

# As Scouts Canada Members we Play an Essential Role in Helping our Communities Thrive

## FAQ

### **Does the Nov 1, 2021 deadline for fully vaccinated include a 14 day period following the final second vaccine dose?**

Yes. The Nov 1 date was selected as it can incorporate the required timing between dose 1 and dose 2 of the approved vaccines and a further 14 days following the second, final, vaccination dose required for full vaccination status.

### **Which vaccines are permitted for “fully vaccinated status”?**

At this time, only those vaccines approved by Health Canada (i.e. Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson, AstraZeneca).

### **Some provinces have requirements more restrictive than Scouts Canada, for example the requirement to show vaccine records or an approved provincial vaccine passport or equivalent. What is the direction for groups and sections in this regard?**

In provinces or municipalities in which governments stipulate a specific procedure or passport use, Scouts Canada would require those procedures to be adopted e.g. Vaccine passport (QR code) in Quebec. In provinces or school districts that have a requirement for in-person building access or after-hours school use, it is expected that a procedure and associated document will be required.

**NOTE:** In all cases, federal and provincial legislation MUST be followed in addition to Scouts Canada rules. Contact your local Council for further information.

### **Who decided to make COVID-19 vaccination mandatory at Scouts Canada?**

The decision was made by the Scouts Canada Board of Governors on the recommendation of Scouts Canada’s leadership. Scouts Canada believes vaccination is the key to a safe and successful return to in-person Scouting activities and to ensuring the safety of our community.

### **Will Scouts Canada require each eligible (e.g., currently >12 years of age) youth, Scouter or attending person to be vaccinated against COVID to participate in in-person meetings, events, or other activities?**

Yes, starting on November 1, 2021, all persons present at a Scouts Canada in-person activity will be required to be fully vaccinated.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Scouts Canada has based its decisions on a set of Board Approved guiding principles for COVID pandemic management, specifically: Scouts Canada will make risk-based decisions, will always follow Federal and Provincial legislation and will be a fast-follower that learns from others—specifically school boards. Most importantly, Scouts Canada has always taken a leadership position in the area of youth safety and to role model the expected behaviours consistent with public safety and civic leadership. Public health officials continue to advocate strongly for vaccination as the most critical step to bringing the pandemic to an end, Scouts Canada supports this position.

With Canada being in the enviable position of more than 80% of the eligible population vaccinated and both federal government, education institutions and businesses supporting vaccine deployment, Scouts Canada has determined that a position of leadership and clarity will aid the continued safety of our youth and members. Our guiding principles: [Scouts.ca/news-and-events/covid-19/covid-19-faq.html](https://scouts.ca/news-and-events/covid-19/covid-19-faq.html)

### **Will Scouts Canada require all future eligible youth to get vaccinated (e.g. 6 to 12 years of age) if federally legislated to participate in in-person meetings, events, or other activities?**

Yes, in principle, the vaccine mandate will extend to youth 12 and under as vaccines are approved for children. Scouts Canada will continue to monitor developments in vaccine eligibility while continuing to follow our guiding principles before making a future decision and associated timing.

### **What are the contingency plans if a booster or third vaccine is required?**

Scouts Canada will continue to update its policies in alignment with public health guidelines.

### **Can we still attend Scouting in-person activities prior to November 1 if we are not fully vaccinated?**

Yes. All members have until November 1, 2021 to be fully vaccinated. After that date, only fully vaccinated persons who have submitted and recorded their self-declaration, or have an approved and recorded exemption, may attend in-person meetings or activities (subject to federal or provincial legislation that may precede this date).



### **What is the logic or reasoning as to why Scouts Canada has taken this position if the province, or local school board, has not mandated the need for vaccination?**

From the beginning of the pandemic, Scouts Canada has taken the position of ensuring as much as practical and possible, the safety of our youth and members that participate in Scouting as directed by our guiding principles. In addition, as one of the largest youth-serving organizations in Canada, we have a civic and community responsibility to lead by example while being a fast-follower recognizing that governments, hospitals and education ministries are equipped with specialist expertise that we do not have access to. In principle, we will continue to be consistent with the direction of our federal, provincial and municipal leaders and continue to provide safe, fun Scouting adventures. Given the complexity and variability of the requirements in different areas, Scouts Canada has taken the position to provide clarity to our members and a more risk-conservative approach, ensuring, the safety of our youth remains priority number one. Without vaccine approval for youth under the age of 12 we have taken a risk-based decision to ensure that all eligible members working with our youth are vaccinated.

### **What if different school boards have different responses? What if the provincial government has one rule for schools but another for outdoor sports or youth activity?**

Given the complexity and variability of the requirements in different school boards, geographic areas, provinces, municipalities and activities, Scouts Canada has made the risk-based assessment that while there will be inconsistencies in some parts of the country, a clear position on vaccine requirements for in-person Scouting best serves our youth, parents and Scouting membership.

### **How do I let Scouts Canada know that I or my youth has been fully vaccinated?**

Prior to attending an in-person activity or meeting, all youth, Scouters and staff will be required to self-declare their vaccination status through MyScouts (procedure and timing to be confirmed). Parents and other individuals who want to participate in ad-hoc in-person meetings, but do not have a MyScouts account, will need to self-declare their vaccination status to the Scouter-in-Charge (or Contact Scouter) of the activity prior to participation (in much the same way we have conducted self-assessment screening). If requesting an exemption, this needs to be completed, including approval, before participation.

### **How are Groups and Sections expected to determine vaccination status?**

Unless required by legislation, Groups and Sections will not be collecting medical information but will ask members to self-declare vaccine status that will be recorded via MyScouts.ca (more specific information will be made available when ready). Those who do not

share their vaccine status or who have not requested an exemption will be determined to be a 'non-vaccinated' status and the member will not be permitted to participate in in-person Scouting activities at this time.

In provinces or areas in which governments stipulate a specific procedure or passport use, Scouts Canada would require those procedures to be adopted e.g. Vaccine passport (QR code) in Quebec. In provinces or school districts that have a requirement for in-person building access or after-hours school use, it is expected that a procedure and associated document will be required. More information will be shared when made available. Councils will provide more specific guidance to their members.

### **Can I request an exemption from mandatory COVID-19 vaccination to participate in in-person Scouting?**

Yes, you can. Any individual who cannot be vaccinated on medical or religious grounds can request an accommodation. Your approved exemption will be recorded in MyScouts—you only need to provide it once. Specific guidance and instructions to request an exemption are being developed and will be provided when available. Scouts Canada will follow all provincially defined legislative exemptions as it relates to COVID-19.

### **How are Groups and Sections expected to manage medical exceptions?**

A medical exemption will be recorded in the members MyScouts record. The Scouter in Charge or Contact Scouter for a section will be able to check this in their section applicable MyScouts records. Similarly, GCs will be able to check this in their MyScouts records. As a reminder, all personal information stored in MyScouts is confidential, each member signs a Code of Conduct including a declaration of privacy and confidentiality as a requirement to participate in Scouting.

### **Is my vaccine information confidential? Will my vaccine status be shared with anyone outside those that collect the information for the section or group?**

All personal health information is confidential. Your vaccine self-declaration will be maintained confidentially like other medical and private information and only shared as required for the safety of the group, section or activity.

### **Do I still need to wear a mask after I am fully vaccinated?**

In many provinces, the requirement to wear a mask inside buildings, especially schools, still stands. All public health guidelines such as wearing a mask, social distancing, and frequent hand washing remain in effect. Refer to the current Scouts Canada 'Stage' and associated Standard.

### **If I am dropping my child off at an activity, do I require to be fully vaccinated for them to participate?**

As much as we believe vaccination is our best approach to reducing COVID-19, no, if you are not going to participate in the activity and are dropping your child off safely from the parking lot or similar, you are not required to be vaccinated.

### **Do I need to be fully vaccinated to visit a Scouts Canada location?**

Starting on November 1, 2021, all staff, youth, Scouts Canada members and visitors to Scouts Canada buildings or facilities will be required to be fully vaccinated. This includes Scouts Canada offices, headquarters, camps and Scouting halls (subject to federal or provincial legislation that may precede this date).

The exception to this is third party property rental arrangements that have an existing rental agreement for the use of a Scouts Canada property or building and have exclusive use of a property or can be isolated from Scouting or other users.

### **What if my child turns 12 mid-year, do they immediately have to be vaccinated?**

We anticipate that in many provinces, children who turn twelve at any time during the year in 2022, will be eligible for vaccination at the beginning of 2022. Just like children who will turn twelve in 2021 are currently eligible for vaccination now. We encourage all to make appropriate arrangements for vaccination as soon as their children are eligible as soon as possible. Vaccination is the key to ending the pandemic and helping our communities thrive. Children can continue to enjoy in-person Scouting while they await full vaccination as long as it is within a reasonable timeframe of when they are eligible to be vaccinated.

**NOTE:** Councils and Groups will follow provincial and local health policies in addition to Scouts Canada policies as we have done throughout the pandemic.

### **What if a volunteer chooses not to declare their vaccination status?**

If a member or volunteer over the age of 12 has not declared their vaccination status, it will be assumed that they are unvaccinated and as such, can no longer participate in in-person activities or planning. Unvaccinated members may continue to participate in virtual activities if available and applicable (please note: Virtual Scouting is not widely available at this time).

### **Is Scouts Canada allowed to ask about vaccination status as a condition of participation?**

Currently, as part of the registration process, volunteers and youth members are asked to provide any relevant medical information that may be necessary for participating in Scouts (e.g. severe allergies, use of Epi-Pen, Code of Conduct, expected behaviours and commitment to Scouting values etc.) This extends to the vaccination self-declaration of our eligible members.

### **If myself or my youth are not vaccinated do we/they no longer continue to be a member of Scouts Canada?**

Starting on November 1, 2021, all staff, youth, Scouts Canada members and visitors to Scouts Canada buildings or facilities or participating in in-person activities will be required to be fully vaccinated or have an approved medical or religious exemption. Persons who choose to remain unvaccinated without requesting an exemption choose not to participate in in-person activities but may continue to be a member of Scouts Canada.

Scouts Canada's position is one of both values and health and safety. We also value inclusion as a key tenet of who we are. Accordingly, we encourage youth and volunteers to consider available virtual opportunities in which they may be able to participate.

While youth virtual activities are not widespread, we do encourage youth to participate as best they can and as per the opportunity. For volunteers, there are roles available for virtual only support in which they can provide meaningful community service.

### **I or my youth are unvaccinated, and we choose to remain unvaccinated. Can I get a refund for the calendar year 2021?**

In keeping with our current refund policy, refunds can be issued within 30 days of registration. This policy announcement ensures our membership is informed when they register for the new year that the vaccine policy will take effect Nov 1.

