

## **Legislative Assembly Building COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY**

### **1. Background**

The Legislative Assembly is committed to promoting and protecting the health, safety, and well-being of persons, and the social well-being of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic declared by the World Health Organization.

COVID-19 is a communicable disease which has, and continues to, put the lives and livelihoods of residents of the Northwest Territories at risk. The Office of the Chief Public Health Officer of the Northwest Territories has recommended that all eligible residents become fully vaccinated.

Consistent with the *Safety Act*, the Legislative Assembly endeavours to take all reasonable precautions and to adopt and carry out all reasonable techniques and procedures to ensure the health and safety of its employees and workplaces.

### **2. Exception for Members attending Proceedings**

Unless and until provided otherwise by Motion of the Legislative Assembly, this Policy *does not* apply to Members attending the Legislative Assembly Building for the purposes of attending and participating in a sitting, committee meeting or other proceeding of the Assembly, either in-person or by remote means. For greater certainty, this Policy *does* apply to Members attending the Legislative Assembly Building in-person for purposes other than attending and participating in a sitting, committee meeting or other proceeding of the Assembly.

### **3. Principles**

The Legislative Assembly will adhere to the following principles when implementing this Policy:

- a) The Legislative Assembly retains the right to control its own proceedings according to the privileges or practices, rules and procedures of the Legislative Assembly or Parliament. As elected representatives, Members of the Legislative Assembly are expected to hold themselves to a higher standard of conduct.
- b) As an employer in the Northwest Territories, the Legislative Assembly is committed to protecting the safety of all members of society served by the Legislative Assembly.

- c) The Legislative Assembly has a responsibility to be part of and maintain a healthy and safe workplace. This includes the prevention and mitigation of hazards in the workplace, the prevention of harm, and the promotion of well-being as outlined in the Legislative Assembly's Exposure Control Plan.
- d) The Legislative Assembly recognizes that privacy and trust are particularly important where health information is concerned and will adhere to principles of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (ATIPPA) associated with its collection, use, disclosure and protection, notwithstanding ATIPPA does not apply to the Legislative Assembly.

#### **4. Definitions**

The following terms apply to this Policy:

- a) **Board of Management** – The Legislative Assembly's Board of Management established pursuant to s. 36 of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* (LAECA), which is responsible for establishing policies for all services to be provided to Members and management of the Legislative Assembly Building .
- b) **Clerk** - The person appointed by the Commissioner, on the recommendation of the Board of Management, approved by motion of the Legislative Assembly, pursuant to s. 54 of LAECA.
- c) **Contractors** – All individuals engaged to provide services with or without remuneration of behalf of the Legislative Assembly.
- d) **COVID-19** – or Coronavirus disease is an infectious respiratory illness caused by a newly discovered coronavirus, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).
- e) **Employees** – all members of the public service as defined by the *Public Service Act*.
- f) **Fully Vaccinated** – For the purposes of this Policy, a person is considered Fully Vaccinated 14 days after receiving the full or final dose of a Health Canada authorized COVID-19 vaccine or an approved combination of Health Canada authorized vaccines. For greater certainty, Fully Vaccinated does not mean receipt of a third dose or a booster shot, unless and until recommended by Health Canada.

- g) **Legislative Assembly Building** – The Legislative Assembly building in Yellowknife and any physical indoor space that is operated and maintained by the Legislative Assembly.
- h) **Member** – Member of the Legislative Assembly.
- i) **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** – a mask or other protective equipment prescribed by the Clerk.
- j) **Speaker** – The person elected pursuant to s. 45 of LAECA and who presides over the Office of the Legislative Assembly, pursuant to s. 53 of LAECA.
- k) **Visitor** – Any person visiting the Legislative Assembly Building with or without formal business to conduct.

## **5. Authority and Accountability**

### **General**

This Policy is issued under the authority of the Board of Management. The authority to make exceptions and approve revisions to this Policy rests with the Board of Management under s. 41 (c), s. 41 (d) and s. 42 (1) of LAECA.

The Speaker is accountable to the Board of Management for the implementation of this Policy.

The Clerk is accountable to the Speaker for the administration of this Policy and any Accommodations in accordance with section 6(b).

### **Specific**

The Board of Management may approve the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy and amendments to it.

The Speaker may recommend amendments and exceptions to the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy to the Board of Management.

The Clerk may recommend to the Speaker appropriate corporate guidelines and propose amendments to the guidelines. Guidelines may include:

- i. Procedures to be put in place to protect the security and confidentiality of records, specifically those including personal information, consistent with ATIPPA;
- ii. Measures, such as appropriate PPE, to protect the safety of Employees and members of the public where Visitors have not provided proof of vaccination;
- iii. Measures to ensure appropriate communication of the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy and accompanying guidelines and procedures;
- iv. Measures to monitor the effectiveness of the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy and accompanying guidelines and procedures.

## **6. Policy Statement**

### **a) Proof of Vaccination**

- i. With the exception of Members attending proceedings as described in section 2 above, all Members, Employees, Contractors and Visitors who enter the Legislative Assembly Building and are eligible to be vaccinated are required to be Fully Vaccinated by **November 22, 2021**.
- ii. Members, Employees, Contractors and Visitors whom the preceding section 6(a)(i) applies must provide proof of full vaccination, such as a COVID-19 vaccination record from GNWT Public Health or an equivalent record from another jurisdiction, which will be used to verify vaccination status.

### **b) Accommodations**

- i. Accommodations will be made for Members, Employees, Contractors, and members of the media who are unable to be vaccinated or undergo regular COVID-19 testing for a valid medical exemption or based on protected grounds under the *Human Rights Act*.
- ii. Members, Employees, Contractors and members of the media who are unable to be vaccinated in accordance with this Policy, or who are in the process of becoming Fully Vaccinated, will be required to wear PPE at all times in the Legislative Assembly Building and undergo regular testing for COVID-19 until they have provided proof of full vaccination. Regular testing may be required up to three times a week for Employees and includes the requirement to

provide proof of a negative test result before they can enter the Legislative Assembly Building .

- iii. Members, Employees, Contractors and members of the media who refuse to wear PPE or participate in testing protocols when directed will not be granted access to the Legislative Assembly Building . Employees and Contractors will be required to work from elsewhere, with the approval of their supervisor if applicable and if operationally feasible, or take leave without pay.
- iv. All other Visitors who are unable to be vaccinated and provide proof of vaccination in accordance with this Policy will not be authorized to enter the Legislative Assembly Building on or after November 22, 2021.

**c) Confidentiality**

The confidentiality of information obtained through the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy will be handled consistent with the provisions of the ATIPPA associated with the collection, use, disclosure and protection of personal information.

Access to documents and information relating to an individual's vaccination status will be on a need-to-know basis and restricted to only the specific individuals necessary to carry out the implementation of this Policy and associated guidelines.

**d) Policy Review**

This Policy will continue to be updated by the Board of Management as required and as reasonable given the evolving nature of the pandemic, vaccine availability and government and public health authority direction.

**e) Prerogative of the Board of Management**

Nothing in this Policy shall in any way be construed to limit the prerogative of the Board of Management to make decisions or take action with respect to the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy.