

# Q and As

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**TOPIC:** Proof of Vaccinations in City Facilities

**DATE:** Oct. 1, 2021

## **I am not in favour of the proof of vaccination requirements – why is the City enforcing them?**

The City of Vaughan continues to work with all levels of government to ensure the safety and well-being of citizens, businesses and staff. Following the recent release of the [Province of Ontario's regulation and guidance on proof of vaccination](#), the City is adhering to the Province's direction on vaccine requirements for those who access City facilities or participate in fall recreation programs effective Wednesday, Sept. 22.

As well, in accordance with York Region Public Health and Dr. Karim Kurji's [Letter of Instruction](#), effective Friday, Oct. 1, all individuals aged 12 years and older who are entering an indoor municipal recreation facility, where organized sports are played and/or practiced, must provide identification and proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or a valid medical exemption. This directive applies to anyone actively participating in organized sports; coaching, officiating at organized sports or volunteering; or spectating at organized sports. In addition, all individuals visiting a recreational facility must comply with all other requirements under the [Reopening Ontario Act](#) and its regulations that apply to the facility.

The City will continue to update its vaccination protocols in line with Provincial regulation and Regional direction. Details are available in the [Ontario Regulation 645/21](#) amending Ontario Regulation 364/20 (Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step) under the [Reopening Ontario \(A Flexible Response to COVID-19\) Act, 2020](#), available for download or print, and in the [Province's Proof of Vaccination Guidance](#) (PDF).

## **Whom should I contact to voice my concerns about the proof of vaccination requirements?**

Should you any questions or comments about the regulation set by the Ontario government, please speak with your Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP). If you do not know who your MPP is, please contact [Elections Ontario](#) to confirm your representative. Should you have any questions about York Region's Medical Officer of Health Dr. Karim Kurji's [instructions](#), please contact York Region Public Health at [yr.corporate.communications@york.ca](mailto:yr.corporate.communications@york.ca).

## **Why are vaccines required for indoor activities?**

The proof of vaccination regulation for indoor activities is required by the Province of Ontario and York Region. In a news release, the Province explains the reason for the vaccination requirement as follows: "Requiring proof of vaccination will help increase vaccination rates, protect individuals in higher-risk indoor settings, and keep businesses open." For more: <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1000807/ontario-releasing-guidance-to-support-proof-of-vaccination-policy>

## **How will parents who are not vaccinated attend to their children coming for a City-operated program?**

Parents or guardians who do not meet the vaccination requirements for entering a community centre – as set out by the Province of Ontario – will not be able to enter. If you are unable to enter the facility due to

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vaccination status, City staff will meet your child at the entrance and walk them to their program room. Please be prepared to provide identification when picking up your child at the same location as drop-off.

### **How will parents who are not vaccinated attend to their children coming for non-City operated programs?**

Parents or guardians who do not meet the vaccination requirements for entering a community centre – as set out by the Province of Ontario and York Region – will not be able to enter. If you are unable to enter the facility due to vaccination status and your child is participating in a non-City operated program – such as a minor sports league – you should contact the body operating the program your child participates in for next steps.

### **What recreational services will the City offer unvaccinated adults who pay taxes?**

There are many opportunities for all citizens to enjoy the City's recreational services regardless of their vaccination status. For starters, the City continues to operate a number of virtual programs that can be enjoyed from the comfort of home. For more, visit [vaughan.ca/recreation](http://vaughan.ca/recreation).

Virtual programs run once a week for 45 minutes to 1.5 hours (with the exception of workshops). All programs run virtually; internet access and a computer with audio and video capabilities is required. A Zoom link to your program will be provided in your confirmation upon registering. Parent/guardian assistance may be required. For guidelines and more information refer to our [Virtual Programs Basics](#) or [Frequently Asked Questions](#) webpage.

As well, citizens are encouraged to have fun and enjoy the outdoors all year round with #PlayVaughanLocal. This season, the City is offering many activities for residents of all ages to enjoy. Whether it's discovering your own neighbourhoods, going on nature walks through the City's trails and local parks, or golfing, Vaughan has something for everyone. The City urges the public to continue to do their part to help stop the spread of COVID-19 while visiting outdoor amenities.

### **Do unvaccinated Vaughan citizens receive a tax break since they are being denied use of the facilities?**

The annual property tax bill supports many critical services that residents rely on each day, including Vaughan Fire and Rescue Service; public works and road services; waste management; infrastructure replacement; maintenance of City facilities; city planning and development; Building Code enforcement; and by-law and compliance. These important services and more remain operational during the COVID-19 pandemic. Municipal services in Vaughan are provided by two tiers of government – the City of Vaughan and York Region. The City retains approximately \$1,600 of an average \$6,000 annual property tax bill to support these critical services. In 2021, the City of Vaughan will fund approximately \$317.9 million in gross expenditures on delivering property tax-supported programs and services and maintaining City infrastructure (buildings and roads). To find out more about where your tax dollars go, visit [vaughan.ca/budget](http://vaughan.ca/budget). As well, citizens who choose not to receive vaccinations are encouraged to take advantage of the many virtual programs offered by the City – for details, visit [vaughan.ca/recreation](http://vaughan.ca/recreation).

### **How can I provide feedback on the City's budget and property tax rate?**

The City's annual [budget](#) process is open and transparent, with public consultation being a vital

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component. A key priority is to educate the public about the process – to ensure they are informed and have multiple opportunities to comment on the budget and how the City spends their tax dollars. This includes educating stakeholders on how property taxes and water and wastewater rates are allocated. The annual [Budget Book](#) (PDF) provides an overview of the budget and this process.

Planning is underway for the 2022 budget process. Public meetings will be held to discuss the budget on the below dates and times:

- Special Committee of the Whole (Public Meeting) on Wednesday, Dec. 1 at 7 p.m.
- Special Committee of the Whole (Public Meeting) on Tuesday, Dec. 7 at 7 p.m.
- Special Council Meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 14 at 7 p.m.

For more information on how you can [get involved](#), visit [vaughan.ca/budget](http://vaughan.ca/budget).

### **Will the public be able to use the washrooms without showing proof of vaccination as per provincial guidelines?**

The proof of identification and proof of vaccination against COVID-19 requirements under O. Reg. 364/20 do not apply to a patron who is entering an indoor area solely for the purpose of using a washroom. All other public health measures (e.g., masking and physical distancing) continue to apply to these patrons.

### **How do medical exemptions work?**

Individuals with a medical exemption are required to present identification and appropriate written documentation from a medical doctor or qualified registered nurse stating the individual is exempt for a medical reason and the time-period for the medical reason.

### **What about other exemptions (i.e. human rights)?**

The City is following the Provincial regulation and York Region directive in regard to exemptions to proof of vaccination requirements.

The following exemptions apply to patrons of community centres:

- Children under the age of 12
- Individuals with a medical exemption

Should you have questions or comments about the regulation set by the Ontario government, please speak with your Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP). If you do not know who your MPP is, please contact [Elections Ontario](#) to confirm your representative. Inquiries about York Region's instructions should be directed to York Region Public Health at [yr.corporate.communications@york.ca](mailto:yr.corporate.communications@york.ca). If you have a further concern, please contact [vaccination@vaughan.ca](mailto:vaccination@vaughan.ca).

### **What directives are coming into effect on Friday, Oct. 1 in York Region related to organized sports?**

Effective Friday, Oct. 1, anyone 12 years and older attending the indoor area of a City facility where organized sports are played and/or practiced is required to provide identification and proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or a valid medical exemption.

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### **What will happen if an unvaccinated youth (aged 12-17) arrives for an organized sport on Oct. 1?**

The City will spend this month focused on communication and education related to York Region's Letter of Instruction, with escalated measures, including enforcement, to follow. The youth participating in organized sport will not be denied entry at this time.

### **Why did York Region issue this direction?**

Activities related to organized sports have the potential to enhance COVID-19 transmission. Close contact, forceful exhalation, prolonged exposure, crowded indoor spaces and masks and face coverings removed during physical activity contribute to enhanced likelihood of COVID-19 transmission. Recent outbreaks in York Region have been identified in basketball, dance and other sports settings. More activities, including fitness activities and sports, will move indoors in colder weather. To further limit the spread of COVID-19, York Region's Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Karim Kurji, issued the following directive to Owners/Operators of facilities where organized sports are played and/or practiced:

- Require each person, age 12 years and older, at the point of entry, who attends the indoor area of the facility for the purpose of (a) actively participating in organized sports, (b) coaching, officiating at organized sports or volunteering or (c) spectating at organized sports, to provide identification and proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or a valid medical exemption
- Comply with all other requirements under the *Reopening Ontario Act* and its regulations that apply to the facility

### **Why is this Letter of Instruction different from the provincial regulation?**

Under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, health units have the ability to issue letter of instruction, like this, based on the local situation, data and epidemiology. York Region reviewed local data and data across the province to assess the risk associated with after-school sports, along with modelling data which currently estimates 44 potential hospitalizations of those under the age of 19 between now and the end of 2021. This requirement will help keep participants and their families safe, minimize outbreaks and help ensure the long-term sustainability of these programs.

### **Why is this date so soon?**

Many indoor sports activities and leagues are starting now or have already started. Recent cases and outbreaks in basketball camps, dance events and other indoor sports have demonstrated a need for this as sports return to indoor settings over the fall and winter months. It's important to act quickly to stem further spread of COVID-19.

### **What proof of vaccination is acceptable for patrons? (NOTE: From Sept. 22 to Oct. 22)**

As of Sept. 22, 2021, Ontarians need to be fully vaccinated (meaning, they have received the final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, as required, plus 14 days) and provide their proof of vaccination along with photo ID to access certain public settings and facilities – including community centres. Proof of vaccination can be provided in one of three ways:

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- Providing the paper receipt given on site at the time of vaccination. The receipt includes key information about the vaccination event including the individual's name, date of vaccination and product name of the vaccine received (i.e., Pfizer, Moderna, etc.).
- The email version of the paper receipt sent to the address provided by the vaccine recipient for the person's records. This would be a PDF.
- Downloading or printing copies of a COVID-19 vaccination receipt through the [COVID-19 vaccination provincial portal](#) or by calling the Provincial Vaccine Booking Line at 1-833-943-3900.

All versions of the receipt that show the individual to be fully vaccinated are acceptable as proof of vaccination.

## **What does it mean to be fully vaccinated?**

An individual is considered fully vaccinated if they have received:

- two doses using Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech, AstraZeneca (including CoviShield) in any combination (the full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada)
- one or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada
- three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada

[Find out what vaccines are authorized by Health Canada.](#)

Individuals must receive their final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days before providing the proof of being fully vaccinated.

## **What proof of identification is acceptable?**

Validation of identification must be presented to ensure that vaccination receipt offered by the patron belongs to them. Validation of vaccination will be based on two key identifiers: name of the identification holder and date of birth. A photo identification is not required.

Examples of identification documents that may be used to confirm the identity of the holder of the vaccine receipt include:

- Birth certificate
- Citizenship card
- Driver's licence
- Government (Ontario or other) issued identification card, including health card
- Indian Status Card /Indigenous Membership Card
- Passport
- Permanent Resident card

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### **What proof of ID are kids 12 to 18 supposed to provide if they do not have a photo ID?**

Photo identification is not required. Youth age 12 to 18 can provide documentation issued by an institution or public body, such as a student ID, a library card or health card, provided it includes their name and date of birth.

### **Do current and future City employees need to be vaccinated?**

Yes. The City of Vaughan has a Mandatory Vaccination Policy in effect that applies to all City of Vaughan employees, students and volunteers. For City staff, the City will comply with its human rights obligations, make exceptions for applicable medical conditions and accommodate employees legally entitled to accommodation.

### **Do coaches and officials need to show proof of vaccination?**

Under the Province of Ontario's requirements for any indoor premises of a facility used for sports and recreational fitness activities as well as the direction from York Region, coaches must provide proof of vaccination and identification to access an indoor recreational facility – this includes a community centre. Please contact your sports league directly for additional requirements they may have.

### **Is proof of vaccination required to visit Vaughan Public Libraries?**

No. The [Province of Ontario's regulation and guidance on proof of vaccination](#) does not apply to libraries. Customers can browse Vaughan Public Libraries' physical collection, access on-site study and reading spaces, and use public computers. Visitors are reminded to remain vigilant and follow public health guidelines, including physically distancing at least six feet (two metres) from others, wearing a mask or face covering, and thoroughly washing and sanitizing hands. Please note: Maple Library remains closed due to renovations. For more: <https://www.vaughan.ca/news/Pages/Vaughan-Public-Libraries-community-branches-are-now-OPEN-.aspx>