

Preamble:

Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region (EAFWR) is committed to the health and safety of all people supported, their families, staff (full time, part time, casual), and volunteers (as described by... the *Volunteer Policy*), connected to services or supports provided. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused widespread morbidity and mortality. It represents a significant health risk to all stakeholders, and is especially dangerous for those with certain pre-existing medical conditions. This policy will provide information and encourage participation in vaccine programs, mitigating COVID-19 impact, and outline the measures in place to address risk to and from unvaccinated staff providing services and supports on behalf of EAFWR.

Scope: This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, students or any person performing work with EAFWR. Throughout the remaining document, this group will be referred to as staff.

Policy:

New Staff

Effective August 1st 2021, all employment offers to new staff will include a requirement to show proof of approved COVID-19 vaccination and commit to maintaining vaccination status in good standing as a condition of employment. Alternatively, new staff may adequately demonstrate the need for accommodation based on recognized human rights grounds.

Existing Staff:

EAFWR strongly encourages all EAFWR staff to be vaccinated against COVID-19. EAFWR is able to support staff in obtaining vaccines by:

- Providing up to date information from Public Health regarding vaccination. Available at: <https://www.eafwr.on.ca/covid-19/>
- Flexible hours to accommodate vaccine appointments scheduled during work time
- Paid sick time is available as needed, without requiring a doctor's note, for up to three days following a vaccine appointment.

Disclosing Vaccine Status:

EAFWR will require that all staff, students, and volunteers provide the following information:

1. A copy of documentation confirming full or partial vaccine status;
2. Timely updates regarding change in vaccine status;
3. Annual declaration of up-to-date vaccine status;
4. If accommodation related to protected grounds under the *Ontario Human Rights Code (1990)* is requested by a staff member, confirmation of the reasons vaccination has been declined with supporting documentation where reasonably necessary; and
5. If declining vaccination for reasons not protected by the Human Rights Code, an attestation of this position.

Those who refuse to provide sufficient information confirming vaccine status will be considered "unvaccinated" for reasons not protected under Ontario Human Rights Code. Staff may face disciplinary action for refusal to provide information that is reasonably necessary to prevent,

alleviate and respond to the outbreak of COVID-19. Providing intentionally misleading information is grounds for disciplinary action.

PDF Vaccine receipts can be obtained at no cost from Ontario Health:

<https://covid19.ontariohealth.ca/>

Unvaccinated Staff:

Where existing staff have declined vaccination for reasons not protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code, mandatory training and education on the function and efficacy of vaccines will be provided. Following this training, EAFWR will complete a Risk Assessment to determine if alternative measures are appropriate to reduce the risk of working while unvaccinated.

Considerations of the Risk Assessment will include public health recommendations, obligations to external partners (eg. LHIN), the nature and location of the person's work, interaction with people supported deemed medically fragile, use and availability of PPE, and the current community risk level (zone or stage of the region, regional rate of infection).

Alternative Measures:

As deemed appropriate through the Risk Assessment and in discussion with the unvaccinated staff, reasonable alternative measures may be introduced to reduce the risk of working while unvaccinated. Alternative measures will be specific to the situation, and may include one or a combination of the following:

- Continued use of Personal Protective Equipment such as gloves, gowns, masks or face shields, regardless of outbreak status or Public Health restrictions in the region
- Mandatory screening of symptoms prior to beginning work
- COVID testing (at supervisor's discretion)
- Transfer to alternate location for work
- Reassignment - the staff member may not be permitted to work with some coworkers or people receiving services (based on medical risk related to COVID-19)
- Modification to the work, service, or support performed
- Temporary, unpaid leaves of absence. During these leaves unvaccinated employees may use accumulated paid vacation, sick, or lieu time.

In instances of outbreak at the unvaccinated staff person's primary work location, staff will be placed on an unpaid leave if remote work cannot be offered as an accommodation. During these leaves, unvaccinated staff may use accumulated paid vacation, sick, or lieu time.

If a volunteer or student has declined vaccination for reasons unrelated to accommodation under the Human Rights Code, they will be assigned to tasks that restrict their interactions with people supported. If those tasks are unavailable, the unvaccinated volunteer or student placement will be cancelled.

Accommodation:

Staff or volunteers may have declined COVID-19 vaccination for reasons related grounds protected by the *Ontario Human Rights Code (1990)*. In these cases staff must indicate that they have declined vaccination based on protected grounds and an Accommodation Request should be made through the Human Resources Director. EAFWR reserves the right to ask for supporting information to substantiate any request for accommodation.

EAFWR remains committed to workplace accommodations based on grounds protected by the Human Rights Code up to the point of undue hardship. Situations will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

COVID -19 Policies

Unless individually rescinded, all other policies and procedures related to the COVID-19 Pandemic remain in effect for unvaccinated and vaccinated staff members, volunteers, contractors or others performing work on behalf of EAFWR. This includes the Pandemic Plan, Covid-19 Office Exposure Response, Standard Precautions for Infection Control, Office / WALES Entry Screening Requirements, as well as norms established through Public Health advice such as masking and physical distancing.