

N.S. extends vaccine mandate to correctional workers, regulated child-care centres ^[1]

MLAs will also have to show proof of vaccination at Province House

Author: Gorman, Michael

Source: CBC News

Format: Article

Publication Date: 4 Oct 2021

AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

EXCERPTS

The Nova Scotia government is extending its COVID-19 vaccine mandate to include people who work in adult and youth correctional sites and regulated child-care centres.

Last week, the government announced teachers and health-care workers have until Nov. 30 to show proof of double vaccination or they'll be placed on unpaid leave. The list of people to whom that applies was updated Monday.

The list now includes correctional officers, youth workers, staff volunteers, visitors, contractors and service providers who work in, or provide service to adult or youth correctional facilities, according to a news release from the province.

Also being added to the mandatory vaccine requirement are early childhood educators and staff in regulated child care, as well as any volunteers, practicum students, or other professionals entering these settings.

MLAs required to show proof of vaccination

People who are not fully vaccinated must participate in a mandatory education program.

The announcement comes on the first day of the province's proof-of-vaccine requirement. Under the rules, people attending non-essential locations must show proof of vaccination to be able to be admitted, unless they have a medical exemption.

As the new rules come into effect, they will also apply to MLAs when they return to Province House for the autumn sitting on Oct. 12.

House leaders for the three parties and Independent MLA Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin recently agreed that MLAs attending the legislature will need to provide proof of vaccination.

Government House leader Kim Masland said the clerk and Speaker's office have been working on the details, but the move makes sense.

"It's a no-brainer to me, really," she said. "We've always supported that the caucus would be vaccinated before going into the House."

Leading by example

The Liberals sent a letter to Speaker of the House Keith Bain last week about the issue. Liberal House leader Derek Mombourquette said it's important for MLAs, who come from all areas of the province, to lead by example.

"First and foremost, it's about public safety," he said. "Where we're all coming from different areas of the province, it was something that was important to caucus."

The spring sitting operated using a hybrid model, where only a few MLAs were physically present in the chamber while the rest attended virtually.

Masland said details on that are also being finalized. Like Mombourquette, she said she would be comfortable being in the chamber with all of her colleagues based on the knowledge everyone has been double vaccinated and is following public health protocols.

Smith-McCrossin said she'd like to see the hybrid option remain in place for any MLAs who might need to use it.

Region: Nova Scotia ^[3]

Tags: COVID-19 ^[4]

health and safety ^[5]

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/21/10/ns-extends-vaccine-mandate-correctional-workers-regulated-child-care> [2] <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/covid-19-proof-of-vaccination-mandate-1.6198927> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7853> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9040> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/health-and-safety>