

HIGH PARK INITIATIVES POLICY MANUAL



Approved by: HPI Board	Date: October 8, 2021
Policy No:	Last Updated: March 1, 2022
Section: Health and Safety	Revision #: 2

High Park Nature Centre COVID-19: Vaccination Policy

Policy Statement

The High Park Nature Centre is committed to taking every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of the health and safety of employees, contractors, and volunteers from the hazard of COVID-19. Vaccination is a key element in the protection against the hazard of COVID-19. To this end High Park Nature Centre employees, contractors and volunteers are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Background and Current Situation

Full vaccination has been shown to be effective in reducing COVID-19 virus transmission and protecting vaccinated individuals from severe consequences of COVID-19 and COVID-19 variants including the Delta variant currently circulating in Ontario. Given the continuing spread of COVID-19, including the Delta variant, within Ontario, the compelling data demonstrating a higher incidence of COVID-19 among the unvaccinated population and the increasing levels of contact between individuals as businesses, services, and activities have reopened, it is important for High Park Nature Centre employees, contractors, and volunteers to be fully vaccinated in order to protect themselves against serious illness from COVID-19 as well as to provide indirect protection to others, including colleagues.

Application

This policy applies to all High Park Nature Centre employees, contractors, and volunteers. Volunteers participating solely in the work of stewardship in the park and contractors who are engaged exclusively in outdoor work are exempted from this policy.

Barring those exempted, all new High Park Nature Centre employees, contractors, and volunteers are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as a condition of being hired/onboarded by the High Park Nature Centre.

The HPNC strongly recommends that, when eligible, all staff receive their third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. In light of changing public health circumstances, the third dose of a Health Canada-approved vaccine may become mandatory for all employees.

Continued Compliance with all Health and Safety Procedures

The High Park Nature Centre's employees, contractors, and volunteers are expected and required to continue to comply with applicable health and safety measures to reduce the hazard of COVID-19, including but not limited to compliance with established workplace access controls (e.g. screening), wearing a mask or face covering, using provided PPE, maintaining appropriate physical distancing and self-monitoring of potential COVID-19 symptoms when at work or otherwise engaged in High Park Nature Centre business.

In addition, employees, contractors, or volunteers who remain unvaccinated due to a medical exemption will be required to provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test weekly or within 72 hours of a scheduled in-person shift.

Vaccination Requirement

Barring those exempted, all High Park Nature Centre employees, contractors and volunteers are required to be fully vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine series by October 31, 2021, or provide proof of medical exemption.

Proof of Vaccination

Barring those exempted, the High Park Nature Centre requires proof of vaccination from all employees, contractors, and volunteers. Proof means documentation verifying receipt of a vaccination series approved by Health Canada or the World Health Organization.

Employees, contractors, and volunteers must disclose their vaccination status to the High Park Nature Centre in accordance with the established process by no later than October 31, 2021.

Employees, contractors, and volunteers who, by October 31, 2021, disclose that they have not received two doses of COVID-19 vaccine (or a single dose in the case of a single dose vaccine series), or who have not disclosed their vaccination status as required, shall attend mandatory education on the benefits of vaccination.

The High Park Nature Centre will maintain vaccination disclosure information, including documentation verifying receipt of a vaccination series approved by Health Canada or the World Health Organization, in accordance with privacy legislation. This information will only be used to the extent necessary for implementation of this policy, for administering health and safety protocols, and infection and prevention control measures in the workplace.

Accommodations Due to Medical Exemption

Employees, contractors, and volunteers who are not able to obtain a COVID-19 vaccine due to a medical accommodation must provide documentation from a physician or nurse practitioner outlining the exemption and whether the medical reason is permanent or time-limited.

Ongoing Monitoring and Assessment of COVID-19 Workplace Safety Measures

The High Park Nature Centre will continue to closely monitor its COVID-19 risk mitigation strategy and the evolving public health information and context, to ensure that it continues to optimally protect the health and safety of employees, contractors and volunteers in the workplace and the public that they serve. To that end, and in consultation with Toronto Public Health and occupational health and safety experts, the High Park Nature Centre will continue to assess other available workplace risk mitigation measures, including, for example, requiring proof of a negative COVID-19 test, etc. If it is determined that additional precautions are necessary, the High Park Nature Centre may decide to deploy new measures (including at an individual level) to protect employees, contractors, volunteers, and the public from COVID-19 and may amend this policy accordingly and/or communicate the required precautions to impacted employees.

Consequences of Non-Compliance with Policy

Employees who do not comply with this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

Contractors and volunteers who do not comply with this policy will not be retained by the High Park Nature Centre.

Effective Date

October 8, 2021