



## Personnel and Employee relations

### Policy C-19 – COVID-19 Risk Mitigation

*This policy is in effect immediately. Employees will have until **December 17, 2021** to bring themselves into compliance.*

#### BACKGROUND

COVID-19 represents an identifiable workplace hazard. COVID-19 is an acute respiratory illness caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Exposure to the virus typically occurs through: (1) inhalation of fine respiratory droplets and aerosol particles; (2) deposit of respirator droplets and particles on exposed mucous membranes in the mouth, nose, or eye by a direct splash or spray; or (3) touching mucous membranes with hands that have been soiled by virus-containing respiratory fluids (or touching surfaces with the virus on them).

Symptoms of COVID-19 include new or worsening fever, cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, sore throat, chills, painful swallowing, nasal congestion, feeling unwell/fatigued, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained loss of appetite, loss of sense of taste or smell, muscle/joint aches, headache and/or conjunctivitis (commonly known as pink eye). Asymptomatic infection is also possible. The risk of severe disease and death increases with age and is elevated in those with underlying medical conditions and those who are pregnant. Previously, younger persons have been less likely to develop serious illness or death, however, the emergence of variant strains has seen increasing hospitalization rates and death among younger age groups.

Calgary Arts Academy, a Public Charter School, has identified cases of confirmed COVID-19 infection at both campuses among the student population, notwithstanding attempts to control spread through: engineering controls which control a hazard at the source (including ventilation systems or physical barriers); administrative controls which change the way people work (including hand hygiene, other cleaning practices, social distancing and cohorting); and personal protective equipment (PPE) which control the hazard at the worker's level (such as masking and gloves). Vaccinations are also considered to be an engineering control.

#### POLICY

The Calgary Arts Academy Society Board of Directors ("the Board") is committed to providing safe and healthy learning and working environments. The Board commits to protecting students and employees from injury, illness, and accidents as required by Occupational Health and Safety legislation, the *Education Act*, and common law. Transmittable diseases, including COVID-19, are identifiable workplace hazards. Such hazards can have a detrimental effect on health and safety, school operations, student learning, employee productivity, Board costs, and employee morale. The

Board has legal obligations to take all reasonable steps to identify, eliminate, and control workplace hazards like COVID-19.

The purpose of this policy is to mitigate the risk of spread of COVID-19 infection in all Board facilities to protect staff, students, and their families from the highly contagious illness during a global pandemic.

## **DEFINITIONS**

“COVID-19” means the virus designated “coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)” or the symptoms of that virus where the context requires.

“employee” means any and every employee of the Board while such individual is performing services on behalf of the Board or on Board property.

“fully vaccinated” means receiving the required number of doses of vaccine as per Health Canada guidelines. See “vaccine” for further information.

“Human Resources” means the Human Resources Director of Calgary Arts Academy.

“policy” means Policy 14 COVID-19 Risk Mitigation.

“rapid testing” means any legitimate official testing devices authorized by the Government of Alberta.

“vaccine” means any vaccine approved by Health Canada for inoculation against COVID-19. Currently this includes: Moderna COVID-19 vaccine; Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine; AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine; Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) COVID-19 vaccine.

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all employees. It also applies to all persons carrying out duties or activities on Board property and to volunteers. Any employees newly hired to the Board on or after December 1, 2021 will require proof of vaccination or proof of rapid testing as a condition of employment.

## **TEMPORARY POLICY**

This policy is temporary. Current rates of transmission in Alberta indicate rapidly increasing numbers of individuals are exposed to COVID-19. The Board will re-evaluate the need for this policy when the government and medical authorities no longer support the identification of COVID-19 as a workplace hazard. The Board will review this policy for amendment or elimination at least every 6 months, or as deemed necessary.

## General Guidelines

1. All employees are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 no later than December 17, 2021.
2. If an employee is unable to comply with being/becoming fully vaccinated, they must comply with semi-weekly COVID-19 rapid testing requirements.
3. Any employee who requires an exemption to this policy must inform Human Resources no later than December 17, 2021.

## **APPLICATION**

The administration and application of this policy will be pursuant to administrative procedure “COVID-19 Risk Mitigation.”

**Legal Reference: Date of Approval: Date of Revision: Due for Review:**

*Alberta Human Rights Act, RSA 2000, c. A-25.5*

Nov. 8 2021 -April 20, 2022