

May 12, 2021

The purpose of this document is to provide key messages and frequently asked questions about the *workplace considerations and impacts* of the COVID-19 vaccines.

The City of Edmonton strives to share the most up to date information on the COVID-19 vaccine. However, as the details about the vaccine roll out are rapidly evolving and changing, employees are encouraged to visit [Alberta Health](#) and [Alberta Health Services](#) for the most up to date and accurate information.

For answers to workplace-related vaccine questions not currently found in this document, email [safety@edmonton.ca](mailto:safety@edmonton.ca). This FAQ will be updated with new questions and answers as they arise.

## KEY MESSAGES ON VACCINATION

- Vaccination is one control we can use to improve safety among our employees, within our work spaces and within our community.
- The City encourages employees to make an informed choice on vaccination and strongly encourages participation by all employees who are able to be vaccinated when it is made available to them.
- There will be no mandatory vaccination policy for City of Edmonton employees.
- The City will promote Alberta Health's vaccination strategy to employees.

**I got  
my shot!**



Vaccines are being made available to more groups of people each week. This means Albertans have another tool to keep each other safe. A google icon has been created if you wish to show your enthusiasm when you get your vaccine shot.

The City strongly encourages participation by all employees who are able to be vaccinated when it is available to them. Please visit Alberta Health to learn about Alberta's COVID-19 vaccination program and visit the City of Edmonton's COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ.

Effective April 7, 2021, the City launched the [COVID-19 Vaccination Employee Intake Form](#). This form asks for *employees to voluntarily report when they have received the COVID-19 Vaccine, or the reasons why they choose not to receive the vaccine*. The data received through the Form will be used for the purposes of assessing our workforce uptake of the vaccine and decision making around the use of other safety measures in place in the future.

## KEY MESSAGES ON THE COVID VACCINATION EMPLOYEE INTAKE FORM

- The information obtained from the COVID-19 Vaccination Employee Intake Form will be maintained at an aggregate level by Workforce Safety and Employee Health to understand the large-scale protection in our workforce and how that will affect safety measures in the future. Individual information will not be collected.
- Employees are asked to *voluntarily* disclose when they receive the COVID-19 vaccination OR the reason why they choose not to be vaccinated using the [COVID-19 Vaccination Employee Intake Form](#).
- The data received through the Form is not linked to an individual employee and will only be seen by senior leaders of Workforce Safety and Employee Health (Directors and Branch Manager). High level reports will be prepared and provided to the Executive Leadership Team, as necessary to support decision making regarding workplace safety. Any reports prepared will be reviewed by the Corporate Access and Privacy Office to ensure privacy and confidentiality is maintained.

## FAQ

### **As an employee, is it mandatory for me to get the vaccine?**

The COVID-19 vaccine will not be mandatory for employees. The City of Edmonton supports the provincial vaccination program and strongly encourages participation by all employees who are able to be vaccinated when it is made available to them.

### **Am I able to take time off to receive the vaccine?**

It is good practice to schedule your vaccine appointment after work hours and ideally before a day off. This will ensure you have time to rest and allow your body to recover from any soreness or side effects that may come from the vaccine. In situations where you are unable to book your appointment outside of work hours, it can be scheduled during work time with advanced notice (at least 48 hours is suggested) and your leader's approval. Use MDL (for permanent employees or LWP (for non-permanent employees) to enter up to 3 hours of time.

A leader may request an appointment confirmation before approving time off, if an employee is unable to book outside of work hours. In accordance with the *Employment Standards Code*, employees are not required to provide a record of immunization or disclose any underlying medical condition(s). The City encourages employees to receive the vaccine if able to do so. Vaccination is an additional workplace control measure which will help to minimize the ongoing human and operational impacts of COVID-19.

### **Will the City of Edmonton track my compliance with being vaccinated?**

No. The City of Edmonton is asking employees to *voluntarily* disclose when they have received a COVID-19 vaccine or that they have decided they will not be vaccinated. This information will be maintained at an aggregate level by Workforce Safety and Employee Health to understand the large-scale protection in our workforce and how that will affect safety measures in the future. Individual information will not be collected.

### **Do I submit the COVID-19 Vaccination Employee Intake Form before or after I have been fully vaccinated?**

The form does not collect employee names and because of this you will be unable to update the form after receiving your second dose. We ask that you please submit the form once you have received the second dose of the vaccine (if applicable).

### **Will leaders be notified when an employee completes the COVID-19 Vaccination Employee Intake Form?**

Access to the results of the COVID-19 Vaccination Employee Intake Form are not available to leaders and they are not notified when an employee completes the form. The results are only accessible by leadership within the Workforce Safety & Employee Health Branch and will not be shared externally to other organizations such as AHS.

### **What do I do if I experience symptoms after I receive the vaccine?**

If you have side effects that are the same as [COVID-19 symptoms](#) (fever, cough, shortness of breath, trouble breathing, sore throat or runny nose), you must stay home and away from others (isolate), even if you think the side effects are from the vaccine.

- If your side effects start within 24 hours and go away within 48 hours after the side effects start, you don't have to keep isolating and you can go back to your normal activities (Use IWP for this period that you are unable to come to work). If you have been told to isolate for other reasons, you must keep isolating.
- If your side effects start after 24 hours or last longer than 48 hours, stay home. Use the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment for Albertans](#) ([ahs.ca/testing](https://ahs.ca/testing)) to make an appointment for a COVID-19 test.
- Call Health Link at 811 to report any serious or unusual side effects.

If the only side effect you experience is redness, swelling, or soreness at the injection site, self-isolation is not required.

### **Where do I find more information about COVID-19 vaccines approved in Canada?**

Employees are encouraged to visit [Alberta Health](#) and [Alberta Health Services](#) for the most up to date information on vaccines, as well as the [Government of Canada website](#).

### **Is the City of Edmonton publishing and sharing any information about the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Consistent with other topics related to COVID-19, the [COVID-19 Employee Guide](#) will be used and updated to share workplace related information about the vaccine, such as this FAQ. The City will not be publishing further details about the vaccines or the vaccination roll out program in Alberta. Instead, the City will redirect employees to [Alberta Health](#) and [Alberta Health Services](#) for the most up to date and accurate information on the vaccines and the vaccination roll out program.

### **As a leader, should I be encouraging or instructing my employees to get their COVID-19 vaccination?**

Leaders are not to advise or instruct their employees to get vaccinated. The City encourages employees to make an informed choice on vaccination. Leaders are asked to help employees to access information on the provincial vaccination program by encouraging them to visit [Alberta Health](#) and [Alberta Health Services](#) for the most up to date and accurate information.

### **An employee disclosed to me that they will not get vaccinated/they received their vaccination. How should I respond to that?**

Leaders are asked to model respectful workplace principles and confidentiality by keeping that information private. Additionally, Leaders should communicate that COVID-19 workplace controls continue to remain in place for the safety and protection of all employees. Leaders may share that the City of Edmonton asks employees to *voluntarily* disclose when they have received a COVID-19 vaccine or that they will not be vaccinated (as explained in the question below).

### **Why is the vaccine not mandatory for City of Edmonton employees?**

There are reasons why someone may choose not to be vaccinated -- or be unable to receive the vaccine -- and everyone is entitled to privacy and understanding regarding their decision. These reasons may include medical and religious considerations, which are protected by the *Alberta Human Rights Act*. We ask that everyone respect the personal decisions of their coworkers as to whether to get the vaccine and understand that they do not have to disclose that choice.

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

People are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose in a two-dose series, like the Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna COVID-19 or Covishield/AstraZeneca vaccine, or two weeks after the single-dose Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 vaccine.

**Will those in the Temporary Work from Home Program start going back to work after they receive the first dose of the vaccine?**

No, being vaccinated will not be the trigger for employees to return to work at city office buildings. The Workplace Reintegration Plan in the [Employee Reorientation to the Workplace](#) outlines a gradual return to the workplace in alignment with the [provincial restrictions](#). This plan addresses the need to control the occupancy in high and low rise office towers to ensure physical distancing can be maintained and the risks of COVID-19 transmission are reduced as much as possible.

**Will the City ease off COVID-19 workplace restrictions when employees are vaccinated?**

Not yet. The phased availability of the COVID-19 vaccine to City of Edmonton employees will not result in immediate reduction or elimination of COVID-19 workplace controls such as the use of face coverings or physical distancing. The City of Edmonton will continue to operate in compliance with all public health orders and guidelines for COVID-19 to ensure the health and safety of employees, contractors and the public. When public health orders change, the City will revisit our safety measures and may make revisions that align with keeping our workplaces safe.

**If I am vaccinated do I still need to wear a mask, physically distance and follow other COVID-19 workplace controls at work?**

Yes. All employees are required to continue to follow workplace safety measures and keep practicing good hand hygiene, physical distancing, masking and staying home when sick as the province's vaccination program is rolled out. These practices remain important lines of defence against the spread of COVID-19.

**What if I am not comfortable working at a City of Edmonton worksite with others who are not vaccinated?**

There are reasons why someone may choose not to be vaccinated -- or be unable to receive the vaccine -- and everyone is entitled to privacy and understanding regarding their decision. As the vaccine program rolls out, the City of Edmonton will continue to operate in compliance with all public health orders and guidelines for COVID-19 to ensure the health and safety of employees, contractors and the public. All employees are required to continue to follow workplace safety measures and keep practicing good hand hygiene, physical distancing, masking and staying home when sick. These practices remain important lines of defence against the spread of COVID-19. When public health orders change, the City will revisit our safety measures and may make revisions that align with keeping our workplaces safe.

Employees who are able to work from home are encouraged to continue to do so under the Temporary Work from Home Arrangement. Management and out-of-scope employees may apply for the Remote Work Program if they wish for their primary work location to be a remote location.

**I will not or cannot receive the vaccine (for reasons that do not need to be disclosed). What if I am not comfortable working at a City of Edmonton worksite?**

The City of Edmonton will continue to operate in compliance with all public health orders and guidelines for COVID-19 to ensure the health and safety of employees, contractors and the public. All employees are required to continue to follow workplace safety measures and keep practicing good hand hygiene, physical distancing, masking and staying home when sick. These practices remain important lines of defence against the spread of COVID-19. When public health orders change the City will revisit our safety measures and may make revisions that align with keeping our workplaces safe.

Employees who are able to work from home are encouraged to continue to do so under the Temporary Work from Home Arrangement. Management and out-of-scope employees may apply for the Remote Work Program if they wish for their primary work location to be a remote location.

Should an employee have a medical reason they cannot return to the workplace, they are required to notify their leader or Disability Management Consultant to discuss an appropriate accommodation.

**Will the City be offering COVID-19 vaccine clinics at City of Edmonton worksites, similar to the flu vaccination program in past years?**

The City is not currently planning to offer vaccinations at City of Edmonton worksites specific to its employees given the availability of community-hosted vaccination sites such as pharmacies.

The City is continuing to work with the Province to support the provincial vaccine roll out, which includes the use of the EXPO Center as a public vaccination site.