

Subject: **VACCINATION POLICY – COVID-19**

Section: **INFECTION CONTROL**

Approved By: **Senior Management Committee**

Date Approved: June 17, 2021

Date Revised: October 15, 2021

Policy Number: **RCM-IC-670**

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## **POLICY**

Effective November 15, 2021, Fairhaven employees, students and volunteers must be vaccinated against COVID-19, or they will be placed on an indefinite, unpaid leave of absence.

This policy change is in line with the updated Minister's Directive on Long Term Care Home COVID-19 Immunization Policy (October 1, 2021), which reflects the new requirement for all staff, support workers, students and volunteers to receive all required doses of WHO approved COVID-19 vaccines by November 15, 2021.

It is important to protect the health and well-being of Fairhaven's residents, employees, staff, volunteers and students where there is evidence of a risk with identified measures for management. The CMOH has directed Fairhaven to develop, implement and ensure compliance with a COVID-19 vaccination policy.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to outline organizational expectations with regards to COVID-19 immunization of employees, staff, contractors, volunteers and students. Contingent upon vaccine availability, all eligible employees, staff, contractors, volunteers and students are required to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, unless it is medically contraindicated.

## **BACKGROUND**

Fairhaven recognizes the importance of immunization of employees, staff, volunteers and students, due to the nature of their work with vulnerable residents and seniors and the potential for exposure in the community. This COVID-19 immunization policy aims to protect Fairhaven's population including residents, employees, staff, volunteers and students. 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. The risk of severe disease increases with age but is not limited to the elderly and is elevated in those with underlying medical conditions.

## **PROCEDURES**

Employees, volunteers and students will be required to provide one of the following no later than October 26<sup>th</sup> in anticipation of the November 15, 2021 deadline:

1. Proof of COVID-19 vaccine administration as per the following requirements:
  - Proof of all required doses of a COVID-19 vaccine approved by the World Health Organization

2. Medical Exemptions

There are only two valid/recognized grounds for medical exceptions from receiving the COVID-19 vaccine:

- The employee has a severe allergy to a component of the vaccine, confirmed by an allergist or immunologist.
  - The individual has suffered myocarditis or pericarditis after the first dose of an mRNA vaccine.
3. Employees, staff, volunteers and students who elect not to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination per 1 above, and rely on 2, are required to perform rapid antigen testing, at a frequency of not less than three times weekly in alignment with provincial guidance.
  4. Employees, staff, volunteers and students who choose not to be vaccinated, or disclose their vaccination status, will be placed on an unapproved unpaid leave until such time that they are fully vaccinated or there is a change in regulations from the CMOH.
  5. If an employee chooses not to be vaccinated, or disclose their vaccination status to the employer, the following conditions will apply as of 2359 on November 15, 2021:
    - The employee will be placed on an Unapproved Leave of Absence effective immediately for an undetermined length of time
    - The allowable length of Unapproved Leaves of Absence will be reviewed monthly
    - The affected positions will be posted on a temporary basis for a six-month period
    - No sick time, vacation credits, banked/lieu time or other credits will be paid during an employee's Unapproved Leave of Absence.
    - Employees may not enter the premises except to attend a pre-arranged appointment with the manager of their department or Human Resources. The employee will be tested according to policy prior to entry.

- A Record of Employment will be submitted to Service Canada on behalf of employees on an Unapproved Leave of Absence with a reason specified as “Other.”
- During this unapproved leave the employee forfeits their current posting.
- If, and when, an employee receives all required doses of an approved vaccine after November 15, 2021, they may apply for any open postings. They may be scheduled for unfilled shifts within their classification as per call-in procedure.

### **Confidentiality Statement**

Fairhaven is required, pursuant to the Chief Medical Officer of Health’s Directive #6 for Public Hospitals within the meaning of the Public Hospitals Act, 1990 and Service Providers in accordance with the Home Care and Community Service Act, 1994, Local Health Integration Networks within the meaning of the Local Health System Integration Act, 2006 and Ambulance Services within the meaning of the Ambulance Act, 1990 (operating as Home and Community Care Support Services) providing long-term care home placement services COVID-19 Immunization Policy, to report statistical information to the OCMOH or the ministry. No identifying information will be provided to the ministry in relation to this policy; all statistical information will be provided in aggregate form.