

Subject: Covid-19 Updates - October 8th, 2021 - Vaccine Status and Safety Measures

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From: Ernie Baatz

To: Ernie Baatz

Vaccine Status and Safety Measures for People We Support, their Families and our Teams

Two weeks ago we asked employees to confirm their vaccine status with us. We added a short-term policy that provided more information on why the information is necessary and how it will be used.

<https://sscl.sharevision.ca/public/PolicyDirectory/Personnel%20Policies/P04.1VaccinationDataCollectionPolicy.pdf>

We are seeking to collect information about the vaccination or immunity status of our employees in order to:

- Better understand the risk of infection in the workplace;
- Help mitigate the risk of infection for those at the greatest risk, including by putting accommodations or other protective measures in place for unvaccinated individuals;
- Plan for operational continuity in the event of an outbreak;
- Support the continuity of services to the people we support in community settings where admission is available only to those who confirm vaccination status;
- Support risk mitigation and contact tracing efforts in the event that an exposure occurs within the workplace.

The vaccine status of a person has a number of implications for safely providing services to the people we support:

- There are community activities that are not accessible unless you have a BC Vaccine Card, such as restaurants, theatres and sporting events.
- Isolation requirements after exposure to someone who has covid are different for people who are fully vaccinated.
- The risk of illness for someone who is unvaccinated is much higher than for people who are vaccinated and preparing for staff illness is a key priority for our managers.

We are happy to confirm that over 90% of our staff are vaccinated. **Thank You!**

We do want to reinforce that the decision to get or to refuse a vaccine is still a personal medical decision and staff should not be debating the pros and cons of vaccination with each other.

There are a number of people who only have one dose so far, and it is important that you get both doses of the vaccine to ensure the best protection:

http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID-19_vaccine/2ndDose_Importance.pdf

There are still people who are concerned about getting the vaccine due to health considerations. Here is a list of the reasons that the Provincial Health Officer has identified as valid reasons to not get the vaccine:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/pho-guidance-covid-19-vaccines-contraindications-deferrals.pdf>

Across the country, more and more employers are implementing vaccine mandates – requiring

vaccination to be able to come to work. Spectrum has already been required to implement a vaccine mandate at one home funded by Fraser Health. We are getting legal advice about vaccination mandates and will keep you informed of what we learn.

In the meantime, we want to ensure we are doing everything we can to ensure the safety of the people we support and their teams of supporters. For this reason, we are taking the following actions:

1. Reviewing the work locations of employees who are not vaccinated (or have not informed us of their status) and assessing the risks of infection.
2. Reviewing covid safety protocols with staff who are not vaccinated (or have not informed us of their status) and monitoring for compliance.
3. Reviewing the situations where people are working in more than one person's home.

You can still get started or complete your vaccination at a local clinic. Vaccination clinics no longer require appointments.

You can find a nearby vaccination clinic by following these links:

- In Vancouver Coastal Health: <http://www.vch.ca/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine>
- Fraser Health clinics are here: <https://www.fraserhealth.ca/vax>

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Ernie Baatz

Executive Director

Spectrum Society for Community Living

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