

THE CORPORATION OF HALDIMAND COUNTY			
Grandview Lodge			
Department:	All	Subject:	Immunization Policy
Effective Date:	July 1, 2021	Policy #:	
Revised:		Author:	ADON
Reviewed:		Authority:	Administrator

1.0 PURPOSE

Employers across Canada have a legal obligation under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to provide their employees with safe workplaces and to take all reasonable precautions to protect employees from contracting a work-related illness. The vaccines available in Canada are currently thought to be between 80% and 95% effective in either preventing infection, or preventing symptoms of COVID-19 in the vaccinated person.

Contingent upon vaccine availability, all existing eligible staff, student placements, and volunteers are strongly encouraged to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, unless it is medically contraindicated. All hires into new postings will be required to meet the job requirements as posted, which will include full COVID-19 vaccination.

The impacts of non-vaccination that were considered in the development of this policy can be categorized into three areas. 1. Residents 2. Staff 3. Costs to Employer/Public.

- Violation of Residents Rights under the LTCHA if we cannot allow them to resume normal activity because of our staff vaccination rate not reaching 70% threshold mandated by the Ministry of Health or fluctuating above/below.
- Health and Safety Risk to Residents – the lower the vaccination rate, the greater risk of transmission throughout the home
- Health and Safety Risks to Staff (vaccinated and unvaccinated) and their families should they contract the virus and transmit it throughout the home, to their families and the community
- Should an outbreak occur it risks the safety of as staffing levels may be impacted.
- While a large percentage of our resident population is vaccinated, it is important to note that symptoms of Covid-19, even with a reduced severity, could be life threatening to our most vulnerable residents.
- In the event of outbreak the employer will have additional costs for overtime to adequately staff the home and for PPE required.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Protection of our vulnerable residents is of paramount importance and the participation in COVID-19 vaccination is strongly encouraged for our existing staff as of the effective date of this policy, and will be required for any new hires into postings for all positions at Grandview Lodge from the date the policy is effective. The ability for staff to work in some situations will be restricted based on the vaccination status of that staff member. High rates of vaccination in our home is important to protect all people who

live in, work, and visit it and to help reduce the risk of outbreaks and the need to isolate residents. Isolation means residents lose in-person social interaction and the ability to engage in activities; the effects of isolation may be greater for residents who have dementia and/or a cognitive impairment.

Grandview Lodge will provide the following supports for people subject to this policy to receive a vaccine: paid time, if required to receive the vaccine, assistance with booking vaccine appointment, peer-to-peer support.

Non-compliance with the policy will be managed in accordance with human resources policies, collective agreements and applicable legislation, and directives.

Statistical Information; All licensees must collect, maintain, and disclose to the Ministry of Long-Term Care, key data metrics that underpin the Directive. No identifying information will be provided to the ministry; in relation to this policy; all statistical information will be provided in aggregate form.

3.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all Haldimand County employees and volunteers regardless of their division, including students, of Grandview Lodge, and agency providers working at Grandview Lodge.

3.01 Existing Staff

Three options as per Ministry of Health:

- Show proof of full immunization against COVID
 - Provide medical documentation showing unable to receive any COVID vaccine
 - Take an educational course, approved by Grandview Lodge
 - If still not willing to vaccinate, staff will be required to sign a Declination Form (Appendix 1) that outlines the risks of not being vaccinated to themselves, the residents and their coworkers – as well as an accountability statement indicating they are aware of the impacts or consequences that could arise if they contract and transmit the virus within the home.
- a. Providing proof of vaccination** For people who are vaccinated in Ontario, the only acceptable proof of vaccination is the receipt provided by the Ministry of Health to the person who was vaccinated. This includes either the physical/hard copy receipt or email version of the receipt a person would have received from Public Health Ontario.
- b. Proof of a medical reason for not being vaccinated** Proof must be provided by either a physician or a nurse practitioner (note: A nurse practitioner is a registered nurse who holds an extended certificate of registration under the Nursing Act, 1991). In some instances, the medical reason for the person not being vaccinated may be time-limited. As we would with any other type of medical accommodation, we will need to follow up periodically to ensure that nothing has changed from the physician's/nurse practitioner's point of view on vaccination for that staff member, by requiring updated medical documentation. Should the medical circumstances change, allowing the employee to be vaccinated, documentation as per 3.01a will be required.
- c. The educational course is not considered “mandatory”**, since there is an option of a or b above. Staff who choose c –will be required to complete the course with a passing

grade of 95%, on their own time. The County will pay for the course, instructor, materials, venue, etc., but since it is not a mandatory training – it will not fall under the scope of the existing Collective Agreements and not be paid time. The educational program has been approved by Grandview Lodge / Haldimand County 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. The Ministry of Health requires that proof of completion be provided prior to staff working in the home and as such staff will not be permitted to attend work until a passing grade is achieved.

3.02 New Hires

COVID-19 full vaccination for all Grandview Lodge hires, from the date the policy is effective, including students, is a job requirement. New hires must comply with 3.01a or 3.01b as outlined within the policy. Grandview Lodge will accommodate as necessary and manage the medical file as noted in 3.01b.

3.03 Existing Staff Posting into another Line/Shift, Job Status or Classification

Internal and external job postings – Job documents will show COVID-19 vaccination as a job requirement. Any existing Grandview Lodge staff member applying to a new line or shift, a new status (i.e. part time to full time) or a new classification (i.e. nursing to housekeeping), must meet the job requirements in the posting. The only exception would be those with medical exemption (with documentation as per 3.01b.)

4.0 PROCEDURE

- a) Employees will be given every reasonable opportunity to be informed of the risks, benefits and side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Education on the benefits, potential risks and side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine;
 - Posting of a notice in accessible locations, e.g. Staff Lounge and bulletin boards of COVID-19 information;
 - Sending reminders to those Employees who have not yet received immunization;
 - Promotional information, staff town hall and up to date information sharing on COVID-19 vaccines and the vaccine statistics for the Homes
- b) The Infection Control Specialist (ICS) or designate will collect statistics on staff vaccination rates and report data as requested by the Ministry;
- c) The Home will inform any unvaccinated staff, essential care givers, private care givers and support workers that in the event of outbreak, they may be excluded from work;
- d) Contracted resident care providers may not be permitted to enter the Home during the outbreak if they are unvaccinated;
- e) Unvaccinated staff will complete a declination form (Appendix 1) This declination form will be kept on the employee file with a copy to the Infection Control Specialist (ICS) for outbreak planning and occupational health surveillance activities;
- f) Efforts should be taken to minimize contact of unvaccinated staff with unvaccinated residents through re-assignment of primary care groups and cohorting activities in an outbreak;
- g) Unvaccinated staff will be required to wear PPE as directed by the home at all times after precautions have been lifted for vaccinated staff and be required to have weekly PCR testing at a local assessment center unless otherwise directed by Public Health;

- h) Unvaccinated staff will be required to maintain single site/single employer declaration and be cohorted to a single unit for the duration of the pandemic; unless otherwise directed by the Ministry;
- i) The Infection Control Specialist will maintain a list of staff vaccine status and provide regular updates to the Home's leadership team;
- j) Staff who are medically unable to receive the Covid 19 vaccine will be excluded from work and sent home or reassigned as able during an outbreak. Reassignment of staff may include an assignment to another Haldimand County division, outside of Grandview Lodge and may not follow the employees regular schedule. Such reassignment would not be eligible for additional compensation such as mileage or pay differential. Likewise, an employee will not suffer a loss of earnings if reassigned to a lower paying classification;
- k) Reassignment will depend on operational need, risk assessment and done in collaboration with the Public Health and Haldimand County's Human Resources Division;
- l) Should an employee decline an offer of reassignment, they will be excluded from work without pay until the outbreak is declared over in consultation with the Public Health;
- m) All employees can return to work once the outbreak is declared over in consultation with the Public Health.

Payment of Wages During Outbreak

Staff who are unable to work during an outbreak because they do not meet the criteria, and have no proof of illness, will not be paid for lost time.

Staff who have a medical accommodation regarding the Covid 19 vaccine and cannot be reassigned by the employer, will be paid for their missed work as per the schedule as posted at the declaration of the outbreak. Employees must provide adequate documentation from their physician indicating the medical contraindications for vaccination in order to receive payment. Annual physicians note is required. (option b above)

Directions for Staff in a COVID-19 Outbreak

Category	Asymptomatic Staff	Staff Working On Outbreak Unit	Staff Working on Non Outbreak Unit
A	Fully vaccinated. (14 days after second dose)	May continue to work on outbreak unit (s)	May continue to work on non outbreak unit (s)
B	Unvaccinated/choice	Reassignment OR unpaid leave of absence until outbreak is declared over	May continue to work on non outbreak unit (s) Must wear full PPE for duration of shift until outbreak is declared over
	Unvaccinated/medical	Reassignment OR sick leave of absence using banked sick time until outbreak is declared over	



Grandview Lodge

Comfort. Compassion. Care.

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Declination of COVID-19 Vaccination

The Ministry of Health, our local Public Health Unit and Grandview Lodge, recommend that I, _____, receive COVID-19 vaccination to protect myself, residents/clients, co-workers, and others in the healthcare facility.

Vaccination is one of the most effective ways to protect your health. Vaccines work with the body's natural defences to develop protection against a disease. COVID-19 vaccines provide instructions to your body's immune system to recognize and fight off the virus that causes COVID-19.

I acknowledge that I am aware of the following facts (please read and initial each box):

- ☐ COVID-19 is a serious contagious virus that can easily spread from person-to-person. Some infected persons may develop severe disease and die. There is no way to determine how COVID-19 may affect you and the severity of symptoms or complications you may experience.
- ☐ COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for me and for all other healthcare workers to help prevent spreading the disease to, clients/residents and co-workers and to protect me from getting COVID-19, or from serious illness if I do get infected.
- ☐ I understand that, if I contract COVID-19, I am potentially contagious for 2 days before any symptoms appear. During this time, and for 10-14 days after infection, I can potentially transmit COVID-19 to residents/clients, and co-workers in this facility.
- ☐ I understand if I become infected with COVID-19, that even if my symptoms are mild or non-existent, I can spread the virus to others. Symptoms that are mild or non-existent in me may still cause serious illness and death in others.
- ☐ I understand if I get COVID-19 that I will be required to isolate away from others and will not be able to work for a minimum of 10 days after symptoms appear or 10 days from the date I test positive if I have no symptoms.
- ☐ I understand that I cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine and getting the vaccine is a safe way to build up immunity.
- ☐ The consequences of my refusal to be vaccinated could be life threatening for me and the health of everyone with whom I have contact, including my co-workers and all residents/clients in Grandview Lodge.

Understanding all of these facts, I choose to decline COVID-19 vaccination for the following reasons:

I understand that I may change my mind at any time and accept the COVID-19 vaccination.

I have read and understand the information on this declination form.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Name (print): _____ **Department:** _____