirements for Volunteers:

Volunteers must provide proof of full vaccination status. Exceptions will only apply to those with an approved medical exemption. Testing arrangements must be made with OHS before attending on site.

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Requirements for Contractors, Students, Learners

Individuals must be fully vaccinated to work and/or attend placement with GBHS. Medical exemptions must be received, approved and recorded by their educational institution or employer, and communicated to GBHS OHS department. Those with an approved medical exemption will be required to provide proof of a negative antigen test to their employer/educational institution prior to commencement of each date of work/ placement on-site at GBHS. Individuals may be required to provide proof to GBHS OHS upon request.

Support

Individuals who wish to discuss support to receive the vaccine can reach out to their manager or OHS and reasonable accommodation will be made.

Confidentiality


Pursuant to the Chief Medical Officer of Health's Directive 6 for Public Hospitals, GBHS is required to report, when asked, statistical information to the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health or the Ministry of Health. No identifying information will be provided to the Ministry in relation to this policy; all statistical information will be provided in aggregate form.

Medical information relating to an individual's proof of vaccination and/or the reason(s) for not receiving a COVID-19 vaccination and rapid antigen testing will remain in the employee's confidential Occupational Health file for the purposes of contact tracing, policy compliance and minimizing risks to staff and patients. Vaccination status will be released for purposes of COVID-19 Case Contact, Outbreak Management processes and staffing.

Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with the terms of this policy, may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment, placement or revocation of privileges, and/or discontinuation of contracted service.

Future amendments of this policy are anticipated as the COVID-19 situation evolves. Mandatory vaccination may become a requirement for employees and credentialed staff.

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References:

Directive #6 for Public Hospitals, issued under Section 77.7 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA), R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7

https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/directives/vaccination_policy_in_health_settings.pdf