



# BC Rugby COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Policy

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### **Introduction**



BC Rugby is committed to providing and maintaining a safe competitive environment for all participants. Accordingly, BC Rugby has agreed, in conjunction with Rugby Canada and other provincial unions, to implement a Mandatory Vaccination Policy for all BC Rugby participants. This Policy requires all individuals subject to this Policy either to be vaccinated for COVID-19 or to obtain an approved exemption, all in accordance with the terms set out below.

This Policy complies with the general measures and recommendations to help combat the spread of COVID-19 as established by Public Health Canada and by the BC Provincial Health Officer. However, additional safety policies may be applied based on local requirements.

BC Rugby wishes to take reasonable precautions in the circumstances to protect the health and safety of both the rugby community and the general public. This Policy is mandatory for all BC Rugby participants.

## 1. Definitions

- 1.1 **"Sanctioned Activity"** means any game, on-field practice, outdoor or indoor training, training and education courses and any other activity involving one or more Participants that is approved, sanctioned or hosted by BC Rugby.
- 1.2 A person is **"fully vaccinated"** if: (1) the person has received all the required doses of one or more Health Canada approved COVID-19 vaccines; and (2) the person has received their last required dose no later than two weeks prior to the first day of the Sanctioned Activity.
- 1.3 **"Participant"** includes a person who is a player, social member, official, match official, team staff member, coach or volunteer who is involved in a Sanctioned Activity. It does not include spectators at a Sanctioned Activity.
- 1.4 **"Vaccine Card"** has the meaning given to it by the British Columbia Office of the Provincial Health Officer, as that definition may be updated from time to time.
- 1.5 To **"verify"**, **"verified"** or **"verification"** has the meaning to scan the QR code on a Vaccine Card using the BC Vaccine Card Verifier App.

## 2. General

- 2.1 Every Participant who takes part in a Sanctioned Activity must strictly comply with the terms of this Policy.



- 2.2** Any Participant who does not comply with this Policy may be denied entry to or removed from a Sanctioned Activity or may face further discipline under BC Rugby's Code of Conduct, as determined by BC Rugby.
- 2.3** Provincial and regional COVID health orders as well as venue operator health and safety protocols must be followed for every Sanctioned Activity. This includes, but is not limited to required COVID testing, limits on the number of Participants at a venue, daily health attestations, mask mandates, social distancing mandates and other such measures required by public health authorities.
- 2.4** BC Rugby reserves the right at its sole discretion to impose additional health and safety policies in addition than those mandated by provincial or regional health authorities and/or a venue.

### **3. Implementation**

- 3.1** In order to participate in a Sanctioned Activity, a Participant must be fully vaccinated by October 27, 2021, subject to any approved exemption.
- 3.2** It is the responsibility of a Participant to ensure that they are fully vaccinated by October 27, 2021 and can demonstrate compliance with this requirement.

### **4. Policy for Participants at Sanctioned Activities**

- 4.1** A Participant who intends to participate in a Sanctioned Activity must provide proof that the Participant is fully vaccinated to the satisfaction of BC Rugby.
- 4.2** A Participant who is under the age of twelve does not have to provide proof that the Participant is fully vaccinated but must still comply with all other applicable requirements of public health authorities, as well as BC Rugby's Return to Rugby Policy.
- 4.3** If BC Rugby is uncertain whether a Participant is under the age of twelve, then BC Rugby may request that the Participant provide acceptable proof of their age.



- 4.4** All Participants who are twelve or older or who turn twelve after this Policy comes into effect are required to be fully vaccinated within eight weeks of the later of this Policy coming into effect and the Participant turning twelve.
- 4.5** If the age eligibility for COVID vaccination changes while this Policy is in effect, then any Participant newly eligible to receive a COVID vaccination will have eight weeks to become fully vaccinated or by an established date as determined by BC Rugby.
- 4.6** Proof that a Participant is fully vaccinated MUST be verified by BC Rugby prior to the start of the Sanctioned Activity unless the Participant has obtained an exemption under Section 5 of this Policy.
- (a) Proof that a Participant is fully vaccinated must be the in form of a Vaccine Card.
  - (b) If a Participant consents, then BC Rugby and/or the Participant's member club will record the fact that the Participant has provided proof of being fully vaccinated in compliance with this Policy.
    - i. BC Rugby will only collect, use, and disclose information regarding proof that a Participant is fully vaccinated in accordance with BC Rugby's Privacy Policy, as permitted by any applicable privacy laws.
    - ii. BC Rugby will not collect or store any immunization records, other than for the purpose of initially verifying this information.
    - iii. The only information to be retained by BC Rugby and the member club will be the name of the Participant, the fact that the Participant has provided proof of being fully vaccinated and the date of verification.
    - iv. This list will be kept in a confidential file, securely stored with limited access.
  - (c) For BC Rugby and the Participant's member club to record and retain the fact that a Participant has provided proof of being fully vaccinated, the Participant must complete and return a Consent to Record Vaccination Verification to BC Rugby. If the Participant is a minor, the legal guardian or parent of the Participant must complete and return the Consent. If the Participant does not provide the Consent, then the Participant will need to provide proof of being fully vaccinated each time the Participant takes part in a Sanctioned Activity.



- (d) In order for a Participant to be verified that they are fully vaccinated, the Participant has two options:
- i. If a Participant wants to upload the documentation, then the Participant shall upload their Vaccine Card to their Sportlomo account and, if this option is selected, then:
    - a. designated BC Rugby staff members will verify the documentation provided by the Participant;
    - b. once verified, the BC Rugby staff member who verified the Participant's documentation will record the outcome of the verification and then delete the documentation; and
    - c. the Participant will receive a notification when their documentation has been verified and deleted; or
  - ii. If a Participant does not want to upload their documentation, then the Participant's Vaccine Card must be verified in person by a club COVID Safety Officer or their designate, and:
    - a. for Participants who have signed Consent forms, member clubs will submit to BC Rugby to be manually recorded in Sportlomo a list of fully vaccinated Participants who have had their Vaccine Card verified; and
    - b. this list must state the name of the Participant, the date of verification of their Vaccine Card, the name of the individual who verified the information.
- (e) If a Participant does not consent to BC Rugby and/or a member club to record and retain the fact that the Participant has provided proof of being fully vaccinated, then the Participant must have their Vaccine Card verified in person by a club COVID Safety Officer or their designate before every Sanctioned Activity. A Participant who is unable to provide proof that they are fully vaccinated before the Sanctioned Activity may not participate, even if they have previously presented proof that they are fully vaccinated.
- (f) Member clubs are responsible for verifying and tracking whether a Participant associated with their club is fully vaccinated and has submitted the required proof. If a Participant associated with a member club is involved in a Sanctioned Activity without proof that the Participant is fully vaccinated, then the member club will be subject to discipline by BC Rugby.



- 4.7** BC Rugby is committed to creating a safe, positive, and inclusive environment in which all Participants can participate in sport and are treated with respect and fairness. BC Rugby has a zero-tolerance policy for any intimidating and/or abusive physical or verbal conduct from Participants (or their parents/guardians) towards any member of BC Rugby or member clubs who are requesting information or enforcing the terms of this Policy. Any intimidating and/or abusive physical or verbal conduct should be reported in accordance with BC Rugby's Code of Conduct, and the offending individual may be subject to disciplinary action by BC Rugby and/or be reported to law enforcement officials.
- 4.8** A Participant who cannot provide proof that they are fully vaccinated will not be permitted to participate in a Sanctioned Activity under any circumstance unless the Participant has received written approval from Rugby Canada and BC Rugby that the Participant is exempt from the requirement to be fully vaccinated.
- 4.9** BC Rugby will not provide a refund to a Participant who has not been permitted to participate in a Sanctioned Activity because the Participant is not fully vaccinated or is unable or unwilling to provide proof that the Participant is fully vaccinated. BC Rugby will not provide a refund to any club or team who is unable to participate in a Sanctioned Activity because a Participant has not been permitted to participate in the Sanctioned Activity because the Participant is not fully vaccinated or is unable or unwilling to provide proof that the Participant is fully vaccinated.

## 5. Exemptions

- 5.1** If a Participant is unable to receive a vaccination due to a medical condition or grounds protected by applicable legislation, then the Participant may seek approval from Rugby Canada to participate in a Sanctioned Activity without proof that the Participant is fully vaccinated.
- 5.2** There is no general requirement under BC's human rights legislation to accommodate a refusal to be vaccinated arising from a political belief and/or principle. Political belief, such as the objection to receiving the vaccination on a principled basis, is not a protected ground under this legislation.
- 5.3** A Participant who is seeking an exemption must co-operatively engage in the exemption process, share information with Rugby Canada, including answering reasonable questions asked by Rugby Canada, and/or provide information about relevant restrictions or limitations applicable to the Participant.
- 5.4** A Participant who is seeking an exemption must submit an exemption request in writing to [covidexemptions@rugby.ca](mailto:covidexemptions@rugby.ca) allowing at least two weeks for the request to be considered. The



request must include documentation supporting the Participant's position that they should be exempt from having to be fully vaccinated to participate in a Sanctioned Activity.

- (a) A Participant who is requesting an exemption from this Policy based on a medical condition must submit a letter from a physician, clearly stating the reason why the Participant should be exempted from having to be fully vaccinated to participate in a Sanctioned Activity. This letter will be considered as part of the Participant's exemption request but does not constitute, in and of itself, an exemption.
- (b) A Participant who is requesting an exemption on religious belief or creed must provide materials in support of the Participant's religious belief or creed, including a letter of support from a religious leader or community representative. This letter will be considered as part of the Participant's exemption request but does not constitute, in and of itself, an exemption.

**5.5** By applying for an exemption, a Participant consents to their application and supporting documentation being shared and reviewed by Rugby Canada and any subject-matter experts to whom Rugby Canada may refer the application and supporting documentation as part of considering the Participant's exemption request.

**5.6** Rugby Canada may grant or refuse the exemption request but it must render a decision. Rugby Canada may also grant the exemption request with conditions, such as weekly proof of a negative COVID test, masking, and social distancing.

**5.7** The decision of Rugby Canada is final.

## **6. Spectators**

**6.1** Spectators must follow the health and safety policies of any venue hosting a Sanctioned Activity.

**6.2** BC Rugby is not extending the requirements of this Policy to spectators at the present time. However, spectators must follow the guidelines and requirements as established by public health authorities with respect to vaccination requirements to attend events.

**6.3** BC Rugby reserves the right to implement, at a later date, a vaccine mandate as a condition of spectator attendance involvement if warranted.

## **7. Return to Play Policies**





- 7.1** BC Rugby's Return to Play policies remain in effect and must be followed by all Participants.
- 7.2** Rugby Canada's Return to Play Committee may have to add, change, or update health and safety requirements as set out in the BC Rugby Return to Play policies, as necessary.

## **8. Modification**

- 8.1** BC Rugby reserves the right to amend this Policy from time to time as circumstances change and warrant.