



## **POLICY 57A-2021 COVID-19 VACCINE & TESTING POLICY**

### **1.0 POLICY STATEMENT**

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Town of St. George will adopt a Vaccine or Testing policy requiring that employees and members of Town Council who attend the workplace either show proof of full vaccination, or wear masks and regularly undergo COVID-19 testing.

### **2.0 PURPOSE AND GENERAL REQUIREMENT**

The Town of St. George must provide a safe work environment. Implementing this policy helps protect employees, members of Common Council, third parties who work at Town buildings and, generally, the community we serve from infection, serious illness, hospitalization and death associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Employees and members of Town Council who attend the workplace shall either provide proof of full vaccination or wear a mask and regularly undergo COVID-19 testing. Participation in the Vaccine or Test program is mandatory. The program shall remain in force pending advice to Council by the Town CAO that it is no longer required, and the subsequent rescinding of the policy statement by Council.

### **3.0 CONTEXT AND SCOPE**

Federal and Provincial Governments and Public Health have urged all eligible residents to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. They have also made public statements regarding the effectiveness of the vaccine in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Evidence has shown that the vaccine protects individuals, their families and their communities against severe illness, hospitalization and even death from COVID-19. This policy is a condition of access to the Town of St. George workplaces for its employees, members of Council and third parties to ensure that the Town provides a safe work environment for its workforce and those it serves during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This policy applies to all Town of St. George employees (current and new hires), members of Town Council, contractors, on-site vendors, suppliers and volunteers who attend Town workplaces.

Contingent upon the availability of the vaccine, and unless medically unable to receive the vaccine or subject to accommodation on Human Rights grounds, it is expected that all Town of St. George employees, members of Common Council, contractors, on-site vendors, suppliers and volunteers who attend Town workplaces will be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or wear a mask and undergo COVID-19 testing.

Employees who do not comply with this policy will be subject to the disciplinary process, up to and including dismissal. They will be sent home on leave without pay pending investigation and necessary disciplinary action. In the event of an outbreak in a workplace, the testing requirements may be temporarily modified (including for fully vaccinated employees) based on Public Health guidance.

Vaccination appointments may be made by visiting the following site:

<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/corporate/promo/covid-19.html>

#### **4.0 LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS**

The New Brunswick Occupational Health and Safety Act (NBOHSA) requires that employers take every reasonable precaution to ensure the health and safety of their employees. In addition, the Town of St. George Safety Policy amplifies the Town's burden of due diligence in representing the health and safety of its employees as a central obligation of the Town of St. George.

#### **5.0 IMPLEMENTATION**

Employees and Members of Council Current employees and members of Council have until Monday, September 27, 2021, or if absent, until their return to work, to provide proof of full vaccination. Employees will provide proof to the Town CAO of such vaccination. Members of Council are requested to provide proof to the Town CAO. The Town will not keep a copy of their employee (or member of Council) vaccination records. The Town will simply maintain a list of who has provided proof of vaccination.

Employees and members of Council who do not provide proof of vaccination by September 27, 2021, must always wear a mask in the workplace except when alone and isolated at their own workstation. For it to be acceptable to remove a mask while at an individual workstation, there must be assurance that no incidental or intentional close contact (defined as within 2 metres) with others is possible. The presence of a plexiglass barrier is not adequate separation for the purposes of this policy.

For consumption of food and drink, employees who are required to wear a mask may remove the mask if they maintain a minimum of 2 metres from all others, sanitize their area after use, and are located in an area where incidental or accidental close contact (within 2 metres) is not possible. Those who are required to wear a mask must immediately re-mask after completion of the consumption of food or drink.

In addition to the mask requirement, employees and members of Town Council who do not provide proof of vaccination will be required to follow the COVID-19 testing requirements until such time that they provide proof of full vaccination.

Employees and members of Council who provide an approved certificate of a medical exemption to the vaccine or to wearing a mask will be managed on a case-by-case basis. Employees and members of Council who believe they meet this requirement must contact the Town CAO for a review and possible exemption. Medical documentation will be required.

#### **Contractors and On-site Vendors, Suppliers and Volunteers**

Anyone who regularly works at Town workplaces shall comply with this policy. Town representatives within the department responsible for the contractors, suppliers or volunteers are responsible to inform those impacted by this policy and enforce this policy.

#### **Accommodation on Human Rights Grounds**

The Town will accommodate employees and members of Council who cannot get vaccinated or wear a mask and undergo testing on Human Rights Grounds. Each situation will be managed on a case-by-case basis.

#### **Members of the Public**

Direction related to members of the public entering Town facilities will be developed and modified as necessary based on guidance and direction from Public Health and the Government of New Brunswick.

As of 22 September 2021, the Province will impose requirements for access to select public spaces. These requirements are likely to be fluid and change as the situation warrants. Therefore, access by members of the public to Town facilities will not form part of this Policy but will be communicated to employees and our community through other mediums and products, on an "as required" basis.

Additional detail may follow, when provided by the Province.

## **6.0 COLLECTION AND TREATMENT OF INFORMATION**

The Town will review the proof of vaccination and test results of those to whom this policy applies but will not retain copies of such documentation. Instead, it will keep a list of employees and members of Council who have produced this information.

Access to proof of vaccination and test results will be limited to management who are administering the policy. Proof of vaccination and test results will be protected against unauthorized access and kept separate from employees' Human Resources files.

The information collected under the authority of this policy will be collected and used only for the purpose for which it is collected and will be destroyed when no longer required.

## **7.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Employees and Members of Council**

Employees and Members of Council are responsible for:

- Reading and understanding this policy and their responsibilities under it.
- Maintaining mutual respect and dignity in all workplace relations.
- If not already done, scheduling and receiving vaccinations if they choose to show proof of vaccination.
- Providing proof of COVID-19 vaccine status. Employees and members of Council are to provide proof to the Town CAO.
- If not providing proof of vaccination, completing the consent form, completing a PCR test and providing result on a weekly basis in compliance with this policy.
- If required to test, reviewing, and following testing instructions.
- If not fully vaccinated, always wearing a mask in the workplace except when isolated in personal workstation. See Section 5 for further clarification.
- If applicable, providing an approved certificate of medical exemption to Human Resources.

### **Town CAO**

The Town CAO is responsible for:

- Maintaining a master list of employees' vaccination status.
- Providing managers the format for employee vaccination list.
- Ensuring the appropriate level of privacy is in place.
- Ensuring the proper protocols are in place so testing is performed correctly, safely and effectively.
- Ensuring protocols are in place if a positive test result is identified.
- Preparing the necessary instructions for testing and providing them to managers for onward briefing to employees.

### **On-site Vendors, Suppliers, Contractors and Volunteers**

On-site vendors, suppliers, contractors and volunteers shall:

- Read and understand this policy and their responsibilities under it.
- Provide proof of COVID-19 vaccine status or a negative COVID-19 test result on a twice weekly basis.
- If not fully vaccinated, always wear a mask in the Town of St. George workplaces except when alone in personal workstation.
- Those who provide an approved certificate of a medical exemption to the vaccine will not be required to wear a mask but will be required to follow the testing requirements. Each such exemption will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

### **8.0 MONITOR AND REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed as needed by the Town CAO. As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolds, if the policy statement must change, the Town CAO will take any proposed change to the policy statement to Town Council for approval.

### **9.0 AUTHORIZATION**

This Policy is authorized by the Town CAO.

### **10.0 RESOURCES**

Government of New Brunswick:

<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/corporate/promo/covid-19.html>

WorkSafe NB:

<https://www.worksafenb.ca/>

New Brunswick Public Health:

<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/corporate/promo/covid-19/about-covid-19/testing-tracing.html#7>

## **11.0 PROCEDURES**

### **Testing Requirements**

An employee or member of Council who chose not to provide proof of their vaccination status shall complete a POCT two (2) times per week. These tests are to be performed three (3) days apart. The Town will provide the POCT kits. Employees and members of Council will begin the testing as soon as the Town provides the kits and will provide the results of each test to their manager in accordance with the instructions provided by their manager. The POCT test can be taken at home, prior to the start of the workday. Any fraudulent testing is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

A POCT takes approximately fifteen (15) minutes to complete. To learn more about the POCT test and how to use it, view: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbVEQfnXwyU>

### **If Positive POCT Result**

Employees and members of Council must schedule a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test immediately if they get a positive POCT test result or have two or more symptoms. Employees and members of Council will not attend the workplace until they get a negative PCR test result (they can work from home if operationally feasible and if they feel well enough to do so). If the PCR test result is negative, they shall return to work. Employees can register for a PCR test on line at [www.getcovid19test.ca](http://www.getcovid19test.ca) or by calling 811.

### **If Negative POCT Result**

Employees and members of Council will be able to attend workplace and will be required to continue with the required masking protocols and testing until proof of full vaccination is provided.

## **12.0 GLOSSARY**

Point of Care Testing (POCT) – diagnostic tests performed at or near the place where a specimen is collected. They provide results within minutes rather than hours. These may be NAAT, antigen, or antibody tests.

Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) – a test to detect genetic material from a specific organism such as a virus. The test detects the presence of a virus if you have the virus at the time of the test. The test could also detect fragments of the virus even after you are no longer infected. These test are completed via one of the Department of Health/Horizon Health medical center. The closest testing sites are Blacks Harbour (Fundy Health Centre) and St. Stephen (Charlotte County Hospital). In order to schedule testing, you will require your Medicare card.

### **13.0 INQUIRIES**

Inquiries regarding this Policy can be addressed to the Town CAO.

This policy was drafted with a cooperative working group lead by the City of Saint John, COVID-19 Vaccine and Test Policy (2021-248).

### **14.0 APPENDICES**

N/A

### **15.0 APPROVAL**

COVID-19 Vaccine and Testing Policy (57A-2021)

Council Review – September 16, 2021

Council Approval – September 27, 2021







This form is to be completed by the employee as verification they have received, read, and agree to comply with Policy 57A-2021, COVID-19 Vaccine & Testing Policy.

The original copy of this form will be placed in the employee file in lieu of a photocopy of the employee's official vaccination record, in the interest of privacy and personal identifying information it may contain.

- I have received and reviewed Policy 57A-2021, COVID-19 Vaccine & Testing Policy.
- I hereby declare the vaccination details presented to Administration are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I will undertake to inform Administration of any changes therein, immediately.

In case any of the above information is found to be false or untrue or misleading or misrepresenting, I am aware that I may be held liable for it.

- I understand these protocols may be amended as required due to changes in recommendations and/or standards by the Province of New Brunswick, the Union of the Municipalities of New Brunswick (UMNB), the Association of Municipal Administrators of New Brunswick (AMANB), or other related organizations, and approved by a resolution of Council.

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*Printed Name*

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*Signature*

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*Date*

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