

**THE RELIGIOUS HOSPITALLERS OF ST. JOSEPH
OF THE HOTEL DIEU OF ST. CATHARINES**

Subject: COVID-19 Immunization and Management	
Issuing Area: Occupational Health	Section: Occupational Health
Application: All Staff, Physicians, Students, Patient Advisors, Volunteers, Board of Trustees, Contractors, Business / Entities Operating at HDS	Policy No.: II-OH-21
Approval Authority: Senior Management Committee	
Effective Date: August 2021	Page No.: 1 of 5
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1.0 PURPOSE STATEMENT

In keeping with the Mission and Values of Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre (HDSHRC), the Hospital has established a policy to outline mandatory COVID-19 vaccine administration and management directions for employees, physicians, students, patient advisors, volunteers, Board of Trustees, contractors, and business / entities operating at HDSHRC. Mandatory participation in COVID-19 vaccination programs reduces the transmission of COVID-19 and decreases the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks.

2.0 APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

2.1 The Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health's Directive #6 for Public Hospitals (Directive #6) within the meaning of the Public Hospitals Act, issued under section 77.7 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA), R.S.O. 1990.

3.0 SCOPE

3.1 This policy applies to all employees, physicians, students, patient advisors, volunteers, Board of Trustees, contractors, and business / entities operating onsite at HDSHRC ("participating individuals").

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 COVID-19

COVID-19 is an acute respiratory illness caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). It may be characterized by fever, cough, shortness of breath, and several other symptoms. Asymptomatic infection is also possible.

4.2 **Immunization**

The process of protecting against vaccine preventable diseases by administration of an antigen. This induces an immune response to prevent infection from that infectious disease.

4.3 **Confirmed Case**

A person with laboratory confirmation of COVID-19 infection.

4.4 **Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) Test**

This COVID-19 test detects genetic material of the virus using a lab technique called polymerase chain reaction (PCR).

4.5 **Antigen Test**

A technology for COVID-19 detection. This method relies on direct detection of SARS-CoV-2 viral proteins in nasal swabs and other respiratory secretions using a lateral flow immunoassay (also called an RDT) that gives results in less than 30 minutes.

4.6 **Fully Vaccinated**

“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 (WHO) (e.g., two doses of a two-dose vaccine series, or one dose of a single-dose vaccine series); and having received the final dose of the accepted COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago.

5.0 **POLICY**

It is the policy of the Hotel Dieu Shaver Health & Rehabilitation Centre that:

- 5.1 The Hospital is committed to maintaining a safe work environment and to protect participating individuals, patients and visitors from the risk of infection from, and complications associated with, COVID-19. Every effort shall be taken to promote the reduction of risk for acquiring and/or transmitting vaccine-preventable diseases.
- 5.2 Vaccination is recognized as the cornerstone for preventing, or decreasing, the effects of COVID-19 for those at high risk of serious illness or death from COVID-19 infection and related complications. HDSHRC strongly encourages all participating individuals to participate in the national COVID-19 vaccination campaign.
- 5.3 HDSHRC is committed to complying with the mandatory direction outlined in the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), Directive #6, and to adopt any additional measures as deemed necessary.

6.0 **RESPONSIBILITIES**

6.1 **Management**

- a) Managers/Supervisors shall implement this policy and any associated procedures as applicable.

6.2 **Competent Supervisors (Directors, Managers, Charge Nurses, Lead Hands, Nurse Practitioners, Senior Allied Health staff, etc.)**

- a) All competent supervisors shall conduct themselves and act in accordance with their responsibilities under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

6.3 **Occupational Health Department:**

- a) Shall assist in the education of employees in relation to specific immunizations, risks/benefits, adverse events, and post-immunization care;
- b) Maintain current health chart to note immunization record.
- c) Manage and follow up with any exposures or acute illnesses related to COVID-19 in accordance with the Ministry of Health (MOH) management of cases and contacts of COVID-19 in Ontario.

6.4 **Participating Individuals:**

- a) Are required to comply with this policy.

7.0 **MANDATORY COVID-19 VACCINE PROGRAM**

It is important to protect the health and well-being of HDSHRC patients, employees, physicians, students, patient advisors, volunteers, and members of the Board of Trustees. The CMOH has directed HDSHRC to develop, implement and ensure compliance with a COVID-19 vaccination policy through Directive #6. The Directive recognizes that healthcare organizations are a higher risk setting and that COVID-19 presents immediate risk to patients, staff, physicians, volunteers, students and all others accessing healthcare property.

7.1 To facilitate this policy, in accordance with Directive #6, all participating individuals will be required to provide one of the following to Occupational Health:

- a) By **September 7, 2021**, proof of COVID-19 vaccine administration (such proof to be in a form acceptable to the Hospital), as per the following requirements:
 - i) Proof of all required doses of a COVID-19 vaccine approved by WHO to Occupational Health;
 - ii) If the individual has only received the first dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccination series approved by the WHO, proof that the first dose was administered, the scheduled date of the second dose and as soon as reasonably possible, proof of administration of the second dose to Occupational Health or;

- b) Written proof of a medical reason reviewed and accepted by the Hospital, and provided by either a physician or nurse practitioner that sets out:
 - i) Why a person cannot be fully vaccinated against COVID-19; and
 - ii) The effective time period for the documented medical reason (i.e., permanent or time limited).
 - c) By **October 8, 2021**, proof that the unvaccinated, participating individual has completed the mandatory COVID-19 educational programming through HDSHRC, their primary employer or educational institution.
- 7.2 In accordance with Directive #6, COVID-19 approved educational programming must address the following learning components:
- a) How COVID-19 vaccines work;
 - b) Vaccine safety related to the development of the COVID-19 vaccines;
 - c) Benefits of vaccination against COVID-19
 - d) Risks of not being vaccinated against COVID-19; and
 - e) Possible side effects of COVID-19 vaccination.
- 7.3 Participating individuals who do not provide proof that they are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 for any reason are required to submit to regular antigen testing. The frequency of the antigen testing shall be at minimum one (1) time per week in accordance with Directive #6, but subject to increased frequency if determined by the Hospital. The tests are not to be used by anyone with symptoms or who has a known exposure to COVID-19. Symptomatic and exposed individuals must follow current screening guidelines in place with their primary employer or educational institution, and be tested in an assessment centre with a PCR test.
- 7.4 To be considered fully vaccinated, the participating individual must be 14+ days past receipt of their second dose. Documentation of vaccine status shall be kept in the confidential health record maintained by Occupational Health.
- 7.5 Volunteers and students who are not on site on the effective timelines identified throughout this policy will be required to produce proof of full vaccination status, or HDSHRC approved medical exemption, prior to returning to HDSHRC and/or prior to their initial placement or retention being approved.

8.0 Contracted Workers and Affiliates

Any organization or individual that is providing services at HDSHRC must have their most senior individual verify that all and any employees and subcontractors performing work for their organization will comply with Directive #6 and this policy.

9.0 Mandatory Vaccination

- 9.1 As of January 13, 2022, staff and physicians who have not received their second (2nd) dose of vaccine, and who do not have an approved medical or other legislated approved exemption on file with Occupational Health, will be placed on an unpaid leave of absence, providing time to reconsider their vaccination status.

- 9.2 Individuals who are on an unpaid leave due to their vaccination status will have until January 27, 2022 to submit proof of full COVID-19 vaccination to Occupational Health.
- 9.3 All new employees, physicians, volunteers, patient advisors and student placements, and all other participating individuals, must provide proof of full vaccination status or proof of Hospital approved medical or other legislated exemption before any retention arrangements can be implemented.

10.0 POLICY NON-COMPLIANCE

- 10.1 Failure to comply with the COVID-19 policy, including any misrepresentation of facts, may result in discipline up to and including termination of employment.
- 10.2 All other non-compliant participating individuals may be subject to appropriate remedial measures including termination of privileges, contract(s), placement(s), or appointment(s) or other retention arrangement as applicable.

11.0 CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

- 11.1 Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre is required, pursuant to the CMOH's Directive #6 for Public Hospitals within the meaning of the Public Hospitals Act, 1990 to report statistical information to the CMOH or the Ministry of Health (MOH). No identifying information will be provided to the CMOH or MOH in relation to this policy; all statistical information will be provided in aggregate form.

12.0 REFERENCES

- 12.1 CMOH Directive #6
12.2 Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act & Regulation
12.3 Public Hospitals Act

13.0 DISTRIBUTION

Corporate Manual - Volume II – Section 6 – Occupational Health