



MEMORANDUM

MEMO TO: DIOCESAN PRIESTS

MEMO FROM: MR. JIM LONG, CHANCELLOR (TEMPORAL AFFAIRS) ✓

DATE: OCTOBER 7TH, 2021

RE: VACCINE POLICY – UPDATES AND CLARIFICATIONS

Thank you to those who participated in the ZOOM call and to those who have taken their time to email the Diocese with feedback about the vaccine policy that was distributed last week. The majority of the comments we have received centre around the need for Parishes to be able to retain our unvaccinated volunteers.

The Diocese has reviewed these comments and has had the chance to receive further legal advice from our Legal Counsel as well as feedback from other Bishops at the ACBO plenary where Covid Vaccination policies of other Dioceses were discussed.

Taking into account all of this the Diocese has made a number of amendments or clarifications to the policy, highlighted below.

PROOF OF VACCINATION

- Clarification on where proof of vaccination should be sent.
- At this time we only require proof of vaccination from those volunteers who are active in Parish life, will be attending functions at the Parish or will be volunteering during times of the day where they will come in contact with other individuals.

UNVACCINATED CLERGY, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- Volunteers who do not provide proof of vaccination and who are in contact with Parishioners, such as Choir Members and Ushers, can provide services to the Parish as long as the Parish Priest agrees to this and agrees to take on the responsibility of administering tests. Tests are only required on the days they are volunteering. The Chancery Office will not be administering tests for volunteers.

OBTAINING FREE RAPID TESTS

- Rapid tests can be obtained from most local Chambers of Commerce, please google your local City or Region to find where tests are available. For example, in Hamilton tests can be obtained by visiting [Rapid Antigen Testing - Rapid screen, point of care or POC testing | City of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada](#).
- If Parishes decide to obtain rapid tests, Ministry of Health guidelines must be adhered to.

USE OF PARISH HALLS

- Parish Halls can be used for gatherings for religious purposes (*i.e.* a non-social purpose), such as RCIA, communion preparation, prayer groups, etc.
- Parish Halls can be used for gatherings connected to the administration (business-related) of a parish, such as a finance council meeting, money counting or employee training.
- For purpose of this Policy, the Diocese includes CWL, SVDP and the Knights of Columbus meetings as non-social events and will not require proof of vaccination.

ONGOING MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF COVID-19 WORKPLACE SAFETY MEASURES

The Diocese will continue to closely monitor its COVID-19 risk mitigation strategy and the evolving public health information. If it is determined that additional precautions are necessary, the Diocese will amend this Policy accordingly.

Any questions concerning the interpretation and/or applicability of this Policy should be addressed to Monsignor Murray Kroetsch or myself.

Sincerely



Jim Long
Chancellor (Temporal Affairs)
Diocese of Hamilton



COVID-19 Vaccination Policy of the Diocese of Hamilton- Amendments

Above all, clothe yourselves in love

PROOF OF VACCINATION

The Diocese requires to know the vaccination status of all Employees and volunteers. A sample of the most common type of proof of vaccinations is attached (Appendix A). You can obtain your proof of vaccination by visiting <https://covid19.ontariohealth.ca/vaccine-receipt>.

- Clergy will provide proof of vaccination to Monsignor Murray Kroetsch at: chancellor@hamiltondiocese.com.
- Employees will provide proof of vaccination to Ms. Gagan Gill at: ggill@hamiltondiocese.com.
- Volunteers should provide proof of vaccination to their Parish Priest (or his delegate). If the Parish Priest prefers not to handle this task, volunteers will provide proof of vaccination to Ms. Gagan Gill at: ggill@hamiltondiocese.com.

At this time we only require proof of vaccination from those volunteers who are active in Parish life, will be attending functions at the Parish or will be volunteering during times of the day where they will come in contact with other individuals. So for example if your Finance council has been meeting by zoom and will continue to meet by zoom, proof of vaccination is not needed, unless of course members are involved in other active ministries. Please contact Jim Long for further clarification.

Proof of vaccination can be mailed, couriered or emailed. If mailing or courier your proof of vaccination, the mailing address is as follows:

Monsignor M. Kroetsch or Ms. Gagan Gill
700 King Street West
Hamilton, Ontario
L8P 1C7

If you are emailing your proof of vaccination please save the document into a pdf or jpeg before attaching it to your email.

When providing proof of vaccination to Ms. Gagan Gill please provide your Name, Parish, City and Position. I have provided a form (Appendix B) that employees and volunteers may wish to include when submitting proof of vaccination.

Proof of vaccination is required by October 31st, 2021. Clergy, Employees and volunteers who, by October 31st, 2021, disclose that they have not received Full Vaccination or who have not disclosed their vaccination status as required, shall be subject to the terms of the Policy for unvaccinated individuals.

UNVACCINATED CLERGY, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Clergy, Staff and Volunteers with a valid exemption under the Code, or who choose not to receive Full Vaccination without an exemption, must provide proof at their own expense of a negative rapid COVID-19 test every Monday and Thursday morning, except if such Clergy or Staff are on vacation or are on sick leave that day, in which case proof shall be provided on the day that the Clergy or Staff return to work.

- Clergy shall provide negative test results to the Monsignor Murray Kroetsch by email. Only a negative test from a third part testing facility will be accepted for Clergy. Tests are valid for 24 hours. Appendix C is an example of the results of a test from Shoppers Drug Mart. Most drug stores and pharmacies provide these services.

If the Parish Priest agrees to monitor Staff, acceptable tests are either those tests from a third party testing facility or a rapid test administered by a delegate appointed by the Parish Priest. Unfortunately for Clergy, as leaders of your Parish, proper control procedures do not allow you to administer your own rapid test.

- Staff shall provide negative test results to the Parish Priest or his designate if the Priest agrees to take on the responsibility or to Ms. Gagan Gill if he doesn't. If the Parish Priest agrees to monitor Staff, acceptable tests are either those tests from a third party testing facility or a rapid test administered by the Parish Priest or his delegate.

If the Parish Priest does not agree to monitor staff the only acceptable negative test will be tests from a third party testing facility, these tests are valid for 24 hours. Appendix C is an example of the results of a test from Shoppers Drug Mart. Most drug stores and pharmacies provide these services. Please note that Parishes are not obligated to administer rapid tests.

- Volunteers, who are in contact with Parishioners, such as Choir Members and Ushers can provide services to the Parish as long as the Parish Priest agrees to this and agrees to take on the responsibility of administering tests. Tests are only required on the days they are volunteering. The Chancery Office will not be administering test results for volunteers.

If the Parish Priest agrees to monitor Volunteers, acceptable tests are either those tests from a third party testing facility or a rapid test administered by the Parish Priest or his delegate. If the Parish Priest does not agree to monitor Volunteers, Volunteers will not

be able to provide services to the Parish. Please note that Parishes are not obligated to allow unvaccinated Volunteers to provide services to the Parish.

Please visit [COVID-19 testing locations \(ontario.ca\)](https://www.ontario.ca/covid-19-testing-locations) to find a testing location in your area.

OBTAINING FREE RAPID TESTS

Rapid tests can be obtained from most local Chamber of Commerce, please google your local City or Region to find where tests are available. For example, in Hamilton tests can be obtained by visiting [Rapid Antigen Testing - Rapid screen, point of care or POC testing | City of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada](#).

Please note that Parishes who wish to participate in rapid testing must adhere to the Provinces Guidelines which are available on the City or Regions websites and included in Appendix D. The main issues are as follows:

- Ensuring that all personal information is retained in accordance to the Diocese's privacy policy.
- Planning, developing, and operationalizing policies and procedures related to testing.
- Cooperating with their local public health unit in the event of a potential workplace exposure of COVID-19 or an outbreak investigation.
- Properly storing and disposing of the test waste with registered haulers (approved to carry biomedical waste) to ensure ongoing protection of human health and the environment.

Parishes are encouraged to read all the available documentation and make a decision that is best for their Parish.

USE OF PARISH HALLS

Based on the wording of various government, it can reasonably be surmised that Parish Halls would constitute meeting or event spaces when used for non-parish events and that proof of vaccinations would be required for such "social gatherings" at Parish Halls, but gatherings for religious purposes would not appear to be subject to vaccine passport requirements.

Based on our Legal Counsel's understanding of the Step 3 Regulation, a "social gathering" (which is also not legally defined) would require Vaccine Proof. This would include social gatherings, such as birthday parties and family reunions held at meeting or event spaces.

However, based on a narrow interpretation of the term, a social gathering would not include gatherings for religious purposes (*i.e.* a non-social purpose), such as RCIA, communion preparation, prayer groups, or parent and children movie days that are intended for religious education reasons. This would also exclude purposes that are not social gatherings, but rather connected to the administration (business-related) of a parish, such as a finance council meeting, money counting or employee training.

For purpose of this Policy, the Diocese includes CWL, SVDP and the Knights of Columbus meetings as non-social events and will not require vaccine passports.

Having said this, there is no prohibition on requiring Vaccine Proof from all “patrons” of the hall, if the Parish chooses to err on the side of caution. However, doing so may involve substantial administrative burdens, much of which may be unnecessary based on the actual requirements of the Step 3 Regulation.

CONTRACTORS (WITH A CONTRACTS WITH THE DIOCESE)

Contractors who have a contract with the Diocese (Music Ministers, Cooks and Cleaners) can provide services to the Parish as long as the Parish Priest agrees to this and agrees to take on the responsibility of administering tests. Tests are only required on the days they are working at Parish. The Chancery Office will not be administering test results for Contractors.

If the Parish Priest agrees to monitor Contractors, acceptable tests are either those tests from a third party testing facility or a rapid test administered by the Parish Priest or his delegate. If the Parish Priest does not agree to monitor Contractors, Contractors will not be able to provide services to the Parish. Please note that Parishes are not obligated to allow unvaccinated Contractors to provide services to the Parish.

CONTRACTORS (OTHER)

Parish Priest must use their discretion when allowing independent contractors (snow plow companies, plumbers, electricians, landscapers, etc.) onto Parish premises. Your decision should be based on the type of work being done, their interactions with staff and Parishioners and the Covid policy of the Company providing the work.

MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS

People are required to wear masks in indoor areas of the Diocese’s premises, Ontario Regulation 364/20 under the Reopening Ontario Act (“Ontario Regulation”) states that the person responsible for an organization shall ensure that any person in an indoor area of the premises of an organization wears a mask or face covering in a manner that covers their mouth, nose and chin during any period when they are in the indoor area unless subsection (4) applies to the person in the indoor area.

There are several exceptions to the mask requirement which are set out in subsection 2(4) of the Ontario Regulation which are as follows:

- The person has a medical condition that inhibits their ability to wear a mask or face covering.
- The person is being accommodated in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
- The person is being reasonably accommodated in accordance with the Human Rights Code.

Evidence supporting a mask exemption does not need to be provided, importantly, “it is not necessary” for a person claiming an exemption to present evidence of the exception they are claiming.

Please note there is a difference between not wanting to wear a mask and having a medical exemption for not wearing a mask. So for example the mask me uncomfortable or makes it hard for me to breath does not constitute a medical condition. If someone decides to claim that they have a medical condition and that therefore they cannot wear masks, then the Diocese cannot request that they provide proof of a medical exemption.

COVID-19 vaccination receipt / Récépissé de vaccination contre la COVID-19**Identification / Identification**

Name / Nom: .

Health card number / Numéro de la carte Santé: #####.

Date of birth / Date de naissance: .

Vaccination / Vaccination

Date / Date: 2021-07-03, 11:16 am

Agent / Agent: COVID-19 mRNA

Product name / Nom du produit: MODERNA COVID-19 mRNA-1273

Diluent product: Not applicable / Ne s'applique pas

Lot / Lot: 042D21A

Dosage / Dosage: 0.5ml

Route / Voie: Intramuscular / Intramusculaire

Site / Site: Right deltoid / Deltoïde droit

You have received 2 dose(s) / Vous avez reçu 2 dose(s)

Vaccine administered by / Vaccin administré par: \ , Registered Nurse

Authorized organization / Organisme agréé: Region Public Health

This document contains confidential information that is intended only for the named individual. Any unauthorized disclosure, copying, or distribution of the contents is strictly prohibited. Printed on 2021-09-29.

Ce document contient des renseignements confidentiels qui sont destinés uniquement à la personne nommée. Toute divulgation, copie ou distribution non autorisée de son contenu est strictement interdite. Imprimé le 2021-09-29.



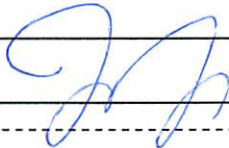
COVID-19 Vaccination Policy - Appendix B

NAME

PARISH AND CITY

POSITION

COVID-19 Abbott Panbio™ Rapid Antigen Test Result

Test Performed		
Abbott Panbio™ COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Test This test has been approved by Health Canada		Nasal Swab
Patient Information		
<i>Patient Information should match Identification Provided (e.g. Passport, Drivers License, etc.)</i>		
First Name: _____		
Middle Name: _____		
Last Name: _____		
Date of Birth: _____		
Identification Type: HEALTH CARD		
Identification Number: _____		
Test Date and Time		
Date: SEPTEMBER 28, 2021	Time: 12:15PM	
Result Date and Time		
Date: SEPTEMBER 28, 2021	Time: 12:30PM	
Test Result		
Test Result: Negative		
Testing Location		
Shoppers Drug Mart Pharmacy		
Pharmacy Address: 501-503 Plains road E	City: Burlington	Province: Ontario
Phone Number: 905-632-3365	Postal Code: L7T 2E2	
Pharmacist Name: IG	License Number: 626135	
Pharmacist Signature: 		

Shoppers Drug Mart
 501-503 Plains Rd E
 Burlington, ON L7T 2E2
 Ph: 905-632-3365 F: 905-632-6693
 Pharmacy Stamp

Ministry of Health

COVID-19 Guidance: Considerations for Privately Initiated Testing

Version 3.0 May 21, 2021

This document is intended for individuals or organizations that choose to participate in private COVID-19 testing outside of the public health care system in Ontario.

Testing is not considered to be an effective preventive measure for COVID-19 on its own and does not replace public health strategies such as symptom screening, physical distancing, and hand hygiene.

Please see the [COVID-19 Provincial Testing Guidance](#) for more information. Anyone who falls within the current Provincial Testing Guidance should continue to seek publicly funded testing, available at participating pharmacies, specimen collection centres, and assessment centres.

However, in recognition that some organizations may choose to conduct private testing as part of their operations, this document has been developed to outline the minimum considerations and requirements for such initiatives. This guidance provides basic information only. It is not intended to take the place of medical advice, diagnosis, treatment, or legal advice. **Further, organizations that initiate private COVID-19 testing campaigns assume any operational, medical, and/or legal responsibilities relating to this initiative.**

In the event of any conflict between this guidance document and any applicable legislation or orders or directives issued by the Minister of Health or the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), the legislation, order or directive prevails. Please see [Ontario's COVID-19 website](#) for more general information as well as for updates to this document.

Preamble

- Currently, COVID-19 clinical testing in Ontario is primarily conducted through the provincial public health care system.
- As some organizations have resumed operations, some organizations have expressed interest in privately conducting asymptomatic testing and/or offering testing to individuals who are not eligible for publicly-funded testing under the current [Provincial Testing Guidance](#).
- Organizations should consider the rationale for asymptomatic testing, and ensure attention is paid to the following:
 - The interpretation of test results and related consequences, including following up on positive results as well as managing potential false positive and false negative results.
 - In the absence of known COVID-19 cases, there is a greater likelihood of false positive results.
 - False negative results may lead to parties undertaking inappropriately lax prevention methods, resulting in increased potential for COVID-19 transmission.
 - Positive results may result in psychological distress and stigmatization, while negative results may result in false reassurance.
 - Test-related factors, including but not limited to licensing procurement, availability, and test characteristics, including performance in both laboratory and field settings.
 - The organization's personnel, facility, and operational capacity for administration of the tests.
- Individuals who have previously been diagnosed with and cleared of COVID-19 infection may resume asymptomatic screening testing after 90 days from their COVID-19 infection (based on the date of their positive result).

- Organizations must develop a [COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan](#) to minimize the risk of COVID-19. This includes having written policies and procedures that are in alignment with the sector specific [guidance](#) issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health and any other specific measures recommended by public health agencies.
- Employers are also required to follow the [Occupational Health and Safety Act \(OHSA\)](#).
 - All workplace parties (e.g. employers, supervisors, workers) have statutory responsibilities related to [health and safety](#) in the workplace.
 - There are no specific requirements in the [OHSA](#) or its regulations for employers to conduct testing of workers.
- Employers can find additional information on [Screening for COVID-19: Guidance for Employers](#)

Testing Requirements

- Prior to initiating testing, all organizations must contact their local public health unit to make them aware that they will be engaging in a private testing program.
- Private testing can only be performed using one of the types of tests currently available in Ontario as per the [COVID-19 Testing Guidance](#)
 - All non-POC tests must be performed by a laboratory licensed under the [Laboratory and Specimen Collection Centre Licensing Act \(LSCCLA\)](#) or persons that are exempt from the LSCCLA.
 - All POC tests (molecular or antigen-based) must be performed following the [COVID-19 Guidance: Considerations for Antigen Point-of-Care Testing](#) and the [Appendix 9: Management of Individuals with Point-of-Care Testing Results](#).
 - Health care professionals must ensure that all personal and health information will be collected, used, disclosed in accordance with relevant legislation, including the [Personal Health Information Protection Act \(PHIPA\)](#).
 - Organizations may **not** make arrangements with public assessment centres to conduct specimen collection.

- Health care professionals are responsible for satisfying all applicable legislative and regulatory requirements, including those under the [Health Protection and Promotion Act \(HPPA\)](#), [PHIPA](#), [Health Care Consent Act \(HCCA\)](#), [Regulated Health Professions Act \(RHPA\)](#).
- Organizations should have a systematic procedure in place to provide follow up on test results.
- Organizations should have plans in place to respond should any individuals be exposed to or diagnosed with COVID-19.
- All test results performed by a licensed laboratory, as well as POC molecular test results, must be entered into the Ontario Laboratories Information System (OLIS) in accordance with the [HPPA](#).
- All POC molecular test results, must be reported to the local public health unit in accordance with the [HPPA](#).

Laboratory Responsibilities Relating to Private COVID-19 Testing

Licensed labs are required to fulfil their contractual obligations with the Province and satisfy legislative obligations under all applicable statutes, including the [LSCCLA](#) and [HPPA](#). In addition, licensed labs must:

- ensure that all testing is performed on technologies approved by Health Canada (HC) or otherwise validated by the licensed laboratory (i.e., laboratory-developed test or research use only test), and must be used, processed, and interpreted in compliance with the manufacturer's instructions or laboratory-established protocol.
- report all positive test results to the local public health unit in accordance with the [LSCCLA](#) and [HPPA](#).
- upload results into the Ontario Laboratories Information System (OLIS)

Organizational Responsibilities Relating to Private COVID-19 Testing

Organizations that are interested in pursuing private testing are also responsible for:

- Seeking independent legal advice on issues of human rights, labour and employment law, privacy, and occupational health and safety before implementing a testing program and developing a company policy related to COVID-19 testing based on this advice.
- Seeking independent legal advice to ensure that all personal and health information of their workers will be collected, used, disclosed in accordance with all applicable legislation.
- Planning, developing, and operationalizing policies and procedures related to testing.
- All costs related to any testing initiated, including but not limited to infrastructure, overhead, testing equipment, test consumables, personal protective equipment and laboratory fees.
- Procuring and purchasing all materials, equipment, technology, and/or device(s) required to carry out the testing using [validated collection methods](#).
- Cooperating with their local public health unit in the event of a potential workplace exposure of COVID-19 or an outbreak investigation.
- Properly storing and disposing of the test waste with registered haulers (approved to carry biomedical waste) to ensure ongoing protection of human health and the environment.