



Public health order issued for October 12 vaccine requirement

Order shortens waiting period after second COVID-19 vaccine to seven days, provides timelines for new hires

B.C.'s Provincial Health Officer (PHO) Dr. Bonnie Henry has issued a written order confirming the requirement that workers in long-term care and assisted living to be vaccinated against COVID-19. It comes three weeks after she announced the action earlier in August.

The [Residential Care Staff COVID-19 Preventive Measures Order](#) (September 2) confirms that workers will need to receive their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine by September 13 in order to get their second dose by October 11 (28 days later) and meet the October 12 deadline for receiving two doses of the vaccine.

Public health officials have also shortened the waiting period after the second dose by a week, and pushed back the effective date of interim measures like rapid testing by a week.

A worker will now be considered vaccinated seven days after their second dose, and effective September 13 will have to undergo rapid testing on every shift until the end of the seven-day period.

The new order also requires new hires between September 13 and October 12 to have received at least one dose of the vaccine. They must receive a second dose within 35 days, and be subject to rapid testing on every shift until seven days after their second dose.

Hires after October 11 must already be vaccinated (two doses plus the seven day waiting period).

The PHO also updated the [COVID-19 Vaccination Status Information and Preventive Measures Order](#) (originally published August 20). The updated version moves the deadline for site operators/employers to upload workers' name, birthdate and Provincial Health Number (PHN) from September 1 to September 8.

The updated order also permits uploading of a worker's address in place of their PHN.

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Data collected from workers will be used by public health to analyze site-level vaccination rates, and to enforce the vaccination requirement.

The union continues to meet with government and health employers to get clarity on the employment consequences for workers who do not meet these requirements.

While health employers have taken the position that failure to comply could lead to termination, the union has asked about leaves, redeployments, or other measures that could provide workers with continued employment or the opportunity to return to the workplace at a later date.

COVID-19 vaccines have been proven to be effective in reducing the severity and transmissibility of the virus. HEU encourages members who are unvaccinated to seek out credible information on COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccines, and to get vaccinated if they are able.

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