



**Archdiocese of Toronto**  
**COVID-19 Vaccination Policy**  
**September 24, 2021**

**Purpose**

Our principal goal in this COVID-19 Vaccination Policy (the “Policy”) is to encourage all staff to be vaccinated unless there is a medical reason preventing this. Two important caveats are necessary. First, this Policy is work and ministry-related; we are not requiring attendees at our religious services and parish gatherings to provide proof of vaccination. Second, the Policy is expected to be for a short term only while we remain in a state of pandemic. We sincerely hope that the requirements set out below will be lifted as provincial requirements are lessened and when they are no longer needed to address reasonable workplace health and safety concerns in relation to COVID-19.

We want to contribute to the effort to get all Ontarians vaccinated to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and return to our normal way of life, including religious services. COVID-19 remains a serious risk in the community, particularly in light of the ongoing spread of variants of concern. We want our staff members and those we serve to feel safe and be safe from COVID-19, and all evidence and moral considerations point to vaccination as the safest and most effective way to achieve this.

**Continued Compliance with Health and Safety Protocols**

Regardless of vaccination status, all individuals who are subject to this Policy must continue to comply with applicable health and safety measures in place to reduce the hazard of COVID-19, which includes masking protocols, distancing protocols, and any other requirements set out by public health officials or your specific workplace.

**Employees at Parishes, Chancery, and Satellite Offices**

Beginning on October 8, 2021, we will require that all employees attending the workplace be fully vaccinated<sup>1</sup> against COVID-19 or provide regular proof of a recent negative COVID-19 test result.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this policy, “fully vaccinated” means having received the full series of a COVID-19 vaccine or a combination of COVID-19 vaccines approved by Health Canada (e.g., two doses of a two-dose vaccine series, or one dose of a single-dose vaccine), and having received the final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago.

In order to be considered fully vaccinated, employees will need to provide proof of vaccination as issued by the [Ontario Ministry of Health](#) (in hard or [soft copy](#)) to their department head or pastor, who in turn will provide a summary document to HR.

Employees who do not provide proof of vaccination will be required to provide proof of a recent negative COVID-19 test result (in hard or soft copy) to their supervisor or pastor prior to or immediately upon entering the workplace.

For the purposes of this Policy, a test result will be considered “recent” if the individual received the test result within the preceding seven days, or such other time period as we may require.

Rapid tests available through participating drug stores are acceptable. These tests are administered at the pharmacy with results available within 15 minutes. The employee is responsible for the cost (about \$40/test).

### **Volunteers and Lay Ministers at Parishes**

Beginning on October 8, 2021, we will require that all volunteers, lectors, choir members, ushers, and individuals performing similar functions (collectively, “Volunteers and Lay Ministers”) attending the workplace be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

In order to be considered fully vaccinated, Volunteers and Lay Ministers will need to provide proof of vaccination as issued by the [Ontario Ministry of Health](#) (in hard or [soft copy](#)) to their volunteer leader, parish ministry leader, or pastor.

At his sole discretion, a pastor may allow Volunteers and Lay Ministers (save and except for extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion) who have not provided proof of vaccination to provide proof of a recent negative COVID-19 as a condition of attending the workplace or place of worship as a Volunteer or Lay Minister. If applicable, these individuals must provide proof of a recent negative COVID-19 test result (in hard or soft copy) to the pastor. For the purposes of this Policy, a test result will be considered “recent” if the individual received the test result within the preceding seven days, or such other time period as we may require.

Rapid tests available through participating drug stores are acceptable. These tests are administered at the pharmacy with results available within 15 minutes. The volunteer or lay minister, as applicable, is responsible for the cost (about \$40/test).

### **Clergy**

Beginning on October 8, 2021, we will require that all clergy (bishops, priests, deacons) be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or provide regular proof of a recent negative COVID-19 test result in order to perform their duties.

In order to be considered fully vaccinated, clergy will need to provide proof of vaccination (in hard or [soft copy](#)) as issued by the [Ontario Ministry of Health](#) to their pastor who will provide a summary document to his regional bishop.

Clergy who have provided proof of vaccination may enter parish offices, preside at religious services, and carry out visitations to schools, hospitals, seniors' residences, and individual residences without the need to provide regular proof of a negative COVID-19 test result.

Clergy who have not provided proof of vaccination will be required to provide proof of a recent negative COVID-19 test result (in hard or soft copy) to their pastor prior to or immediately upon entering parish offices, or presiding at religious services.

For the purposes of this Policy, a test result will be considered "recent" if the individual received the test result within the preceding seven days, or such other time period as we may require.

Rapid tests available through participating drug stores are acceptable. These tests are administered at the pharmacy with results available within 15 minutes. The clergy member is responsible for the cost (about \$40/test).

Where provincial legislation and/or guidelines prohibit unvaccinated clergy (and others) from attending certain locations or performing certain duties (e.g., visiting schools, hospitals and seniors' residences), clergy who have not provided proof of vaccination will need to make arrangements with other clergy, lay ministers or volunteers who have provided proof of vaccination to carry out their pastoral ministries.

### **Disclosure**

All individuals covered by this Policy are asked to confirm their vaccination status and, if applicable, provide their proof of vaccination, as soon as possible and in no event later than October 8, 2021 to the applicable individual. Individuals who do not provide proof of vaccination will not be considered to be fully vaccinated for the purposes of this Policy.

### **Accommodation**

We will accommodate individuals who are unable to comply with this policy on the basis of a protected human rights ground to the extent required under human rights legislation. If you believe that you need accommodation pursuant to this Policy, lay staff and volunteers should contact Stephanie Nargoz (Human Resources) and clergy should contact Fr. Edward Curtis (Spiritual Affairs).

### **Discipline**

If an employee does not comply with this policy, or is found to have submitted fraudulent proof of vaccination, a fraudulent test result, a fraudulent summary, or fraudulent documentation in support of an accommodation request, they may be subject to discipline (which includes being placed on an unpaid leave of absence), up to and including termination of employment for just cause.

## **Privacy and Confidentiality**

We are committed to protecting the privacy and security of personal information collected under this Policy. We will not retain or make copies of any proof of vaccination or negative test results provided by an individual in accordance with this policy. All personal information collected in accordance with this Policy will be stored in a secure location. All information collected in accordance with this Policy will be collected, used and disclosed only for the purposes of administering infection control procedures in the workplace or as required by law. When the information collected under this Policy is no longer needed to address reasonable workplace health and safety concerns in relation to COVID-19, it will be destroyed.

## **General**

We recognize that vaccination is a personal choice and we encourage individuals to educate themselves on the benefits and risks of vaccination. Individuals should not be questioned on their decision – we do not want to create divides within the workplace. Each person must be treated with respect and dignity.

For specific steps on the process, refer to Appendix A which follows.

## Appendix A

### Vaccination Policy – Archdiocese of Toronto Steps to Follow by October 8, 2021

We recognize that the Archdiocese of Toronto vaccination policy will result in some questions regarding process and how this can flow smoothly in your parish/department. To help simplify the steps, we provide the following direction based on the scenarios listed below:

To download your vaccination receipt (proof of vaccination) from the Ministry of Health, visit: <https://covid19.ontariohealth.ca/> - you will be asked to enter your health card and date of birth.

The site will allow you to download a PDF copy of your vaccination receipt which can be e-mailed, printed or kept on a mobile device (where establishments may require proof of vaccination for entry). For proof of full vaccination, only the receipt for your 2<sup>nd</sup> dose is required. Alternatively, you may use the receipt provided at the time of your vaccination.

#### **Scenario #1 – Clergy serving in parish ministry**

By October 8, 2021 - provide proof of vaccination to pastor (see [website](#) to download vaccine receipt noted above). Pastor collects proof of vaccination for himself, Associate Pastor(s), Permanent Deacon(s). E-mail with name of clergy, parish and date of 2<sup>nd</sup> vaccination for each individual are sent to Regional Bishop. Do not forward actual certificates, just a summary.

Any clergy that are unvaccinated provide weekly rapid test results to Regional Bishop by Tuesday of each week.

#### **Scenario #2 – Volunteers serving in parish ministry**

By October 8, 2021 – volunteers are asked to provide proof of vaccination to volunteer co-ordinator, pastor or other parish contact (care should be taken to limit number of individuals with access to vaccination status). Refer volunteers to <https://covid19.ontariohealth.ca/> to access vaccination receipt. Parish representative maintains log of vaccination status, noting name and date of 2<sup>nd</sup> vaccination.

In cases where the pastor permits an unvaccinated volunteer to continue in ministry, weekly rapid test results are shared with volunteer co-ordinator/parish representative on a pre-arranged day each week. Record of negative result is kept in volunteer file until directed by archdiocese.

#### **Scenario #3 – Parish staff**

By October 8, 2021 – parish staff are asked to provide proof of vaccination to the Pastor (see [website](#) to download vaccine receipt). Pastor sends summary document listing staff names and date of 2<sup>nd</sup> vaccination to [hr@archtoronto.org](mailto:hr@archtoronto.org) (note vaccine receipt should not be sent to be sent to Human Resources). In cases of unvaccinated staff, weekly rapid test results are presented to pastor prior on a pre-arranged day each week subject to employee work schedule.

### **Scenario #3 – Chancery Staff**

By October 8, 2021 – Chancery staff are asked to provide proof of vaccination to Department Head (see [website](#) to download vaccine receipt). Department Head sends summary document listing staff and date of 2<sup>nd</sup> vaccination to [hr@archtoronto.org](mailto:hr@archtoronto.org) (note vaccine receipt should not be sent to Human Resources). Department Heads share proof of vaccination with their supervisor who, in turn, provide a summary document to Human Resources.

In cases of unvaccinated staff, weekly rapid test results are presented to pastor on a pre-arranged day each week subject to employee work schedule.

Questions relating to clergy should be directed to Fr. Edward Curtis, Chancellor of Spiritual Affairs.

Questions relating to staff or volunteers should be directed to Stephanie Nargoz, Director of Human Resources.