

## Joint COVID-19 Communique to all OPSEU members

On Friday April 16<sup>th</sup>, a meeting was held to discuss concerns raised by both the Employer and the Union related to COVID-19 Vaccinations. The intent of the meeting was to look at solution focused recommendations.

In the spirit of transparency, the following will provide you with information related to the identified concerns:

Concern	Raise by:	discussion
Vaccine Hesitancy	Both Union & Employer	<p>This is a noted problem locally, provincially, federally and internationally. In general an increase in hesitancy has been noted for all vaccines over the last decade.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO believes that vaccination is an effective strategy to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and that there are individual &amp; societal benefits.</p> <p>We agreed that the provision of information about vaccination is appropriate.</p>
Proof of receiving Vaccine	Employer	<p>Employer reported that they require this information in case of outbreak/health &amp; safety in order to plan for redeployment to other homes if needed. Having the information at this time assists in planning and quick implementation if necessary. If no proof is provided, the Employer will assume the vaccine has not been received.</p> <p>Union expressed concerns of some staff that the information will be used to make transfers/redeployment for reasons other than outbreak, direction of Public Health (PH) or health and safety. Further concerns raised re: fear that personal health information may be released, e.g. who has or hasn't received a vaccine. Recommendation made to ask staff if they would like to volunteer for redeployment in case of an outbreak. This would provide staff with more control and assist with planning.</p> <p>Employer confirmed transfers/redeployment would occur as it related to outbreak, direction from PH, government directives and/or specific health and safety concerns.</p> <p>Employer agreed with the need to maintain confidentiality in regard to all Personal Health information and not disclose any information related to vaccination unless required to by PH or legislation. The employer's intent in naming the winners of the vaccine draw was not to disclose information and will ensure this does not occur in the future.</p> <p>The Local will encourage our members to submit their proof of vaccination. If you have received the vaccination and do not have proof, the employer will provide you with information on how to obtain it. It is</p>

		important to keep a copy for yourself as it may be required for other reasons in the future.
No Vaccination for reasons identified under Human Rights Code	Employer	<p>The Employer requests staff identify to Avenue II that they have declined the COVID-19 Vaccination based on a Protected Code. An accommodation will be made according to Avenue II's policy.</p> <p>It was acknowledge that if a staff does not identify the need for accommodation, the Employer will assume they have declined vaccination based on personal reasons.</p> <p>It was agreed that this decision should be made in discussion between the staff and their care provider in the case of medical needs.</p> <p>The Employer agreed that they will generally apply the principle of good faith and accept the staff's word on need for a Code based accommodation, however reserve the right to request information to substantiate the grounds on a case by case basis (eg – medical note, indicating the Health Care Provider has recommended against Covid-19 vaccination)</p>
No vaccination for other reasons	Union	<p>It was agreed that Covid-19 Vaccination is not mandatory and there will be no discipline for choosing not to receive the vaccine.</p> <p>Decisions made regarding alternatives to vaccination (see COVID-19 Vaccination policy) will be made for reasons related to directives from PH, the government and should make sense in terms of health &amp; safety, risk, outbreak situations, etc., and keep the workers job protected.</p>
COVID-19 Vaccination Policy	Union	Some concerns were raised and the Union submitted suggested changes following the meeting.
Reassignment in case of outbreak		<p>Union suggested that the Employer ask staff to identify if they would volunteer to work at a location experiencing outbreak and/or volunteer to remain at their current work environment if outbreak occurs. These workers would be utilized first where possible in outbreak situations.</p> <p>The employer agreed to send out a request for staff to identify if they would or would not agree to work at an outbreak site.</p>

We encourage staff to get vaccinated, provide proof of vaccination to the employer, speak to your manager if you are eligible for a code based accommodation, keep yourself informed and reach out to your steward or manager if you have any questions.

We also ask all staff to respect the beliefs/decisions of others even if they differ from ours. Be kind, be supportive and be safe.

Our shared goal is the health, safety and wellness of all staff and the clients.

*Silvana Cacciatore*

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