



# VACCINATION POLICY

## 2021-22 Hockey Season

### October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021



#### **Purpose:**

To continue to protect the health and safety of all OWHA Participants by requiring that certain individuals be fully vaccinated as a condition of participating in OWHA activities in accordance with defined timelines.

#### **Definitions:**

***“Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine”*** means a COVID-19 vaccine that has been approved for use by Health Canada.

***“Affected Persons”*** means those individuals listed in Section 3 below.

***“Board Member”*** means a member of the Board of Directors of the OWHA or of an OWHA Member.

***“Exemption”*** means a written document completed and supplied by a registered physician (designated as “MD”) or by a registered nurse in the extended class (designated as “Registered Nurse (Extended Class)”, “RN(EC)”, “Nurse Practitioner” or “(NP)”) stating that the individual named in the document is exempt for a medical reason from being fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

***“Facility”*** means a municipally or privately run ice hockey arena or multi-sport complex in which any Participant, OWHA Member, Team or program participates in Sanctioned Activities.

***“Fully Vaccinated”*** means fourteen (14) days after an individual has received a completed series of an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine.

***“Game Off-Ice Official”*** means any timekeeper, scorekeeper, penalty box attendant or any other person designated by the OWHA or by an OWHA Member as a *Game Off-Ice Official*.

***“Game On-Ice Official”*** means:

- (a) any referee or linesperson approved by the OWHA as a game official; and
- (b) any OWHA-approved instructors and supervisors.

***“Participant”*** means a person registered with the OWHA or OWHA Member or program.

**“Sanctioned Activity”** means any game, on-ice practice, off-ice training, tournament, or any other activity involving players and Team Officials or individuals that is approved by the OWHA and is compliant with all requirements of the OWHA and the involved OWHA Member(s).

**“Staff”** means a person engaged on a full, part time or contract basis by the OWHA or by an OWHA Member including interns.

**“Team”** means any group of OWHA registered and rostered players and Team Officials who are qualified in a division and category under OWHA requirements. who gather for a Sanctioned Activity.

**“Team Official”** means any person involved in the managements of a Team and includes all coaches howsoever designated, managers, trainers, and other Team staff.

**“Vaccine-Eligible Player”** means any player born in 2009 or earlier (in accordance with current Health Canada and public health guidelines).

**“Volunteer”** means any person registered with the OWHA and/or serving as a volunteer.

## **1. Policy Statement**

This Policy applies to the OWHA and its Members. The OWHA requires that all Affected Persons be Fully Vaccinated against COVID-19 in accordance with this Policy as a condition of participating in any Sanctioned Activities during the 2021-2022 hockey season. At the present, this Policy does not apply to players born after 2009 but may be subject to change at any time.

Public health guidance on measures for Fully Vaccinated, partially vaccinated, and unvaccinated individuals continue to evolve and could affect this Policy in the future. The OWHA reserves the right to amend this Policy in response to any new guidance received from or regulations passed by federal, provincial and local public health and governmental authorities with respect to COVID-19.

This Policy is effective immediately.

## **2. Reasons for this Policy**

The health and safety of all Participants is the top priority of the OWHA. The purpose of this Policy is to protect the health and safety of all Participants by reducing the risk of exposure to and transmission of COVID-19 and to promote the health and safety of all members of the OWHA community, through vaccinations against COVID-19.

This Policy is necessary to prevent, respond to, and alleviate any outbreak of COVID-19 in the OWHA because of the significant risk factors for COVID-19 infection that are present while participating in an organized hockey setting as a player and non-player, both on and off the ice. These risk factors include close contact in predominantly indoor closed-space environments (e.g.: arenas, dressing rooms, etc.).

The close contact nature of organized hockey makes compliance with social distancing impossible in certain circumstances and reduces the effectiveness of other infectious disease transmission protocols such as masking.

### **3. Affected Persons**

This Policy applies to the following (“Affected Persons”) who are engaging in one or more Sanctioned Activities:

- Vaccine-Eligible Players
- Team Officials
- Game Off-Ice and Officials
- Game On-Ice Officials
- OWHA Member Officials (local hockey association directors, officers, executive, Staff and Volunteers)
- OWHA Officials (directors, officers, Staff and Volunteers)
- Participants
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Tournament staff and volunteers
- Instructors, supervisors, development providers and others involved either on or off-ice in any Sanctioned Activity.

At present, this Policy does not apply to hockey players born in 2010 or later.

### **4. Vaccination Requirement**

Each Affected Person is required to be Fully Vaccinated (including the 14-day period after receiving their completed dose) by **November 1, 2021** or earlier.

Each Affected Person must present to the OWHA or to their OWHA Member, as applicable, evidence demonstrating that they have received the completed series of an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine by **October 17, 2021** or earlier.

### **5. Acceptable Documentation**

Acceptable documents serving as evidence that an individual is Fully Vaccinated:

- A digital or physical dose administration receipt.
- Medical records signed by a licensed health care provider on that provider’s letterhead indicating vaccine name and date(s) of administration.
- Government verification/language (e.g., Government issued vaccine passport, certificate, card, or electronic record).

NOTE: The OWHA reserves the right to perform spot checks to confirm the accuracy of an individual’s vaccination history and this may include an individual having to produce confirmation of being Fully Vaccinated.

## **6. Medical Exemptions**

In accordance with the Ontario Ministry of Health's 'Proof of Vaccination Guidance for Businesses and Organizations under the Reopening Ontario Act', the OWHA provide accommodation to any Affected Person who is unable to be vaccinated for substantiated medical reasons.

The OWHA reserves the right to have accommodation medical documentation reviewed by an OWHA designated medical specialist.

Any Affected Person who is granted accommodation must undergo regular COVID-19 testing (at their own cost and expense) and must provide evidence to the President or designate of the OWHA or the President or designate of the OWHA Member, as applicable, or someone designated by that President, of a negative test taken not more than 48 hours prior to participating in any Sanctioned Activity.

Any Affected Person who wants to begin the accommodation request process should visit this link to access the OWHA Medical Exemption Request form:

<https://cloud.rampinteractive.com/whaontario/files/Bulletins/FINAL%20-%20OWHA%20COVID-19%20Vaccination%20Medical%20Exemption%20Request%20Form%20%281%29.pdf>

## **7. Record Keeping**

All documentary records about COVID-19 vaccinations and accommodations for Affected Persons will only be collected, used, retained, or disclosed by the OWHA or any of its members as may be necessary for legitimate operational purposes or as directed or requested by governmental authorities or as may be required for legal purposes.

Until no longer required, all records retained in relation to this Policy must be kept in a secure location to which access is provided to only a limited number of designated persons who are involved in administering this Policy, and no others. Once an Affected Person's vaccination status has been verified and it is determined that there is no further need for retention of such records, they must be immediately destroyed in a secure manner (e.g., shredding).

## **8. Unvaccinated Affected Persons**

After **October 17, 2021**, any Affected Person who is not Fully Vaccinated (excluding the 14-day period after receiving their completed dose) or who has not been granted an accommodation in accordance with Section 6 of this Policy, will no longer be eligible to participate in any Sanctioned Activities until such time as they have presented satisfactory evidence that they have been Fully Vaccinated (including the 14-day period after receiving their completed dose) or have been granted an accommodation.

## **9. Players born in 2010 or later**

At the present time, no vaccines have been approved by Health Canada for children born in 2010 or later. However, once such a COVID-19 vaccine has been approved, the OWHHA will re-evaluate this Policy and consider whether or not to extend the definition of Vaccine-Eligible Players to include players born in those years.

Further, at the present time, any player born in 2010, and who has begun the 2021/2022 OWHHA season ineligible because of their age to receive an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine, will not be required to complete their series of an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine to finish the season.

## **10. Pick-up players**

For greater certainty, this Policy does not preclude the use of unvaccinated pick-up players, who are not Vaccine-Eligible Players, in a Sanctioned Activity.

## **11. Spectators**

Ontario's *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020* and its Regulations require that businesses or organizations regarding indoor areas of facilities used for sports and recreational fitness activities, including, for greater certainty, the indoor areas of facilities where spectators watch events must require patrons who are 12 years of age or older and who do not qualify for an exemption to provide proof of identification and proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 prior to entering such a facility.

## **12. Facility**

Each Facility is governed by federal, provincial, municipal and public health legislation, regulations, by-laws, instructions, recommendations, guidance and other requirements. Each Facility may have its own rules or policies outside of the scope of this Policy which rules and policies must be adhered to at all times.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **OWHA Member Association**

- 1) Circulate this Policy.
- 2) Designate an individual or individuals (the "**Designated Individual(s)**") to manage, in a confidential manner, the verification of vaccinations for Affected Persons in accordance with this Policy.
  - a. For individuals who are Fully Vaccinated: The Designated Individual(s) should review the documents to ensure compliance with this Policy and keep an appropriate list. See also Section 7 'Record Keeping' above.
  - b. For individuals requesting an Exemption: Any Affected Person who wants to begin the accommodation request process should visit this link to access the

OWHA Medical Exemption Request form:

<https://cloud.rampinteractive.com/whaontario/files/Bulletins/FINAL%20-%20OWHA%20COVID-19%20Vaccination%20Medical%20Exemption%20Request%20Form%20%281%29.pdf>. Once completed, the OWHA Medical Exemption Request form should be

provided to the Designated Individual(s). The Designated Individual(s) should review the completed the OWHA Medical Exemption Request form to ensure compliance with this Policy and keep an appropriate list. Section 7 'Record Keeping' above.