



QA: Health and Safety	
Policy #: 8.13	
Policy Name: COVID-19	
Date Approved: August 24, 2021	Executive Director: Sherry Carnevale

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to; people who access supports from the organization, families, employees, volunteers, students, host families, external services, and other visitors (referred to herein as “All Parties”).

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The purpose of this Policy is to reduce the risk of exposure to and transmission of COVID-19, a highly infectious and deadly communicable disease, in the workplace by providing occupational protection. The Agency is dedicated to ensuring the health and safety of All Parties.

This Policy has been developed by Community Living North Bay (the “Agency”) in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee as a reasonable and necessary measure to prevent, respond to, and alleviate the outbreak of COVID-19 and the associated risk to employees as well as to the vulnerable people we support, many of whom are medically fragile and/or cannot comply with social distancing and infectious disease transmission prevention protocols.

The Agency strongly encourages and supports vaccination for COVID-19 (subject to human rights related accommodation up to the point of undue hardship).

## **REFERENCES**

This Policy complies with CLNB’s obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (the “OHSA”) which includes taking reasonable precautions to protect the employees of CLNB.

It also complies with CLNB’s obligations under Ontario Regulation 299/10 Quality Assurance Measures to develop procedures with respect to health promotion, medical services and medication, and the personal safety and security of the people we support, and applicable emergency orders (Ontario Regulations 121/20 and 177/20) to comply with public health advice and recommendations.

At a minimum, CLNB will follow public health directives with respect to COVID-19 safety precautions including use of PPE, physical distancing, hand hygiene and visitation limits during and after people supported become vaccinated.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **A. PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEES AND HOST FAMILIES**

1. Any offer made by the Agency to prospective employee or approval as a host family will be conditional on proof of vaccination for COVID-19 (subject to human rights related accommodation up to the point of undue hardship).
2. The prospective employee or host family will have one week from the date of offer / approval to produce satisfactory proof of COVID-19 vaccination, failing which the employment offer will be rescinded for prospective employees and rescinded for placement consideration as a host family, (**“Schedule A” for Employees and “Schedule B” for Host Families.**)
3. The prospective employee or host family will not be permitted to perform any work, or in the circumstance of a host family, begin providing support, nor can either party take part in orientation until the condition has been satisfied.

### **B. EXISTING EMPLOYEES AND HOST FAMILIES**

#### **1. Disclosure of Vaccination Status “Schedule A” for Employees and “Schedule B” for Host Families.**

CLNB requires that all CLNB Staff and Host Families comply with one of the following:

- a) Proof of vaccination for COVID-19, where the person discloses that they have been vaccinated;
- b) Where accommodation is requested by a person declining vaccination, confirmation of the reasons for declining vaccination, with proof of same where reasonably necessary. In this situation Alternatives to Vaccination will be considered; and
- c) Where declining vaccination for reasons not protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code, participate in an educational program about the benefits of vaccination and the risks of not being vaccinated. In this situation Alternatives to Vaccination will be considered

Refusal to provide such information will result in the person being considered “unvaccinated” for reasons that are not protected under the Human Rights Code.

#### **2. Alternatives to Vaccination**

CLNB recognizes that people may choose not to be vaccinated due to a reason protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) or as a personal choice not related to the OHRC. However, regardless of the reason for declining vaccination, the potential risk to people supported and other team members is high, and thus alternative safety precautionary measures may be required.

Non-vaccinated employees, host family members, volunteers, students or visitors (as defined in F) will be required to receive weekly COVID-19 testing and provide proof of a negative response. (Effective 09/07/2021)

In addition, the following conditions may apply:

For employees or host family members who are not vaccinated, CLNB's response will be determined with reference to each circumstance. Considerations will include but are not limited to:

- Recommendations by Public Health
- Relevant legislation / directives (i.e. MCCSS, Provincial or Federal Government, Public Health)
- The collective agreement
- The type of work performed (whether it is direct support, work in a congregate care setting, administrative work etc.)
- Whether there is an outbreak in the workplace
- Risk level in community
- Any other factor that may impact the health and safety within the workplace

Alternative safety precautionary measures may include any one or combination of, but not limited to:

- Enhanced PPE (ie continued use of wearing a mask, eye protection, gown, gloves)
- Surveillance testing
- Reassignment – (staff member may not be permitted to work with people supported who are at high risk of susceptibility to COVID-19)
- Temporary remote work
- Modifications to the work/service/support performed
- Temporary, employer approved unpaid leave of absence (during this time, employee may be permitted to use any unused time banks).

\* Vaccinated employees may still be required to follow additional safety measures when working closely with other team members who are not vaccinated or when providing support to people who are not vaccinated or other situations that may impact health and safety for themselves or others.

### **C. VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS**

Proof of immunization is required upon intake as part of orientation (Schedule A). Due to the high risk of covid-19 and the significant impact on health, only volunteers and students who are immunized will be able to work directly with people supported. As an alternative for those not vaccinated, administration tasks / special projects, if available, can be assigned. Enhanced PPE may be required.

## **D. PEOPLE RECEIVING SERVICES**

### **1. New People Supported**

- a. A service relationship with a new person supported will be conditional on disclosure of vaccination status in the form attached – Schedule C
- b. Where a new person supported has declined vaccination for human rights related reasons they will be asked to produce evidence supporting such. CLNB will investigate possible forms of accommodation, (see section on Alternative Precautionary Measures), for the person short of undue hardship. Where this is not the case, service may be declined.
- c. Where a new person supported has declined vaccination for non-human rights related reasons, CLNB will assess their situation to determine whether CLNB will exercise its discretion to enter into the service agreement with the person subject to alternative precautionary measures. CLNB reserves the right to decline service at its discretion in such circumstances.

### **2. Existing People Supported**

- a. CLNB requires that all people supported (or the SDM) to complete the vaccination status form attached – Schedule C
- b. CLNB recognizes that people, (or the substitute decision maker – SDM - on behalf of the person supported) may choose not to be vaccinated due to a reason protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) or as a personal choice not related to the OHRC. However, regardless of the reason for declining vaccination, the potential risk to people is high, and thus additional protective safety measures may be required.

### **3. Alternatives to Vaccination**

For people supported who are not vaccinated, the agency's response will be determined with reference to each circumstance. Considerations will include but are not limited to:

- Recommendations by Public Health
- Relevant legislation / directives (i.e. MCCSS, Provincial or Federal Government, Public Health)
- The nature of support such as day programming, daily living supports, personal / intimate care, or assistance involving aerosol generating procedures and the availability and practicality of virtual services, and whether the supports involve close contact, close spaces, crowded places, forceful exhalation and prolonged exposure.
- Nature of the support setting such as congregate care supports in a residential setting or individualized supports with limited interaction with multiple people supported and staff

- Whether there is an outbreak
- Risk level in community
- Any other factor that may impact health and safety in relation to COVID-19.

Alternative safety precautionary measures may include any one or combination of, but not limited to:

- Enhanced PPE (i.e. wearing a mask by person supported and / or staff providing support)
- Surveillance testing
- Virtual service delivery
- Restrictions in access to non-essential services
- Limited community activities based on guidance from public health or provincial government
- Permanent or temporary withdrawal of service (only where other measures are not reasonable in the circumstances)
- Other precautionary measures as are deemed to be appropriate and necessary to reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure for the person, staff and other stakeholders with whom the person will interact in receiving service.

***F. VISITORS (i.e. FAMILY, FRIENDS, EXTERNAL SERVICES (i.e. private passport workers, contractors, VON etc.)***

Vaccination status will be required to determine necessary precautions. Considering factors which will contribute to determining necessary precautions will include, but not limited to:

- Recommendations by Public Health
- Relevant legislation / directives (ie MCCSS, Provincial or Federal Government, Public Health)
- The nature of contact such as visits, day supports, property maintenance, availability and practicality of virtual services, and whether the supports involve close contact, close spaces, crowded places, forceful exhalation and prolonged exposure.
- Whether there is an outbreak
- Risk level in community
- Any other factor that may impact health and safety in relation to COVID-19.

Alternative safety precautionary measures may include any one or combination of, but not limited to:

- Enhanced PPE (ie continued use of wearing a mask, eye protection, gown, gloves)
- Virtual Visits / Support
- Limited on-site access
- Surveillance testing

***G. RISK ASSESSMENT AND ALTERNATIVE SAFETY PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES***

At this time there is a provincial mandate for mandatory mask wearing to enter any community premise. There is also guidance from MCCSS around safety measures for employees and visitors including external services when entering CLNB properties which continue to be followed. CLNB will be investigating a “risk assessment tool” to assist in determining the necessary safety precautions that may be necessary to implement for people who are not vaccinated, especially once provincial mandated safety precautions are lifted. (This may also include vaccinated staff supporting a person who is not vaccinated and PPE that will be required when providing support).

#### **H. OTHER PROTECTIVE MEASURES**

All employees, volunteers, students, visitors, host families, and external services, must comply with safety protocols in place with respect to physical distancing, masking, screening, PPE, hand hygiene, enhanced cleaning and any other measures intended to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

#### **I. REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed on a monthly basis and/or more frequently upon receipt of new and relevant information.

#### **Non-Compliance of the Policy - Employees**

Any breach of this policy or the components contained herein will be treated as misconduct. Misconduct will be reviewed and may result in disciplinary action including dismissal from employment.

**Review History**

<b>Policy Number/ Form Number</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Reason for Changes</b>
8.13	COVID-19	June 2021	New Policy
8.13	COVID-19	August 2021	Update in section 2 Alternatives to Vaccination