

## **AQ: COVID-19 Vaccination/Testing Requirements**

**Where can I find out more about COVID-19 vaccines, including information on eligibility criteria and how to book an appointment?**

Employees should contact public health or visit [ProtectMB](#) for information about vaccines.

**I am fully vaccinated, do I still need to wear a mask in the office and practice physical distancing?**

Manitoba government workplaces adhere to the [current public health orders](#) and recommendations.

This includes:

- maintaining physical distancing of two metres (six feet) in indoor settings, especially for those who are unvaccinated or under the age of 12
- washing and sanitizing hands frequently
- continuing to wipe down high-touch surfaces regularly
- staying home when sick
- wearing a mask in all indoor public places is required

We will continue to update requirements/advice as needed based on public health advice.

Your manager will determine the need for other PPE based on the circumstances of each workplace and the nature of the services provided, applicable health and safety laws, as well as the current response level indicated as part of the [#RestartMB Pandemic Response System](#).

**Who is subject to the public health order? I'm not sure if I'm required to be fully-vaccinated?**

Your department will advise you if your position is designated. The new [public health order](#) requires all provincial employees who have direct and ongoing or prolonged contact with vulnerable populations to be fully-vaccinated and provide proof of vaccination, or comply with strict testing procedures. The order applies to:

### **1. Health care personnel**

Persons who have direct contact with patients, residents and clients at

- (a) hospitals;
- (b) northern nursing stations operated by the Government of Manitoba;
- (c) personal care homes or supportive housing facilities;
- (d) facilities operated by Shared Health Inc., a regional health authority, Addictions Foundation of Manitoba or a community services agency that are the subject of a funding agreement with Shared Health Inc. or a regional health authority;
- (e) a residential mental health facility or addictions treatment facility that is operated by or the subject of a funding agreement with the Government of Manitoba.

For certainty, this includes physicians, nurses, allied health professionals, health care aides, cleaning staff, support services staff as well as persons volunteering at those facilities who have direct contact with patients, residents and clients.

### **2. School personnel Persons**

Who have direct and ongoing or prolonged contact with students at a public or independent school.

For certainty, this includes teachers, educational support staff, school administration staff, custodial

staff, bus drivers, practicum students as well as persons volunteering at a school who have direct and ongoing or prolonged contact with students.

**3. Licensed child care facility personnel**

Staff, practicum students and persons volunteering at a facility that is licensed under The Community Child Care Standards Act who have direct and ongoing or prolonged contact with children at the facility.

**4. Civil servants in direct contact with vulnerable populations**

Civil servants who regularly have direct and ongoing or prolonged contact with children, seniors, persons with disabilities, persons experiencing housing insecurity or persons with addictions. Civil servants working in congregate living facilities such as group homes or correctional facilities who have direct and ongoing or prolonged contact with persons residing in those facilities.

**5. Child and family service personnel**

Persons employed or retained by, or volunteering with, a child and family services authority or a child and family services agency who have direct and ongoing or prolonged contact with children.

**6. Funded agency personnel in direct contact with vulnerable populations**

Persons employed or retained by, or volunteering with, an agency or organization that has entered into a funding agreement with the Government of Manitoba, a child and family service authority or a child and family services agency to provide social services to children, seniors, persons with disabilities, persons experiencing housing insecurity or persons with addictions if they have direct and ongoing or prolonged contact with those persons. For certainty, this applies to persons working at group homes and other congregate living facilities who have direct and ongoing or prolonged contact with residents.

**7. Home care workers**

Home care workers employed or engaged by a regional health authority who provide services to individuals who require health services or assistance with activities of daily living.

**8. Paramedics**

Paramedics and emergency medical responders employed or engaged by the operator of a land emergency medical response system licensed under The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Act.

**When am I considered to be fully vaccinated?**

For the purposes of the Orders, a person is fully vaccinated if (a) they have received two doses of the Pfizer, Moderna or AstraZeneca vaccine for COVID-19 or two doses of any combination of those vaccines within a 16-week period and at least 14 days have passed since they received their last vaccine dose; or (b) they have received the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine and at least 14 days have passed since they were vaccinated.

All designated provincial public servants will be required to be fully vaccinated with two doses of COVID-19 vaccine, and provide proof of vaccination by showing official documentation in paper or in an online format by October 18, 2021. If an employee is not vaccinated by this date they will be required to undergo testing. If an employee becomes fully vaccinated after October 18, 2021 they can then show proof of vaccination and cease testing.

**What are the acceptable forms of proof of vaccination?**

Acceptable proof of vaccination against COVID-19 will include physical card or online format (for example, the digital or physical Manitoba Immunization Card).

**Does my manager have the right to ask me for proof of vaccination?**

If you are a designated provincial public servant, as described in the public health order, your manager will discuss with you the requirement to be fully vaccinated including providing proof of vaccination, or complying with strict testing procedures.

**How do I get a vaccine card?**

For more information on how to get your vaccine card you can visit the [Province of Manitoba | Immunization Cards and Immunization Records](#) site.

You can also download the Manitoba Immunization Card app on your phone and providing the relevant information, you are able to receive your QR code immediately and can also request for a physical card during that time.

**You have to wait 14 days after your second vaccine to apply for the vaccine card and I have heard there are delays in getting the card? What can I do in the meantime?**

By downloading the Manitoba Immunization Card app on your phone and providing the relevant information, you are able to receive your QR code immediately and can also request for a physical card during that time.

**What if I don't want to be vaccinated?**

Many public servants have direct and ongoing or prolonged contact with vulnerable populations. As such, are at a higher risk of contracting or transmitting COVID-19, starting transmission chains that will affect those at greater risk.

While you have the right to choose not to get vaccinated, you also have a professional and personal responsibility to help protect public health. If you decline to be vaccinated, you will have to undergo regular COVID-19 testing to help mitigate the risk and provide a proof of a negative test to your employer.

**Is my employment conditional on being fully vaccinated?**

The public health order does not require vaccination as a condition of employment. Rather, employees who work in designated positions will have a choice between being fully vaccinated and showing proof of vaccination, or undergoing frequent COVID-19 testing, in order to attend work.

**What if I refuse to get tested for COVID-19?**

Designated employees who choose not to be vaccinated, who are not fully vaccinated or cannot provide proof of vaccination by October 18, 2021, will undergo regular COVID-19 testing. Regular testing may be required up to three times a week, and includes the requirement to provide proof of a negative test result before they can resume working. Refusal to participate in testing will mean the designated employee will not be able to attend the workplace and work.

**When does the order take effect?**

As described in the public health order issued on September 23, 2021, designated employees must be fully vaccinated by October 18, 2021.

**What if I believe I have a medical reason for not getting vaccinated??**

Please refer to this site for the most recent information on medical exemptions:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/eligibility-criteria.html#exemptions>

**If I do not want to be vaccinated due to my faith or personal beliefs, what should I do?**

Vaccination is not a requirement of your employment. If you do not choose to be vaccinated, you may provide proof of a recent (within 48 hours) negative test prior to the start of your shift.

We strongly recommend you speak to your health professional about your reasons for not being vaccinated to seek expert advice on the COVID-19 vaccine.

**Do I need to provide an attestation from my religious leader?**

No. However you are required to provide proof of a recent (within 48 hours) negative test prior to the start of your shift.

**What if a public servant is on leave? Will they need to get vaccinated before they return to work?**

The employee will need to contact their supervisor to assess if they are a designated person as described under the categories of designated persons under the Public Health Order. If they are a designated person, they would need to be fully vaccinated with two doses of COVID-19 vaccine by October 18, 2021 or their return to work date.

If the employees chooses not to be vaccinated, are not fully vaccinated or cannot provide proof of vaccination by October 18, 2021 or their return to work date, in accordance with the Public Health Order, the employee will undergo regular COVID-19 testing. Regular testing may be required up to three times a week, and includes the requirement to provide proof of a negative test result before they can resume working.

**If I choose not to get vaccinated can I request to work from home through the Flexible Work Arrangement Policy?**

The [Flexible Work Arrangements Policy](#) applies to all employees in the Manitoba government. However, flexible work arrangements will not be feasible for every position and employee. Individual requests must be assessed for feasibility based on operational, program and client needs.

If you are required to be vaccinated because you have direct and ongoing or prolonged contact with vulnerable populations, it is unlikely that your position is able to be conducted from home. In addition, employees with flexible work arrangements may be required to attend to the workplace for a variety of reasons.

**Do I get time off to get my vaccines or do I have to use sick leave credits?**

Amendments to The Employment Standards Code have been made to [make it mandatory for employers to allow employees up to three hours of paid leave each time](#) the employee requires a dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

As a result, Manitoba government employees who are scheduled to receive the COVID-19 vaccine during work hours are no longer required to use sick leave. Employees may receive up to three hours of paid leave to attend their vaccination appointment, to be coded as regular hours worked.

For employees who may be required, or choose, to travel outside of their communities for a vaccine appointment, additional paid time off to attend the appointment in the nearest community where it's available can be approved, if the employee has enough sick leave credits available. Any questions relating to COVID-19 vaccine-related leave requests should be discussed with your manager. As with any medical appointment, whenever possible, employees should try to schedule their vaccinations at a time that is least disruptive to their workplaces.

**What if I experience symptoms following vaccination and am unable to work?**

This should be treated the same as any other sick leave. Employees should notify their managers as soon as possible if they are unable to work.

If an employee has no sick leave credits available, other paid leave credits such as vacation or accrued overtime, or unpaid leave may be used. Employees can contact their [Pay and Benefits Consultant](#) for information on the impacts of unpaid leave.

**Can I ask clients or colleagues I will be working with if they have been vaccinated?**

No, vaccination records are personal health information and are protected by privacy laws.

**How will my vaccination information be stored?**

The Manitoba government remains committed to the principles of personal health information privacy.

**How long does the vaccine last? Will I need a booster?**

Please refer to the following site for information on the vaccine:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/eligibility-criteria.html#third>

**If I'm vaccinated and I develop symptoms, am I still required to isolate?**

Yes. If you are feeling unwell, please stay home and follow all current protocols.

**Where can I go with my questions or concerns?**

If you have comments or concerns, please contact your direct supervisor or human resources and they will help direct you.

## **Testing**

**How does the COVID testing process work? Am I required to get COVID testing done on my own time or during work hours?**

The COVID-19 testing process will be specific to departments and designated persons will be provided with further information on how testing will be operationalized in your department, including times and locations for testing. Please speak to your manager for further details.

**How often do I need to undergo regular COVID-19 testing?**

To help mitigate the risk, designated persons who are not fully vaccinated by October 18, 2021 must undergo regular COVID-19 testing as specified by the employer.

If you are a designated person, you must also provide proof of a recent (within 48 hours) negative test prior to returning to the workplace.

**How long is a negative test result valid for?**

For designated direct contact workers, the results of a negative COVID-19 test is considered valid for 48 hours from the time the test is performed provided the employee has not developed any symptoms of COVID-19 at the start of their shift.

**Where is testing taking place?**

Regular COVID-19 testing times and locations will be specified by your employer. The COVID-19 testing process will be specific to departments and designated persons will be provided with further information on how testing will be operationalized in your department, including times and locations for testing. Please speak to your manager for further details.

**How do I get a test?**

Your employer will arrange for testing – this may be at your workplace, a shared testing environment, self-testing or some other access to rapid testing technology. Do not seek testing at a provincial PCR testing facility unless you have received a positive rapid test or have COVID-19 symptoms.

**Who pays for the tests?**

At this time, your employer will cover the cost of the tests.

**Can I remain in the workplace while awaiting the test results?**

No, you are not able to attend or remain at your workplace unless you are able to provide proof of a recent (within 48 hours) negative test.

If you are taking a rapid test at the workplace you are able to attend the workplace for that purpose and then resume working after you are able to show a negative result. Rapid tests take approximately 15 minutes to conduct.

**What happens if my test is positive?**

If your test results are positive for COVID-19, you must leave your workplace as soon as it is operationally safe to do so, if you were tested for COVID-19 at your workplace. If you were tested for COVID-19 at a location that is not your workplace you will not be able to go to your workplace. You must also take a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test for COVID-19 as soon as possible after receiving notice of the positive test result.

**When can I go back to work after I have tested positive for COVID-19?**

You are able to return to your workplace if:

- the result of their polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test is negative and you can provide proof of that negative result to your employer or supervisor; or
- a public health official provides you with written notice that you are authorized to return to your workplace; or
- 10 days have passed since being tested positive for COVID-19