



Ringette Ontario COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

Policy Preamble:

On September 22nd, 2021, the Ministry of Ontario Proof of Vaccination regulations will come into effect for patrons seeking access to indoor facilities used for sports and recreational fitness activities. These regulations apply to all who wish to enter these locations with limited exceptions.

Ringette Ontario and its Members have legal obligations to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect the health and safety of their participants, workers, volunteers, and stakeholders, and require every eligible person to get vaccinated and help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Ringette Ontario also acknowledges that some Public Health Units (PHUs), municipalities, arenas, and facilities, have the authority to be more restrictive than the current Provincial Proof of Vaccination Requirement. This means that Ringette Ontario Participants, may not be permitted to enter some locations if they do not comply with permit conditions of use. The best way to avoid these issues, is to be fully vaccinated and carry recognized proof and identification as stipulated in the Provincial mandate.

1. Purpose:

- a) To continue to protect the health and safety of all Participants by reducing the risk of exposure to and transmission of COVID-19, an infectious communicable disease, among all persons involved in the activities of ringette, and to promote the health and safety of all members of the Ringette community in Ontario, by requiring that all individuals be Fully Vaccinated as a condition of participating in RO Sanctioned Activities in accordance with defined timelines.

2. Definitions:

- a) **"Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine"** means a COVID-19 vaccine that has been approved for use by Health Canada.
- b) **"Affected Persons"** means all RO Players, RO Officials, RO Bench Staff, RO Minor Officials and RO Volunteers who are eligible for the vaccine.
- c) **"Fully Vaccinated"** means having received the completed series of an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine. An individual is considered Fully Vaccinated 14 days after receiving their final dose.
- d) **"OHRC"** means the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.
- e) **"RO Official"** means an on-ice official, or any other person registered or designated by RO as a RO Official.
- f) **"RO Bench Staff"** means coaches, assistant coaches, managers, trainers and any other person or persons registered or designated by RO as bench staff on a Team Roster Form (TRF).
- g) **"RO Volunteers"** means a registered volunteer over the age of 18 years, of a RO Member Club/Association or League Board of Directors or volunteers serving in any other capacity within the Member and/or League.
- h) **"League"** means any RO Sanctioned League.
- i) **"Member"** means a registered Club/Association of Ringette Ontario.
- j) **"Organization"** means Ringette Ontario or a registered Member Club/Association, Affiliate Team or League as per the RO Bylaws and Membership Policy.
- k) **"Participant"** means any person registered with Ringette Ontario, a Member Club/Association, League or Team, including the parents or legal guardians of any minor aged participant.
- l) **"Sanctioned Activity"** means Ringette related events which are deemed to fall under regular ringette. These include practices, games, tournaments, provincials, league games, try-outs,

banquets, dryland, and any other activity for which your Association or team has secured insurance for under Ringette Ontario.

- m) **“Third-Party Contractors”** means service providers such as fitness instructors or skating instructors who are not registered participants of Ringette Ontario, but who are hired to interact with registered participants in a Sanctioned Activity.
- n) **“Team”** means any group of individuals who gather for a Sanctioned Activity, including but not limited to players, bench staff, on-ice instructors, and volunteers.

3. Policy Statement

- a) ***In order to attend or participate in RO Sanctioned Activities, the Organization requires that all Ringette Ontario Participants who are eligible to receive vaccination, including Players, RO Bench Staff, RO Officials, Minor Officials, Third-Party Contractors and RO Volunteers must show proof of identification and proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to a designated member of their Organization.***
- b) In addition to this Policy, Sanctioned Activities will be subject to all applicable laws and to federal, provincial, and local public health regulations related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Local Public Health Units which have stricter guidelines will take precedence over the Organizations Policy and Participants accessing those locations must abide by the permit conditions of use.
- c) Public health guidance on measures for fully vaccinated, partially vaccinated, and unvaccinated individuals continue to evolve and it is expected that amendments to this policy may occur as a result.

4. Zero-Tolerance

- a) ***The Organization has a zero-tolerance stance towards any behaviour that would be deemed as contrary to our Code of Conduct, including but not limited to, verbal or physical threats, verbal abuse, harassment, or aggression. Participants who behave in such a manner towards any Participant of Ringette Ontario or facility location staff, will be subject to a discipline under the Ringette Ontario Discipline & Complaints Policy with their behaviour constituting a Major Infraction.***

5. Reasons for this Policy

- a) This Policy is necessary to prevent, respond to, and alleviate any outbreak of COVID-19 in or related to our sport because of the significant risk factors for COVID-19 infection that are present while participating in an organized ringette setting as a player and non-player, both on and off the ice. These risk factors include close contact in predominantly indoor closed-space environments (e.g.: arenas, dressing rooms, etc.). The close contact nature of organized ringette makes compliance with social distancing impossible in certain circumstances and reduces the effectiveness of other infectious disease transmission protocols such as masking.

6. Vaccination Requirement and Records

- a) Effective **November 1, 2021**, all Affected Persons 18 and older, are required to have provided to a designated representative of the Organization evidence demonstrating that they have received the completed series of an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine at least 14 days before they are permitted to participate in Sanctioned Activities.

7. Acceptable Documentation

- a) Acceptable documents serving as evidence of COVID-19 vaccination include:
 - i) A digital or physical Dose Administration Receipt.

- ii) Medical records signed by a licensed health care provider on that provider's letterhead indicating vaccine name and date(s) of administration.
 - iii) Other form of evidence that the provincial government identifies are acceptable.
- b) A written document completed and supplied from either a physician designated as an MD or a Registered Nurse in the Extended Class designated as RN(EC) or Nurse Practitioner (NP) must state that the individual is exempt for a medical reason from being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and the effective time-period for the medical reason. The accommodation is only acceptable for the timeframe indicated by the medical professional within the documentation. To begin the accommodation request process, please complete the application by visiting the following link: [Link to Accommodation Request](#).

8. Accommodation

- a) The Organization will comply with the *Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC)* and provide accommodation up to the point of undue hardship to any Affected Person who is unable to be vaccinated for substantiated medical reasons under the *OHRC*. To begin the accommodation request process, please complete the application by visiting the following link: [Link to Accommodation Request](#).
- b) If an Affected Person cannot provide satisfactory evidence of vaccination, the Organization will take into consideration documentation to substantiate a medical reason for not being vaccinated, including the effective time-period for the medical reason (permanent or time-limited).
- c) Any Affected Person requiring a medical accommodation must provide written documentation as stipulated in 7(b) for each entry, to substantiate their reason for not being vaccinated. Where accommodation is not possible without undue hardship, the Affected Person will not be permitted to be involved in any Sanctioned Activity for the duration of the pandemic or until such time that COVID-19 no longer poses a significant public health risk.
- d) The Organization reserves the right to temporarily deny participation if they require external advice to validate vaccination or accommodation documents.

9. Reporting and Record Keeping

- a) All Affected Persons need to provide satisfactory evidence that they are Fully Vaccinated to their Organization designate who will record that satisfactory evidence has been provided. Copies of vaccination documentation will not be retained by the Organization.

10. Unvaccinated Affected Persons

- a) Any Affected Person who has not provided satisfactory evidence that they are Fully Vaccinated by required deadlines, will no longer be eligible to participate in any Sanctioned Activity until such time as they present satisfactory evidence that they are Fully Vaccinated.
- b) This Section does not apply any individual who has been granted an accommodation in accordance with Section 7.

11. Compliance

- a) Individuals who make false attestations about, or provide false documents related to, being vaccinated will be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including permanent expulsion from Ringette Ontario.