

Instructions from the Medical Officer of Health

Pursuant to Section 2 (2.1) of O. Reg. 364/20: Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step

September 17, 2021

- TO: All Owners, Operators and Persons Responsible for businesses and organizations participating in organized sports utilizing the indoor area of facilities located in the City of Peterborough and County of Peterborough**
- RE: Medical Officer of Health Instructions for proof of vaccination requirements for any person eighteen (18) years of age or older participating in organized sports**

The fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic has arrived, in Peterborough as elsewhere.¹ It is clear that the fourth wave is being influenced primarily by the Delta Variant of COVID-19.² The Delta Variant is more than twice as transmissible than the original SARS-CoV-2 virus.³ More specifically, evidence shows that for every person who is infected with the Delta Variant, they are expected to infect 6-8 additional people if there are no control measures in place.⁴ Provincial case counts for COVID-19 continue to be alarming. 593 new cases were reported on September 14, 2021. Recently, case counts have been as high as 944 cases (September 3).⁵ In a report published by Public Health Ontario, the rate of COVID-19 cases in unvaccinated individuals is consistently higher from December 20, 2020 to August 7, 2021, compared to fully vaccinated individuals,⁶ indicating that the unvaccinated population is another factor driving the fourth wave of this pandemic. As such, new provincial targets of 90% of eligible Ontarians with two doses of vaccine have now been adopted.

Activities related to organized sports, particularly those that happen indoors, have the potential to facilitate all five risk factors for COVID-19 transmission which include: close contact, closed spaces, crowded places, prolonged exposure, and forceful exhalation.⁷ When coupled with the removal of masks during physical activity, the Delta Variant of COVID-19 has made indoor sports and recreation activities some of the most high-risk settings for COVID-19 transmission.⁸

The new [provincial proof of vaccination requirements](#) have exempted certain participants of organized sports, including volunteers, coaches and officials. Volunteers, coaches and officials are necessary for the operation of organized sports. Given that these individuals will have close and prolonged contact with vulnerable youth who are unvaccinated, by way of this Letter of Instruction, I am requiring proof of vaccination for these individuals, in addition to the individuals prescribed by provincial legislation. Requiring all individuals, 18 years of age or older, participating in organized sports to be fully vaccinated provides enhanced protection for our community and further curbs the local risk associated with indoor organized sports.

All Owners, Operators and Persons Responsible for businesses and organizations participating in organized sports utilizing indoor facilities located in the City of Peterborough and County of Peterborough are instructed to:

1. Comply with the provincial requirements related to proof of vaccination, as outlined in [O. Reg. 364/20](#), section 2 (2.1) and the Ministry of Health's [Proof of Vaccination Guidance for Businesses and Organizations under the Reopening Ontario Act](#). This includes:
 - a. Confirm proof of vaccination (or proof of being entitled to another exemption) and identification each time a patron, 18 years of age and older, arrives at the facility to actively participate in the indoor organized sport.
 - b. Confirm proof of vaccination (or proof of being entitled to another exemption) and identification for all patrons, 12 years of age and older, each time the patron attends the facility as a spectator.
2. Confirm proof of vaccination (or proof of being entitled to a medical exemption) and identification for all volunteers, coaches and officials participating or associated with the indoor organized sport each time the individual arrives at the facility.
3. Continue to comply with all other public health measures related to screening, physical distancing and use of personal protective equipment, as outlined in O. Reg. 364/20.

In order to comply with provincial legislation and this Letter of Instruction, organized sports operators and facilities will need to work collaboratively. It is expected that organized sports operators and/or facility operators will already have systems in place to confirm proof of vaccination for patrons, including athletes and spectators, and that the added requirement to confirm proof of vaccination for volunteers, coaches and officials is unlikely to be burdensome.

With this being a requirement pertaining to the use of facilities located within the geographical region served by Peterborough Public Health, local organized sports groups will need to ensure that teams or individuals from other jurisdictions attending the Peterborough area for the purpose of a game or competition are made aware of these instructions, prior to attendance at local facilities.

Local facilities are asked to ensure that these instructions are communicated to all user groups and/or renters of the facility and that there is a plan by the person responsible for the organized sport to ensure compliance with these instructions.

For the purpose of these instructions, the following definitions apply:

Person responsible means the holder of a permit to use the facility or designated individual which may include, but is not limited to, a coach, coordinator, trainer, or other person responsible for the compliance with public health measures related to COVID-19.

Organized Sport means sports and recreation including, but not limited to, sports leagues, organized pick-up sports, dance classes, gymnastics, martial arts and swimming classes, or as otherwise described in the Ministry of Health's [Proof of Vaccination Guidance for Businesses and Organizations under the Reopening Ontario Act](#).

Identification means a form of identification with the name of the identification holder and the holder's date of birth; it does not necessarily mean photo identification. More description can be found in the [Proof of Vaccination Guidance for Businesses and Organizations under the Reopening Ontario Act](#).

Medical exemption means an exemption confirmed by an individual who provides a written document, completed and supplied by a physician or registered nurse in the extended class, that sets out, in accordance

with the Ministry of Health's [Proof of Vaccination Guidance for Businesses and Organizations under the Reopening Ontario Act](#): (i) a documented medical reason for not being fully vaccinated against COVID-19, and (ii) the effective time-period for the medical reason.

These instructions are effective beginning **September 22, 2021** to align with the implementation of provincial proof of vaccination requirements. These instructions are enforceable in accordance with the [Reopening Ontario \(A Flexible Response to COVID-19\) Act, 2020](#) (ROA), and will be monitored and enforced by Public Health Inspectors. Failure to comply, by either the patron or the business or organization may result in charges being laid under the ROA. If charged under Part I of the [Provincial Offences Act](#) (POA), set fine amounts are \$750 for individuals and \$1000 for corporations. Maximum penalties based on prosecution under Part I or Part III of the POA include fines of up to \$100,000 and up to a year in jail for an individual; up to \$500,000 and up to a year in jail for an individual who is a director or officer of a corporation; and up to \$10 million for a corporation.

If you have questions or concerns about these instructions please contact our office at (705) 743-1000, ext. 351. Please note that this Letter of Instruction will be posted on PPH's website at: www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca/public-health-orders.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Rosana Salvaterra, MD, MSc, CCFP, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health

¹ Science Table: COVID-19 Advisory for Ontario. Update on COVID-19 Projections: Science Advisory and Modelling Consensus Tables. September 1, 2021. Retrieved from: https://covid19-sciencetable.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Update-on-COVID-19-Projections_2021.09.01_English-1.pdf

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Ontario COVID-19 Data Tool. September 14. Retrieved from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/data-and-analysis/infectious-disease/covid-19-data-surveillance/covid-19-data-tool>

⁶ Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Confirmed cases of COVID-19 following vaccination in Ontario: December 14, 2020 to August 7, 2021. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2021. Retrieved from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/epi/covid-19-epi-confirmed-cases-post-vaccination.pdf?la=en>

⁷ Public Health Ontario. COVID-19 Transmission Through Large Respiratory Droplets and Aerosols... What We Know So Far. May 20, 2021. Retrieved from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/covid-wwksf/2021/05/wwksf-transmission-respiratory-aerosols.pdf?la=en>

⁸ American Academy of Pediatrics. Youth sports and COVID-19: Understanding the risks. March 1, 2021. Retrieved from: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Youth-Sports-and-COVID-19-Understanding-the-Risks.aspx>, Accessed: September 16, 2021.