



Proof of Vaccine FAQ – Sport & Recreation Sector

Vaccination Status

- **If a child is over 13 or older and gets vaccinated now, can they keep participating beyond October 4th if they're waiting for their second appointment?**

Children and youth age 13 to 18 who can provide proof that they received one dose of vaccine can start participating in sport, recreation, arts and culture programming on or after October 4. To continue participating, they must provide proof of full vaccination by November 9 (second dose plus 14 days for it to take effect). In other words, they must get a first dose no later than September 28 and a second dose no later than October 26. If you don't meet the November 9 deadline, you will not be able to participate until you are able to provide proof of full vaccine (second dose plus 14 days for it to take effect).

This would apply to sport teams, sport, recreation, art and culture activities and programs, like art, music or dance classes, brownies/cubs, music or theatre productions. This does not apply to indoor and outdoor leisure facilities and businesses such as public swims or skates, climbing facilities, escape rooms, indoor play places, arcades, shooting ranges, go-carts and outdoor adventure.

- **How will we deal with children who turn 12 during this period, will they be able to continue or would they also have to stop taking part from the time they turn 12 until they are fully vaccinated?**

Children who turned 12 between Jan. 1 and Oct. 4 this year will have until Dec. 31 to attend events and activities while they get vaccinated. Children who turn 12 after Oct. 4 will have three months from their birthday. If they choose not to get vaccinated, they will no longer be able to participate in these events and activities once the grace period is up.

- **If a child is vaccinated but their parent(s)/guardian is not, can they take part if they travel to their activity or use/enter facilities?**

The child may participate in activities or enter/use facilities by providing their own proof of vaccination. Parents who are not fully vaccinated would have to either drop off their children for these activities (if that is possible) or have a fully vaccinated adult accompany them.

- **For those under 12 who are not eligible to be vaccinated, will their proof of vaccine be determined by their parent or guardians vaccine status?**

The proof of full vaccination policy does not apply to those 11 and younger.

- **Will programs have to turn away youth aged 13-18 if they are not vaccinated by the deadline and not permitted by their parent or guardian to make their own medical decision?**

Proof of full vaccination by the deadline is required for youth aged 13-18 to participate in sport and recreation programming. If they do not meet the requirements, they will have to be turned away until they are able to provide proof of full vaccine (second dose plus 14 days for it to take effect).

If you have questions about youth age 12 to 18 year accessing the vaccine without parental or guardian consent, the [Mature Minor Consent for COVID-19 Immunization Factsheet \(PDF\)](#) provides more information about how consent for healthcare decisions for minors works.

- **What qualifies as a medical exemption and how with this be verified/confirmed?**

The province is working on a process to give an exception for people with a valid medical or behavioural reason for not getting vaccinated.

There is limited number of specific medical reasons why someone should not or cannot get COVID-19 vaccine. They include:

- an allergy to any component of a specific COVID-19 vaccine or its container (polyethylene glycol for Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines)
- a history of major venous and/or arterial thrombosis with thrombocytopenia following vaccination with AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine
- a history of capillary leak syndrome following vaccination with AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine
- a history of a serious adverse event following immunization after the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. “Serious” is defined using the World Health Organization standard definition: an adverse event following immunization that results in death, is life-threatening, requires in-patient hospitalization or prolongs an existing hospitalization, results in persistent or significant disability/incapacity or a congenital anomaly/birth defect.

Additionally, as a precaution, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization recommends that people who experienced myocarditis and/or pericarditis after a first dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) should wait to get their second dose of mRNA vaccine until more information is available.

Immunosuppression, auto-immune disorders, pregnancy and breastfeeding are not medical reasons that prevent people from getting COVID-19 vaccine.

- **Are staff who are working in a sport or recreation facility required to be vaccinated, or is work considered essential?**

The proof of full vaccination policy will apply to people participating in the event or activity, not to employees of the business or organization that hosts it.

You will not be required to show proof of vaccination if your job requires you to access a business or organization that is subject to the proof of vaccination policy.

Any workplace may choose to implement their own vaccine policy for staff.

Spectators

- **Does this policy apply to spectators for both indoor and outdoor events? For outdoor events, especially those at open venues such as fields, what would the expectations be for volunteers to be responsible to check the vaccine status of spectators?**

People will need to show proof of full vaccination to attend indoor and outdoor events that are hosted by a recognized business or organization. This business or organization is required to ensure people in attendance have proof of vaccination. In the case of a rental facility, the owner of the facility is responsible for ensuring that people entering the facility for activities that are subject to the policy are showing proof of full vaccination. This means that there must be an appropriate mechanism in place to check as people enter the facility.

- **What is the expectation for proof of vaccination for spectators at outdoor venues without controlled access points (i.e. Point Pleasant Park for cross country events)?**

Proof of vaccination is required for indoor and outdoor festivals, special events, and arts and culture events and venues such as theatre performances, concerts and movie theatres.

Events held in public spaces with no specific entry point are not subject to the proof of vaccination policy. For example, there is no entry point to the Nocturne festival where people need to wander the streets to see the exhibits. However, when an event brings people into a single public space with the intention of them staying in that space for the activity, a specific entry point can and should be set up and proof of vaccination is required.

Is there a difference between a “sporting event” and parents spectating at their child’s sport game / practice?

Proof of full vaccination is required for people attending and participating in sport activity. That includes games, practices, programs, tournaments and competitions.

- **Our arena does not have a front desk attendant. How will small facilities complete vaccine checks for spectators?**

The recognized business or organization hosting an event or activity covered by the policy is required to ensure people in attendance have proof of vaccination. In the case of a rental facility, the owner of the facility is responsible for ensuring that people entering the facility for activities that are subject to the policy are showing proof of full vaccination. This means that there must be an appropriate mechanism in place to check as people enter the facility.

Enforcement

– How long will the mandate last?

The proof of full vaccination policy is a short-term measure to help bring large groups of people together safely once there are no longer any gathering limits. It will allow us to fully reopen and have the best chance of staying open. We do not have a specific end date at this time.

- What are the parameters of the requirement for proof of vaccine (when is it and is not required)?

The full policy is not finalized yet, however, we anticipate the policy will apply to:

- full-service restaurants where patrons sit at tables to be served, both indoors and on patios
- liquor licensed establishments, casinos and other gaming establishments, both indoors and on patios
- indoor and outdoor fitness and recreation facilities such as gyms, yoga studios, pools and arenas as well as fitness classes
- indoor and outdoor leisure facilities and businesses such as dance and music lessons, climbing facilities, escape rooms, pottery painting, indoor play places, arcades, shooting ranges, go-carts, and outdoor adventure
- indoor and outdoor festivals, special events, and arts and culture events and venues such as theatre performances, concerts and movie theatres, unless they are outdoor events held in public spaces with no specific entry point such as Nocturne
- participants and spectators for indoor and outdoor sports practices, games, competitions and tournaments
- indoor and outdoor extracurricular school based activities including sports
- bus, boat and walking tours
- museums, public libraries and the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia
- indoor and outdoor events and activities such as receptions, social events, conferences and training that are hosted by a recognized business or organization
- indoor and outdoor wedding and funeral ceremonies, receptions and visitation that are hosted by a recognized business or organization

What will the policy not apply to? Proof of vaccination will not be required for most places that don't facilitate formal gatherings, such as:

- retail stores
- financial institutions
- food establishments that primarily offer fast food, takeout and delivery
- professional services such as accountants and lawyers
- personal services such as hair salons, barber shops, spas and body art
- healthcare services and health professions such as doctor's offices, dental care, massage therapy and physiotherapy
- rental accommodations such as hotel rooms, cottages and campgrounds
- faith services

- school based activities that take place during the school day, before and after school programs and schools buses
- business meetings and other activities where the general public is not present
- places where government services are offered
- food banks, shelters, Family Resource Centres and adult day programs for seniors or people with disabilities
- informal gatherings at a private residence
- mental health and addiction support group meetings

How will people be expected to prove vaccination?

The province is working on guidance on what the public may present to provide proof of vaccination.

Anyone who got a dose of COVID-19 vaccine in Nova Scotia can access their proof of vaccination online at novascotia.ca/immunizationrecord or by calling toll-free: 1-833-797-7772

– **Who is ultimately responsible/holds the liability to check vaccination status?**

The recognized business or organization hosting an event or activity covered by the policy is required to ensure people in attendance have proof of vaccination. In the case of a rental facility, the owner of the facility is responsible for ensuring that people entering the facility for activities that are subject to the policy are showing proof of vaccination. This means that there must be an appropriate mechanism in place to check as people enter the facility.

– **Would a sport or facility be able to keep a database so they don't have to check every time someone comes, or are their privacy issues with that?**

The province is working on guidance on best practice for how groups and organizations can track proof of vaccination. We anticipate that it will not be recommended that groups and organizations keep a database of actual immunization records. More information will be coming.

– **Will the provincial government support organizations and municipalities that institute stricter policies than the public health guidelines require?**

A business or organization could choose to set a vaccine policy that is stricter than the provincewide policy. However, we've designed this policy to balance safety with some exceptions for children who either aren't old enough to be vaccinated or who should have a grace period participate in sports, recreation and arts and culture activities while they get vaccinated. Any policies should take legal and ethical implications into consideration. People who are not fully vaccinated need to be able to access essential services.

Where is proof of vaccine required within a recreation facility (i.e: meeting space versus the sport field)?

The proof of vaccination policy applies to areas of a recreation facility that offer recreation services and activities to their members and the public. Examples are gymnasiums, weight rooms, fitness studios and classes, pools, ice surfaces, indoor and outdoor fields, change rooms and spectator areas. Typically, there is a designated entry point or people have to show a membership card or pass through a gate of some kind before they can enter these actual recreation areas.

The policy does not apply to the lobby – people need to be able to come in and show their proof of vaccination before entering the actual recreation spaces.

Sometimes a facility has spaces that it rents to a business (such as a physiotherapy business or a restaurant) or multipurpose rooms that are used for community meetings and activities. We will be providing more information about how and when the proof of vaccination policy might apply to these kinds of spaces.

Setting

- **When does a sport activity become an event? A general game versus a practice vs. a tournament?**

Proof of full vaccination is required for people attending and participating in sport activity. That includes games, practices, programs, tournaments and competitions.

- **Will this be required at outdoor public events? (i.e. a Tree Lighting - will controlled access be needed or since it is outdoors no proof is required?)**

Proof of vaccination is required for indoor and outdoor festivals, special events, and arts and culture events and venues such as theatre performances, concerts and movie theatres.

Events held in public spaces with no specific entry point are not subject to the proof of vaccination policy. For example, there is no entry point to the Nocturne festival where people need to wander the streets to see the exhibits. However, when an event brings people into a single public space with the intention of them staying in that space for the activity, a specific entry point can and should be set up and proof of vaccination is required.

- **Is proof of vaccination required for both indoor and outdoor events and fitness classes?**

The policy will apply to indoor and outdoor fitness and recreation facilities such as open swims or skates, gyms, yoga studios, pools and arenas as well as fitness classes.

– **Is proof of vaccination required for training?**

Proof of full vaccination will be required for people taking training hosted by a recognized business or organization such as CPR/First Aid or courses offered by a training business.

If an employer brings together its employees for training, proof of vaccination is not required. If the employer brings a trainer into the workplace to train their own employees, the trainer does not have to show proof of vaccination unless the workplace has a policy requiring it.

– **Will the vaccination requirement for sport apply to coaches attending Theory or Sport Specific in person coaching events?**

Proof of full vaccination will be required for people taking training hosted by a recognized business or organization.

– **Is proof of vaccination required for meetings?**

Proof of vaccination won't be required for business meetings and other activities in the workplace where the general public is not present. It will be required for community meetings, such as municipal council meetings and annual general meetings of businesses or organizations.

– **If a Community Centre is being used by a Physical Education class, would they follow the Back to School plan?**

Proof of full vaccination will not be required to attend school, to participate in activities that take place during the school day, to attend before and after school programs, or to take the school bus.

– **I am a recreation facility and I have tenants who provide essential services, how do they come in the building and access these tenant spaces if they are not vaccinated?**

Proof of full vaccine would not be required for those tenants/activities in the facility that are excluded from POV under the policy and that it will be up to the facility to work with the tenants to determine the most appropriate way to handle participants entering the facilities for different purposes depending on their context.

Miscellaneous

– **What is the requirement for masking in Phase 5?**

Once phase 5 begins, there will be no more gathering limits, physical distance or mask requirements, although masks will continue to be recommended in indoor public places like recreation facilities.