

Complete Policy Title

**Vaccination Policy - COVID-19 Requirements
for Visitors**

Policy Number (if applicable):

Approved by

President and Vice-Presidents

Date of Most Recent Approval

September 6, 2021

Date of Original Approval(s)

September 6, 2021

Supersedes/Amends Policy dated

Responsible Executive

**Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and
Vice-President (Operations & Finance)**

Policy Specific Enquiries

vacc@mcmaster.ca

General Policy Enquiries

[Policy \(University Secretariat\)](#)

DISCLAIMER:

*If there is a Discrepancy between this electronic policy and the written copy held
by the policy owner, the written copy prevails.*

MCMASTER'S COMMITMENT

1. McMaster University (the "University") is committed to creating an inclusive, supportive, safe and healthy Workplace and Learning Environment for all employees and students. This is achieved by observing best practices which meet or exceed the standards to comply with legislative requirements.
2. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in unique infection risks and potentially serious health consequences. In keeping with government and public health advice, the University expects an increasing presence of on-campus academic and operational activity beginning in the Fall 2021 term.
3. In accordance with public health guidance, the University is committed to taking all reasonable precautions, as part of a multi-pronged approach, to ensure the health and safety of the University community.
4. This Policy is consistent with O. Reg 364/20 and the letter from the Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health dated August 24, 2021, which strongly recommends that post-secondary institutions implement full vaccination policies, subject to permitted exceptions, as soon as operationally feasible. This Policy is also consistent with the Instructions issued by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, dated August 30, 2021, which require post-secondary institutions to establish and implement a COVID-19 vaccination policy by no later than September 7, 2021.
5. At all times, if requirements declared by public health authorities or the provincial government exceed the requirements of this Policy, the public health or government requirements will prevail and all Contractors, Lessees, members of the Public, Visitors, and Volunteers must comply with those requirements, including any requirement to display proof of vaccination.
6. Individuals must not attend University Property if they are symptomatic or are otherwise unable to successfully complete the provincial government's COVID-19 self assessment: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>.
7. From time to time, this Policy may be updated, as warranted by new public health guidance or other changing circumstances. At all times, the University will be guided by public health information, legislative requirements, and its existing obligations under, among others, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and the *Human Rights Code*. This Policy will continue to apply until it is amended or revoked.

PURPOSE

8. The purpose of this Policy is to:
 - a) reaffirm the University's commitment to a healthy and safe environment; and
 - b) ensure visitors are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to COVID-19.

DEFINITIONS

9. **Community Members** means McMaster employees (i.e., faculty and staff) and students, as defined in the *Vaccination Policy - COVID-19 Requirements for Employees and Students*.
10. **Contractors** means external providers, third-party agencies, and independent contractors, or employees of such organizations, who are engaged directly by the University to provide specified services on University Property and specifically includes entities engaged in filming/photographic shoots on University Property.
11. **Fully Vaccinated** an individual is Fully Vaccinated if they have received the full series of a vaccine or a combination of vaccines accepted by the World Health Organization and they received their last dose at least 14 days before the date of the self-declaration. Given the changing nature of the pandemic, if the applicable public health authorities announce a different meaning of "Fully Vaccinated", that definition will take precedence. For example, if public health authorities announce that additional vaccine doses (i.e., "booster shots") are required, individuals will not be considered Fully Vaccinated until they have obtained the additional dose(s).
12. **Lessees** means individuals who lease or license space on University Property from the University, or who are employees or members of organizations that lease space on University Property from the University.
13. **University Property** mean any land boundary owned, controlled (whether directly or indirectly) or leased, by the University, inclusive of buildings, learning places, public places, and workplaces. For the purposes of this Policy, certain spaces as may be directed by the University from time to time will not be considered University Property.
14. **The Public** means individuals who are not Community Members, Contractors, Lessees, Visitors or Volunteers, but who want or need to attend University Property (and is inclusive of delivery personnel).
15. **Visitors** means individuals who are not Community Members, Contractors, Lessees or Volunteers, but who want or need to attend University Property and who reasonably expect to be within 6 feet of a Community Member indoors for a consecutive 15 minute period or for a total period of at least 1 hour during a 24-hour period, and is inclusive of persons attending University Property for conferences, recreation, sporting events, concerts/performances and restaurant patrons. Guests of the McMaster hotel properties are also considered Visitors.

16. **Volunteers** means individuals who perform work for, or supply services to, the University without the expectation, promise or receipt of any compensation or academic credit from the University for their work or services.

SCOPE

17. This Policy outlines the actions that will be required of [Contractors](#), [Lessees](#), members of the [Public](#), [Visitors](#), and [Volunteers](#) who want or need to attend [University Property](#). These requirements are in addition to existing control measures, which may include active or passive screening, mandatory masking, physical distancing, personal hygiene practices, engineering practices (e.g., ventilation updates), and ongoing cleaning and sanitization protocols.
18. Any concerns or questions about the interpretation or application of this Policy can be directed to: vacc@mcmaster.ca.

JURISDICTION

19. The Policy applies to all activities on University Property carried out by Contractors, Lessees, members of the Public, Visitors, and Volunteers.
20. The application of this Policy may intersect with the application of other University policies or procedures regarding the same matter. Examples of other such policies or procedures are listed in Appendix A: Related Policies, Procedures and Legislation.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

21. The University will protect personal information and handle records in accordance with its policies, including but not limited to: *Privacy Governance and Accountability Framework*, *Privacy Breach Protocol*, *Policy for the Handling of Personal Information*, *Policy for the Handling of Personal Health Information*, and the *Policy on Access to Personal Health Information*. The University will also comply with its obligations in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *Personal Health Information Protection Act*.
22. The University will ensure that access to any information provided under this Policy is limited to those who require access on a “need to know” basis only. This information will be securely stored and will only be used for the purpose of securing the health, safety, and well-being of the University community. The University will delete the information as soon as possible after the purposes for which it was collected are fulfilled.

OBLIGATIONS

Vaccination Requirements - Beginning September 7, 2021

23. Individuals must be prepared to provide proof that they are [Fully Vaccinated](#) and have been permitted to attend and remain on campus, upon request by designated University officials.
24. To attend [University Property](#), all [Lessees](#) and [Visitors](#) must provide proof that they are Fully Vaccinated, through the process provided by the University on the Back to Mac website.
25. Proof of vaccination should be **submitted at least 1 hour before** the individual's first time attending University Property, and only needs to be submitted once.

Volunteers

26. To attend University Property, [Volunteers](#) must:
 - a) provide proof that they are Fully Vaccinated, through the process provided by the University on the Back to Mac website; or
 - b) obtain an exemption from the University on the basis of a substantiated human rights ground and comply with any additional requirements that the University deems necessary to protect community health and safety.
27. Proof of vaccination should be submitted **at least 24 hours before** the individual's first time attending University Property, and only needs to be submitted once.
28. If a [Volunteer](#) requires an exemption, the request must be submitted as soon as possible and no less than 72 hours before the individual is needed on University Property.

Contractors

29. To attend University Property, [Contractors](#) must:
 - a) provide proof that they are Fully Vaccinated, through the process provided by the University on the Back to Mac website; or
 - b) obtain an exemption from the University on the basis of a substantiated human rights ground and comply with any additional requirements that the University deems necessary to protect community health and safety.
30. Proof of vaccination should be submitted **at least 1 hour before** the individual's first time attending University Property, and only needs to be submitted once.

31. If a [Contractors](#) requires an exemption, the request must be submitted as soon as possible and no less than 72 hours before the individual is needed on University Property.
32. The University will communicate with its Contractors to ensure that only their employees who:
 - a) are Fully Vaccinated; or
 - b) have a substantiated human rights exemption and have a valid negative COVID-19 rapid antigen test and have completed an educational session approved by the University, are assigned to provide services on [University Property](#). Rapid antigen tests must have been completed within the last 72 hours to be valid.

Between September 7, 2021 and October 28, 2021 (inclusive)

33. Between September 7, 2021 and October 28, 2021 (inclusive), the University will require certain of its larger [Contractors](#) (i.e., select Contractors with multiple employees attending University Property) to submit an attestation or verification of exemptions on behalf of the Contractors' employees.
34. If a Contractor's employee is exempt, the University will also ask the Contractor to collect and provide:
 - a) proof of negative COVID-19 rapid antigen testing at regular intervals; and
 - b) proof that employees have completed the University's educational session. The educational session will comply with the requirements set by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Effective October 29, 2021

35. Effective October 29, 2021, the University will require these larger [Contractors](#) to collect and submit proof of vaccination or verification of exemptions on behalf of the Contractors' employees.
36. If a Contractor's employee is exempt, the University will also ask the Contractor to collect and provide:
 - a) proof of negative COVID-19 rapid antigen testing at regular intervals; and
 - b) proof that employees have completed the University's educational session.
37. Proof of vaccination may include official vaccination receipts, a QR code supplied by the government or other official documentation or record.
38. The University will also communicate to its [Contractors](#) and [Lessees](#) its expectation that they will take all reasonable steps to ensure that any contractors or sub-contractors they engage are [Fully Vaccinated](#) before attending University Property.

39. **Information provided to the University under this Policy may be accessed by individuals authorized by the University to administer this Policy. This information will not otherwise be shared with individuals inside or outside the University.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUALS NOT FULLY VACCINATED

40. If a Volunteer, or a Contractor whose information is not being provided to the University by their employer, cannot be vaccinated due to a substantiated human rights ground, the University will provide an opportunity for that individual to submit their exemption for review by the appropriate University department.
41. The exemption request will be reviewed and the individual will receive an approved or denied exemption. Volunteers and Contractors should submit exemption requests at least 72 hours before attending [University Property](#). The University will aim to review the request within 72 hours, subject to volume.
42. Volunteers and Contractors who receive an exemption, or whose request is still pending, must complete a one-time educational session provided by the University, provide proof of regular COVID-19 rapid antigen testing (i.e., at least once every 7 days), and comply with any other safety measures the University deems necessary. Rapid antigen tests must have been completed within the last 72 hours to be valid.
43. Any [Contractors](#) or Volunteers who are not [Fully Vaccinated](#) or exempt, or who cannot provide proof that they are Fully Vaccinated or exempt upon request by their primary University contract, will not be permitted to attend or remain on University Property.
44. Exempt Contractors or Volunteers who are unable or unwilling to comply with rapid antigen testing or educational protocols will not be permitted to attend or remain on University Property.
45. Any [Lessees](#), [Visitors](#) or members of the [Public](#) who are not [Fully Vaccinated](#), or who cannot provide proof that they are Fully Vaccinated upon request by designated University officials, will not be permitted to attend or remain on University Property.
46. Despite the above, the following individuals will be permitted to attend University Property even if they are not Fully Vaccinated:
- a) an individual who attends University Property to participate in a research study, the results of which may be impacted by the participant's COVID-19 vaccination;
 - b) an individual who attends University Property for the purpose of seeking or obtaining health care, provided that the individual does not access any other areas on University Property;
 - c) a child under the age of 12 years old, until such time as such children become eligible to obtain a vaccination.

47. **Information provided to the University under this Policy may be accessed by individuals authorized by the University to administer this Policy. This information will not otherwise be shared with individuals inside or outside the University.**

ACCOUNTABILITY

48. Reasonable care and diligence shall be exercised to prevent contravention of the laws of Ontario and this Policy. The University has identified roles and responsibilities as follows below.
49. The Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and the Vice-President, Operations & Finance are responsible:
- a) for ensuring that the parties or party responsible for the day-to-day implementation of and University alignment with this Policy fulfill those responsibilities accordingly; and
 - b) for monitoring this Policy and for ensuring compliance.
50. [Community Members](#), particularly those who are the primary University contact for external attendees, are responsible for contributing to creating a safe and healthy [Workplace](#) and [Learning Environment](#), which includes complying with this Policy and ensuring that their Contractors, Visitors, and Volunteers comply with this Policy and any other safety measure the University deems necessary to protect the community.
51. [Contractors](#), [Lessees](#), members of the [Public](#), [Visitors](#), and [Volunteers](#) are responsible for complying with this Policy and any other safety measure the University deems necessary to protect the community.

NON-COMPLIANCE OUTCOMES

52. Contractors, Lessees, members of the Public, Visitors, and Volunteers are required to comply with this Policy, as well as all applicable University health, safety and environmental programs and policies.
53. Any individual that fails to comply with this Policy may be:
- a) prohibited from attending [University Property](#); and/or
 - b) subject to the outcomes, remedies and/or sanctions under University policies and procedures, including the *Persona Non Grata Policy*.

APPENDIX A: RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND LEGISLATION

54. This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the following legislation, statutes, University policies and practices or collective agreement provisions. Any question of the application of this Policy or related policies shall be determined by the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and/or the Vice-President (Operations & Finance), and in conjunction with the administrator of the other policy or policies. The University reserves the right to amend or add to the University's policies and statements from time to time. The below is not a comprehensive list.

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Human Rights Code
- Personal Health Information Protection Act
- Policy on Accessibility
- Policy on Access to Personal Health Information.
- Policy for the Handling of Personal Information
- Policy for the Handling of Personal Health Information
- Privacy Governance and Accountability Framework
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Reopening Ontario Act
- Workplace and Environmental Health and Safety Policy