

# COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION POLICY FOR THE PINES LONG TERM CARE HOME

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Review the attached COVID- 19 Immunization Policy and Procedure.

All Current Employees (including those on contract and people employed by an employment agency or other third party), Students on an educational placement at the home, Support Workers as defined by the MLTC and/or Volunteers.

Proof of vaccine to be provided to the Pines; this must be provided by November 15, 2021. Please show your proof of vaccine to the screener and they will document the proof.

OR

Proof of medical exemption including the reason why and the duration of the exemption. This medical exemption must be renewed within 30 days prior to it expiring.

If proof as requested above is not provided by November 15, 2021, individuals will not be able to attend a long-term care home to work, undertake a student placement or volunteer.

Effective immediately, October 1, 2021, any new employees, support workers, students or volunteers must provide proof of vaccination or medical exemptions before they begin working, undertaking their placement or volunteering in the home.

Thank you,

Pines Leadership Team

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## HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT

### Long-Term Care Services

70 Pine Street, Bracebridge, ON P1L 1N3

**Phone:** 705-645-2100 **Toll-Free:** 1-800-461-4210 (within 705)

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## THE PINES

### Long-Term Care Home

98 Pine Street, Bracebridge, ON P1L 1N5

**Tel:** 705-645-4488

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## **The Pines Long-Term Care Home**

**Policy and Procedure Number:**

**Department:** *Health Services*

**Subject:** *COVID-19 Immunization*

**Approval Date:** June 29, 2021

**Review Date:** June 29, 2021

**Update Date:** October 1, 2021

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### **1. POLICY**

Ensuring the health and safety of residents and other individuals, including employees, is a priority at all times, especially during a pandemic. This includes reducing the risk of exposure to infectious diseases such as COVID-19. As part of its commitment to health and safety, The Pines (the Pines) Long-Term Care Home is closely monitoring developments related to COVID-19 and has implemented measures based on available public health information and recommendations, including measures related to immunization. All eligible employees, student placements, support workers and volunteers are mandated to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, unless it is medically contraindicated. The Pines will offer a complete and proactive COVID-19 immunization program, including information regarding COVID-19, as well as on-site vaccines.

### **2. PURPOSE**

The Pines recognizes the importance of immunization of employees, student placements, support workers, volunteers and contractors due to the nature of their work with vulnerable seniors and the potential for exposure in the community. This COVID-19 immunization policy aims to protect the home's population including residents, employees, student placements, support workers and volunteers.

COVID-19 is an acute respiratory illness caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). It may be characterized by fever, cough, shortness of breath, and several other symptoms. Asymptomatic infection is also

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possible. The risk of severe disease increases with age, but is not limited to the elderly and is elevated in those with underlying medical conditions.

### 3. APPLICATION

This COVID-19 Immunization Policy (this “Policy”) applies to the following groups of individuals, regardless of how often they are at the home and how much time they spend there (all referred to as “employees” in this policy):

- All employees (including those on contract and people employed by an employment agency or other third party);
- Students on an educational placement at the home;
- Support Workers;
- Volunteers

This Policy is based on available public health and the Ministry of Long-Term Care information and recommendations, which are subject to change throughout the course of the pandemic. The Pines Long-Term Care Home will review the Policy on a regular basis and reserves the right to modify its contents at any time, based on the most current available information and recommendations. For ease of reference, this Policy will be available to all of the above groups, distributed in email (as required), available at the screening desk (upon entry to the home) and in the All-Staff shared drive for ease of access the latest version.

The Policy is subject to the relevant requirements of any applicable collective agreement(s) and/or applicable legislation, including any temporary orders issued pursuant to applicable legislation. In the event of conflict, such collective agreement(s) or legislation shall prevail.

### 4. DEFINITIONS

**4.1 Fully Immunized Individual:** An individual  $\geq 14$  days after receiving the full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or any combination of such vaccines, or one or two doses of a COVID vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada.

**4.2 Medical Exemption:** Individuals who provide proof of a valid medical contraindication to receiving the COVID-19 vaccine as described in section 4.1

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above, provided by either a physician or a registered nurse in the extended class, that set out:

- 4.2.1 That the individual cannot be vaccinated against COVID-19; and
- 4.2.2 The effective time period for the medical contraindication.

## **5. PROCEDURES**

5.1 All employees must remain vigilant in performing self-monitoring for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, which typically include cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, loss of smell or taste, and headache.<sup>1</sup>

5.1.1 All employees must remain out of the long-term care home (LTC) when experiencing COVID-19 symptoms from the time the symptoms begin and for at least 10 days following their onset. Employees are expected to get tested and follow the recommendations from public health officials if they exhibit COVID-19 symptoms or if they test positive for COVID-19 regarding their return to work.

5.1.2 Due to the similarity of some influenza and COVID-19 symptoms, managers may recommend testing of staff to rule out COVID-19.

5.2 There is no known prophylaxis treatment of COVID-19 at this time. This policy may be amended in the future to reflect any changes in data regarding the effectiveness of prophylaxis.

5.3 To ensure protection of all residents and employees from exposure to and transmission of COVID-19, employees must adhere completely to the infection prevention and control measures put in place during a COVID-19 Outbreak.

5.4 Education regarding the occupational expectations and requirements of this policy will be provided upon implementation, at time of hire, and as required (e.g., with changes in directives).

5.5 In accordance with human resources policies and practices, collective agreements and applicable legislation and directives of the Pines, culpable noncompliance with this policy may result in progressive discipline up to and including termination.

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<sup>1</sup> [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) self-assessment \(ontario.ca\)](https://www.ontario.ca/coronavirus).

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5.6 Immunization is required for all employees, unless they are unable to be vaccinated because it is medically contraindicated. All Current Employees (including those on contract and people employed by an employment agency or other third party), Students on an educational placement at the home, Support Workers as defined by the MLTC and/or Volunteers are required to provide proof of vaccination or proof of medical exemption to The Pines by November 15, 2021.

5.7 A medical exemption must be renewed within 30 days prior to it expiring.

5.8 If proof as requested above in 5.6 is not provided by November 15, 2021, individuals will not be able to attend a long-term care home to work, undertake a student placement or volunteer.

5.9 Effective immediately, October 1, 2021, any new employees, support workers, students or volunteers must provide proof of vaccination or medical exemptions before they begin working, undertaking their placement or volunteering in the home.

## 6. SUPPORT FOR COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION

6.1 SMDHU will offer all individuals the COVID-19 vaccine(s) at specified locations, at no cost, administered by a nurse or their delegate.

<https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/COVID-19>

6.2 The Pines will offer all residents, employees and essential caregivers the COVID-19 vaccine(s) on site.

6.3 Individuals who are unable to be vaccinated by reason of medical contraindication must inform their manager and/or the Pines Long-Term Care Home of same prior to November 15, 2021 or immediately upon date of hire and provide written proof of a medical reason, provided by either a physician or nurse practitioner that sets out:

6.3.1 That the person cannot be vaccinated against COVID-19; and

6.3.2 The effective time period for the medical reason (medical exemption must be renewed within 30 days prior to it expiring)

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6.4 Until written proof of vaccination is received, individuals vaccinated elsewhere will be deemed to be unvaccinated and will be subject to the standards set out above and will not be able to work if proof is not received prior to November 15, 2021.

6.5 The Pines is required, pursuant to the *Minister of Long-Term Care's Directive - Long-Term Care Home COVID-19 Immunization Policy*, to report statistical information to the Ministry of Long-Term Care. No identifying information will be provided in aggregate form. Each manager and/or The Pines will maintain a database of the vaccination status of their staff. This database shall be kept in strict confidentiality in accordance with Privacy Policy of The District Municipality of Muskoka.

## 7. REFERENCES

### COVID-19

- Government of Canada – [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#)
- Public Health Ontario – [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- World Health Organization – [Coronavirus](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – [COVID-19](#)

### Immunization

- Government of Canada – [Canadian Immunization Guide](#)
- Government of Canada – [National Advisory Committee on Immunization \(Statements & Publications\)](#)
- Government of Canada – [Vaccines for COVID-19: Authorized vaccines](#)
- Minister's Directive: LONG-TERM CARE HOME COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION POLICY -  
<https://www.ltchomes.net/LTCHPORTAL/Content/Snippets/001.%20Minister's%20Directive%20LTCH%20COVID-19%20Immunization%20policy%202021-10-01%20Highlighted.pdf>
- RESOURCE GUIDE MINISTER'S DIRECTIVE LONG-TERM CARE HOME COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION POLICY -  
[https://www.ltchomes.net/LTCHPORTAL/Content/Snippets/001.%20LTC%20Immunization%20Policy%20Resource%20Guide%202021-10-01\\_final.pdf](https://www.ltchomes.net/LTCHPORTAL/Content/Snippets/001.%20LTC%20Immunization%20Policy%20Resource%20Guide%202021-10-01_final.pdf) COVID-19 guidance document for long-term care homes in Ontario:  
<https://www.ltchomes.net/LTCHPORTAL/Content/Snippets/001.%20LTCH%20COVID-19%20Guidance%20Document%202021-10-01.pdf>

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