

## THE OTTAWA JEWISH COMMUNITY SCHOOL COVID-19 VACCINE POLICY

### Background & Context:

This COVID-19 Vaccine Policy should be read in conjunction with the OJCS Immunization Policy.

Parents send their children to the Ottawa Jewish Community School (**OJCS** or the **School**) with the assumption and expectation that they will learn, thrive, enjoy themselves, benefit from positive social interactions, and, most importantly, be safe and healthy. In furtherance of these objectives, OJCS has implemented this COVID-19 Vaccination Policy (the **Policy**). This Policy has been developed considering reliable, scientific evidence, government guidance and protocols, applicable Ontario *Occupational Health and Safety Act* requirements, and relevant human rights legislation.

Safe and reliable vaccines are an important tool to help stop the spread of COVID-19, build immunity in Ontario and protect our communities. As a school, OJCS has a heightened responsibility to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect our staff, students and their families. As the majority of roles at the School involve close contact with students and staff members, the School has determined that vaccinations of teachers, school staff and eligible students are mandatory, with certain accommodations or exemptions, as set out in this Policy.

The Government of Canada currently has authorized a number of COVID-19 vaccines for use in Canada, for individuals 18 years of age and older (or 12 years of age and older for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine). In a report dated May 3, 2021, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) stated that in clinical trials, all approved COVID-19 vaccines are efficacious in the short term against symptomatic, confirmed COVID-19 disease. The Government of Canada may subsequently authorize other COVID-19 vaccines for use in Canada.

### Policy:

This Policy applies to all faculty, staff and students of the School who are attending in-person classes at the School, commencing with the 2021/22 School year, and that are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination<sup>1</sup> (**Eligible Members of the School**).

All Eligible Members of the School must (i) have at least one dose of the vaccine by October 31, 2021, and must be fully vaccinated<sup>2</sup> by November 30, 2021 in respect of the 2021/22 School year, and (ii) must be fully vaccinated by such other date as may be determined by the School from time to time in respect of an academic year subsequent to the 2021/22 school year (in each case, the **Full Vaccination Date**).

This Policy will be revisited by the School to consider its applicability to individuals 5 years of age to 11 years of age if and when vaccine eligibility changes for individuals within this age group.

### Proof of Vaccination:

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<sup>1</sup> This currently includes students 12 years of age and older, school administrators, full-time and part-time teachers, administrative staff, contract staff, visitors, on-site contractors and volunteers.

<sup>2</sup> Fully vaccinated includes both doses of an approved vaccine, where applicable.

Once an Eligible Member of the School has been fully vaccinated, they are required to provide proof of vaccination to the School. This must be provided immediately for those who are currently fully vaccinated, and by the Full Vaccination Date (being November 30, 2021 for the 2021/22 school year) for those still requiring vaccination. Proof of vaccination can be in the form of a copy of the proof of vaccination given at the time of receiving vaccination, or a letter from a medical practitioner, confirming the individual has been vaccinated.

The School will only collect, use and disclose information regarding an individual's vaccination status in accordance with our Privacy Policy and all applicable privacy laws. Proof of vaccination will be kept by the School in a confidential file, stored in a secure location.

### **Policy Exemptions:**

The School recognizes its responsibilities and duties under provincial human rights legislation, such as the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the **Code**). If an Eligible Member of the School is unable to be vaccinated, due to a protected ground, as defined by the Code, the School has a duty to accommodate to a point of undue hardship. If an Eligible Member of the School will not be vaccinated because of a protected ground under the Code, they must request an accommodation or exemption which falls under the following category:

1. Medical Condition.

Please note that there is no requirement under the Code to accommodate a refusal to be vaccinated arising from a political belief and/or principles. Political belief, such as objection to receiving the vaccination on a principled basis, is not a protected ground under the Code.

### **Medical Condition Exemption:**

An Eligible Member of the School who is requesting an exemption from this Policy on the basis of a medical condition must provide the School a letter from a medical practitioner, clearly stating the reason why the individual should be exempted from receiving the vaccine. This letter must be provided to the School by the Full Vaccination Date (being November 30, 2021 for the 2021/22 school year). Given the recent surge in fraudulent 'medical exemptions' given across the province, the School reserves the right to review all medical exemption letters for compliance with the applicable Ottawa Public Health document (as published on their website on Sept 7, 2021, in the document: "*Medical Exemptions to the COVID-19 Vaccine*").

### **Accommodation:**

The process to accommodate is a shared responsibility. All parties should co-operatively engage in the process, share information and consider potential accommodation solutions. Members of the School and their parents/guardians (as applicable) who are requesting accommodation are required to:

- Make the accommodation needs known to the best of their ability, preferably in writing, in a timely manner;
- Answer reasonable questions or provide information about relevant restrictions or limitations, including information from health care professionals;
- Take part in discussions about possible accommodation solutions;
- Co-operate with any experts whose assistance is required to manage the accommodation process;

- Meet agreed-upon performance standards and requirements, once accommodation is provided; and
- Work with school administration on an ongoing basis to manage the accommodation process.

**\*\*\*Members of the School who are not fully vaccinated after the Full Vaccination Date (being November 30, 2021 for the 2021/22 school year) because of a protected ground under the Code will be required to complete rapid antigen testing twice weekly. The means of obtaining, administering and reporting the test will be determined by the School on a case-by-case basis.**