

<b>Department:</b>	Administration	<b>Policy Code:</b>	A09-HR
<b>Approval Date:</b>	November 3, 2021	<b>Approved by:</b>	Council
<b>Next Review:</b>	Annually	<b>Revision Date:</b>	Non-Applicable

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## Policy Statement

The Township of Springwater (Township) is committed to providing a safe working environment for our employees and members of the public with whom we interact regularly. It has been recognized by health experts that vaccination is a key element in the protection against the hazard of COVID-19 and this policy is designed to maximize COVID-19 vaccination rates among Township employees as one of the critical control measures for the hazard of COVID-19. This policy is in alignment with provincial directives and within the limits of the Human Rights Code (Ontario).

The Township reserves the right to amend this policy as needed, with minimal notice, to meet the changing provincial and federal requirements.

## Purpose

COVID-19 and COVID-19 variants of concern present a significant health risk, particularly in unvaccinated people. This policy recognizes that those who are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated are at a significantly increased risk of becoming seriously ill from COVID-19 and of spreading the virus to others. This has a significant impact on the health of our employees and the public that we serve as well as business continuity.

Under clause 25(2)(h) of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*, the employer is required to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker. Additionally, Ontario Regulation 577/21 also requires the employer to prepare a policy on COVID-19 vaccinations in their respective workplace.

COVID-19 vaccines are proven to be safe and extremely effective in preventing both infection and serious disease and are a critical control measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

## Scope

This policy applies to all employees at the Township of Springwater, including all full-time, part-time, permanent, and temporary employees, as well as paid on-call firefighters. It also applies to members of Council, volunteers, including any volunteers on Township Committees and Contractors providing any services at Township staffed facilities. All new employees will be subject to this policy as a condition of their employment.

\*Exception\* this policy is overridden by the indoor recreation letter of instruction from SMDHU's medical officer of health for any individuals that fall within a work location or work category that are to be fully vaccinated by this order.

## Definitions

**COVID-19:** Refers to a virus belonging to a large family called Coronavirus, which includes the virus that causes the common cold and more severe respiratory diseases. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel Coronavirus, named SARS-CoV-2.

**Fully Vaccinated:** Having received the full series of a COVID-19 vaccine or combination of COVID-19 vaccines approved by Health Canada (i.e., two doses of a two-dose vaccine series, or a single dose of a single-dose vaccine series) and having received the final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago.

**Rapid Antigen Testing:** Antigen testing detects specific proteins on the surface of the virus. They are often referred to as rapid tests and typically provide results in less than an hour.

**PCR Test:** The polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test for COVID-19 is a molecular test that analyzes an upper respiratory specimen, looking for genetic material (ribonucleic acid or RNA) of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

## Policy

### New Employees

As a condition of hire, all successful job candidates, and all new volunteers, must be Fully Vaccinated prior to starting employment or a volunteer engagement with the Township and will be required to provide proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 at least five (5) business days prior to their start date.

Failure to meet this requirement may result in the immediate revocation of any offer of employment. Once a copy of the candidate's Ministry of Health COVID-19 Vaccine Dose Administration Receipt is received by People and Talent and documented, the copy of the vaccination records will be destroyed. For privacy purposes, the Township will not keep a copy of vaccination records on file.

This condition is subject to the provisions of the applicable provincial human rights legislation. Please note that any requested medical or human rights exemption that is not substantiated with evidence satisfactory to the Township prior to beginning employment or engagement as any other type of worker will result in the conditional offer being immediately rescinded.

## **Current Employees**

All Township employees are required to be fully vaccinated by December 31, 2021, and any subsequent recommended boosters thereafter according to provincial / federal directives. This requirement applies to all employees, regardless of whether they work from home or in any Township facility or property.

The first dose of a two-dose series must be completed by November 30, 2021. The second dose of a two-dose series must be completed by December 31, 2021. Proof of Vaccination must be submitted to People and Talent by email to [vaccine@springwater.ca](mailto:vaccine@springwater.ca).

**Employees must disclose their vaccination status to the Township no later than November 19, 2021, as per the details below.** Employees who are unvaccinated or who are not Fully Vaccinated, must provide regular proof of a negative rapid antigen test as per details below.

Exemptions will be made in accordance with the Township's Accommodation Policy for grounds protected by the Ontario *Human Rights Code* which includes confirmed medical reasons.

## **Proof of Vaccination Status**

All employees must disclose their vaccination status to the Township in accordance with the established process by no later than November 19, 2021, by providing it to People and Talent.

A vaccination receipt constitutes proof of full vaccination. A copy of the vaccination receipt can be obtained by logging in to Ontario's portal to download or print the receipt at <http://covid19.ontariohealth.ca>. Health card number, date of birth and postal code are required information.

Any falsification of vaccination proof will be immediate cause for termination.

## **Enhanced Protocols for Employees Not Fully Vaccinated**

Employees who do not provide proof of full vaccination, or who are unable to be vaccinated for reasons related to an established ground protected under the *Human Rights Code* will be treated as unvaccinated employees. Unvaccinated employees will be subject to enhanced protocols and regular testing as set out below.

Unvaccinated employees will also be subject to certain enhanced safety protocols in the workplace as long as Public Health recommendations or the Township's Policy require. These measures will be adjusted as the situation changes. Employees will be given direction by their Manager in this regard. Such direction will likely include use of personal protective equipment (e.g., masks, face shields) at all times, appropriate distancing, sanitizing of hands and work area or material, or other measures that may come in effect.

Additionally, unvaccinated employees will continue to have to follow all Public Health Guidelines, the Township's COVID-19 Safety Plan, and will have to complete the daily screening form prior to entering the premises. Depending on the situation at the time in relation to COVID-19 restrictions, unvaccinated employees may also be relocated to different areas, tasks, schedules, or may be placed on an Infectious Disease Emergency Leave ("IDEL").

### **Unvaccinated employees with a valid medical exemption**

Employees who cannot be vaccinated due to medical reasons are required to provide proof of Medical Exemption from either a physician or nurse practitioner on the prescribed COVID-19 Vaccine Exemption Form and emailed to People and Talent at [vaccine@springwater.ca](mailto:vaccine@springwater.ca) by November 19, 2021. The Township may liaise with a third-party adjudication provider to assist with adjudicating medical information for the purposes of vaccine exemption. The Township will work with employees who are approved for an exemption to develop an appropriate accommodation plan with alternative health and safety measures.

**Upon approval of medical exemption, employees must adhere to the following procedures:** Effective November 22, 2021, unvaccinated employees shall be required to provide proof of a negative COVID-19 **antigen screening test every 3 days (every 72 consecutive hours)**, with the first antigen test results due on November 23, 2021, prior to the start of their shift. A copy of the antigen screening test results must be emailed to People and Talent at [vaccine@springwater.ca](mailto:vaccine@springwater.ca). All tests **MUST** be administered by a third party (i.e., Shoppers Drug Mart, Guardian Drugs etc.).

Testing may be conducted during working hours and the Township will reimburse the employee for the expenses incurred as a result of the testing through an Expense Reimbursement Form. Eligibility for reimbursement is for **testing only** and does not include any other expenses.

Employees who screen positive on an antigen test shall be required to take a **PCR test** and follow the direction of the Health Unit.

### **Unvaccinated employees who are eligible to receive a vaccine and do not have a valid exemption**

Effective November 22, 2021, unvaccinated employees who do not have a valid medical exemption or who choose not to disclose their vaccination status, shall be required to provide proof of a negative COVID-19 **antigen screening test every 3 days (every 72 consecutive hours)**, prior to the start of their shift with the first antigen test results due on November 23, 2021, prior to the start of their shift. A copy of the antigen screening test results must be emailed to People and Talent at [vaccine@springwater.ca](mailto:vaccine@springwater.ca). All tests **MUST** be administered by a third party (i.e., Shoppers Drug Mart, Guardian Drugs etc.).

Testing will be conducted on the employee's own time and at their own expense.

Employees who screen positive on an antigen test shall be required to take a **PCR test** and follow the direction of the Health Unit.

Public Health isolation requirements will be unpaid by the Township.

In addition, employees who choose not to be vaccinated, or who choose not to disclose their vaccination status, must complete a **mandatory Educational Program** approved by the Township by November 29, 2021, to ensure they are adequately informed about the COVID-19 vaccines and the risks associated with being unvaccinated.

### **Contractors performing work in Township staffed facilities**

Effective November 19, 2021, all Contractors performing work in Township staffed facilities will be required to be fully vaccinated. The Supervisor arranging the contract work will notify the Contractor, collect proof of vaccination, and retain the Contractor's vaccination status on file prior to the commencement of work. All vaccination records will be destroyed and not maintained in any files at the Township.

### **Continued Compliance with all Health and Safety Precautions**

All Fully Vaccinated employees must still follow the Township's COVID-19 Safety Plan and as otherwise directed by their manager, which includes complying with infection prevention practices such as handwashing and sanitizing, wearing PPE whenever physical distancing is a challenge, completing daily screening forms and advising their Manager if they experience any symptoms related to COVID-19.

### **Access to Vaccination Clinics**

The Township provided all employees an additional benefit of up to two (hours) of paid time off work in order to attend and receive their COVID-19 vaccination. Reasonable arrangements will be made to allow for staff to attend COVID-19 vaccination clinics during work time.

Employees require approval from their supervisor in advance before attending a vaccine clinic during work time and proof of an appointment may be required. Employees will be required to submit a time off request form for their supervisor's approval which will be sent to payroll for payment and tracking purposes.

### **Collection and Use of Information Relating to Vaccination Status**

All vaccination records will be destroyed and not maintained in any files at the Township. People and Talent will only record the date of the final dose of the vaccination that leads to being full vaccinated. Full vaccination results 14 days after the final dose in the course of vaccination. All information regarding vaccination will be maintained in the strictest

confidence and securely stored with the People and Talent department. All information on vaccination status will not be disclosed to any third party without worker consent and used only for the purpose of administering this Policy.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Employees**

- a. Comply with the requirements of this policy.
- b. Continue to follow health and safety protocols to ensure personal safety and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### **Managers/Supervisors**

- a. Ensure that employees attending the workplace are Fully Vaccinated against COVID- 19 or have met the requirements of this policy.
- b. Ensure employees have submitted proof of their vaccination status or an approved exemption.
- c. Ensure that Contractors doing work for the Township in Township staffed facilities are Fully Vaccinated. Maintain Contractor vaccination status in a confidential and secure manner. Ensure all vaccination records are destroyed in a responsible manner.
- d. Where feasible, support time from regular duties for employees to attend vaccination clinics.
- e. Follow and comply with any Federal or Provincial legislation, directives, or mandate regarding the vaccination of employees.
- f. Continue to enforce workplace precautions that limit the spread of COVID-19 virus.
- g. Maintain confidentiality of employees' medical and vaccination status.

### **People and Talent**

- a. Collect and store vaccination status information in a manner that ensures medical confidentiality.
- b. Assist supervisors with any employee relations and health and safety issues arising from application of this policy.
- c. Provide information and guidance to supervisors and employees on COVID-19 immunization.
- d. Provide disability management services and accommodation support for employees as required.

## Consequences of Non-Compliance with Policy

Employees who do not provide proof of full vaccination or do not otherwise comply with the provisions of this Policy may be placed on an IDEL under the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*, or be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

## REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Accommodation Request Form
- Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information
- Documented Individual Accommodation Plans
- Expense Reimbursement Form
- Ontario Human Rights Code - <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/guide-your-rights-and-responsibilities-under-human-rights-code/part-i-%E2%80%93-freedom-discrimination>
- Ontario Health - <https://covid19.ontariohealth.ca/>

## Authority

By signing below, the official representative validates that the policy has been approved by the appropriate Approval Authority (Council, Senior Management, Joint Health & Safety Committee, Department Director).

<b>Approval Authority Official Representative:</b>	Mayor	<b>Resolution or By-law #: C551- 2021</b>
<b>Signature:</b>		
<b>Date signed:</b>	November 5, 2021	