



COVID-19 Update
Technical Briefing for Media
September 29, 2021

Vaccine Rollout

Vaccine Rollout – Update (September 29)

- Total doses to date:
 - 779,898 first dose
 - 723,167 second dose
 - 1,503,065 total doses administered
- Vaccine coverage:
 - 80.3% have 1 or more doses
 - 74.4% have both doses
- About 58,000 people have not booked a first dose yet
- About 46,000 people have not booked their second dose yet

Continued Reopening

Phase 5 starts October 4

- Providing proof of full vaccination for discretionary events and activities
- Lifting physical distance requirement and formal gathering limits with proof of vaccination
- Keeping informal gathering limits
 - 25 indoors and 50 outdoors
- Keeping mandatory masking in indoor public places (includes schools)
- Increasing testing capacity to 7,500/day for next 4 weeks
- Implementing border restrictions for PEI and NFLD based on vaccine status

Public Schools

Public Schools

- Have resumed reporting the number of schools with COVID-19 exposures via daily case release; list of schools online (<https://backtoschool.ednet.ns.ca/school-exposures>)
- Notifications for school exposures:
 - Principal notifies all parents/guardians and staff by email about the exposure
 - Local and provincial unions are notified
 - Close contacts receive separate letter and PH notification
 - Advice for close contacts depends on nature of contact and vaccination status

Public Schools: Rapid Take-Home Test Kits

- Pilot program – 80,000 rapid take-home test kits (4 tests/kit = 320,000 tests) to be distributed to families with students in pre-primary through grade 6
- Make symptomatic testing more accessible and support early detection of COVID-19 in an unvaccinated population
- Detailed guidance on when and how to use the kits will be provided to families
- Distribution of the kits and information to families from the RCEs/CSAP is expected begin next week.

Proof of Full Vaccination

Proof of Full Vaccination

- Proof of full vaccination is intended to provide a layer of protection as Nova Scotia enters the fourth wave of COVID-19, as gathering limits and other requirements are lifted.
- Full vaccination means 14 days **after** second/final dose
 - ie - Day 1 is day second/final dose was received, considered fully vaccinated on Day 15
- People 12 and older must show proof of full vaccination for discretionary activities, unless they have an exception or fall into a grace period for youth. Must also show valid proof of identification:
 - drivers license
 - Passport
 - Government-issued ID card
 - health card
 - birth certificate
 - student ID card
 - Secure Certificate of Indian Status
- Businesses and organizations need to see proof of full vaccination but cannot keep a record that it was shown unless people consent
- More information about the proof of vaccination protocol: novascotia.ca/pov

Medical Exception

Six specific reasons for medical exception:

1. A history of severe allergic reaction (like anaphylaxis) after previous administration of a COVID-19 vaccine using a similar platform (mRNA or viral vector)
2. Allergy to any component of the specific COVID-19 vaccine or its container (polyethylene glycol for Pfizer's Comirnaty and Moderna's Spikevax COVID-19 vaccines)
3. A history of major venous or arterial thrombosis with thrombocytopenia following vaccination with AstraZeneca's Vaxzevria COVID-19 vaccine
4. A history of capillary leak syndrome following vaccination with AstraZeneca's Vaxzevria vaccine
5. A history of myocarditis or pericarditis after a first dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer Comirnaty or Moderna Spikevax)
6. Experiencing a serious adverse event after receiving your first dose of COVID-19 vaccine (defined as life-threatening, requires in-patient hospitalization or prolongs an existing hospitalization, results in persistent or significant disability, incapacity or in a congenital anomaly or birth defect)

Medical Exception Process

- The province has clearly communicated the exception process to health care providers.
- If you qualify, call your nurse practitioner or family doctor for an exception letter signed by the provider (if you don't have a provider, call 811)
- Canadian Centre for Vaccinology sending exception letters directly to small number of clinical trial participants
- People with exception letters must show them in place of proof of vaccination

Grace periods for youth

- Turned 12 between January 1 and October 4
 - have until December 31 to get fully vaccinated; can participate in all activities/events until then
- Turning 12 after October 4
 - have 3 months from their birthday to get fully vaccinated; can continue to participate in all activities/events until then
- Anyone who is 13-18 and has received 1 dose of vaccine has until October 26 to receive their second dose to be fully vaccinated by November 9. This only applies to sports, recreation, arts, cultural events/activities.

Enforcement

- Nova Scotia Environment, Labour, Skills and Immigration, Alcohol and Gaming, and Justice have an enforcement plan
 - Working with businesses and enforcement partners
 - Education component with increased checks and compliance efforts over the next several weeks
 - Resources and online training
- Order does allow for fines for businesses and individuals and closures can be pursued if required

New Nova Scotia COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination

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- Adopting Canadian proof of vaccination as of October 1.
- Proof of vaccination can be accessed online at novascotia.ca/proof
- QR code can be scanned with free VaxCheckNS app starting October 22
- VaxCheckNS gives green “confirmed” or red “sorry” response
- Old format or wallet-size version are still acceptable but new is preferred

COVID-19 Proof of vaccination / Preuve de vaccination contre le COVID-19

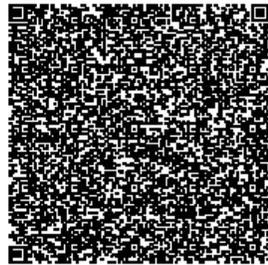
Issuing Province / Territory
Province / Territoire de délivrance

Country of issuance
Pays d'émission

Name / Nom : **Doe, Jane**
Date of birth / Date de naissance : **17 MAR / MARS 1936**

SMART Health Cards QR Code / Code QR de la carte Santé SMART



Vaccines administered / Vaccins reçus : 2

Date : **27 SEP / SEPT 2021**
Product / Produit : **MODERNA COVID-19 mRNA-1273**
Lot : **300042460**

Date : **28 JUL / JUIL 2021**
Product / Produit : **PFIZER-BIONTECH COVID-19 VACCINE mRNA**
Lot : **EL1406**

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Nova Scotia COVID-19 Vaccine Entry Service

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- As of October 4, Nova Scotia residents who received 1 or 2 doses outside the Nova Scotia COVID-19 Immunization Program can submit their information to get a Nova Scotia Proof of Vaccination – will take several weeks
- People who are eligible include:
 - permanent residents
 - anyone who received at least 1 dose in Nova Scotia
- Required information will be submitted online and includes:
 - Official proof of vaccination from province, territory, state or country where dose(s) were administered
 - Date, location, type, brand and lot number of each dose
 - Health card number or another supplied identifier
 - Government issued identification
- Can take 2 to 3 weeks to process.

Mandatory Vaccination

Mandatory Vaccinations

- A new vaccine mandate applies to:
 - Nova Scotia Health Authority and IWK Health Centre
 - workers in long-term care facilities and home-care agencies (licensed and unlicensed)
 - public school teachers, pre-primary and other school-based staff, regional and board office staff, and those providing services in schools, including cafeteria and school bus services
 - Hearing and Speech Nova Scotia
 - residential facilities and day programs funded by the Department of Community Services Disability Support Program
 - workers in facilities and those providing placements for children and youth in the care of the Minister of Community Services (excluding foster family placements)
 - paramedics, LifeFlight nurses and some other staff at EHS
 - physicians and other service providers to the above organizations; for example hairdressers and contractors
- Medical exception process

Mandatory Vaccinations (cont.)

- All employees are required to provide proof of full vaccination on or before November 30.
- Employees who choose not to be vaccinated must participate in an education program before November 30.
- If an employee is not fully vaccinated by November 30, they will be placed on unpaid administrative leave
- Vaccination status to be a hiring condition for new staff

Third Doses

Additional Doses

- As of October 15, the following people can get one additional dose of mRNA vaccine:
 - People who require it for work-related travel
 - Immunocompromised Nova Scotians
- NACI recommends that a booster dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine should be offered to long-term care residents and seniors living in other congregate settings. This dose should be provided at least 6 months after the primary series has been completed.

Additional Doses: Work-related Travel (Oct. 15)

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- One additional dose for people who are required to travel for work to a country that does not accept a mixed vaccine series to:
 - meet the entry requirements
 - avoid isolation within the country they are conducting business
- To qualify the recipient must:
 - be a Nova Scotia resident
 - provide an official copy of proof of vaccination for each of the two doses you have received
 - provide written confirmation from your employer that you are required to travel to a country as part of your job and that country does not accept a mixed vaccine series
 - provide official confirmation or documentation from the country or location of travel that a mixed vaccine series does not permit entry or requires isolation upon entry
- More information and how to apply will become available October 15.

Additional Doses: Immunocompromised (Oct. 15)

- Eligibility is based on NACI recommendations:
 - Active treatment for cancer
 - Received a solid-organ transplant and are taking immunosuppressive medication
 - Received CAR-T therapy or stem cell transplant and taking immunosuppressive medication
 - Moderate to severe primary immunodeficiency
 - Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
 - Active treatment with certain immunosuppressive therapies
- To book one additional dose people must:
 - Review the list of conditions and medications to see if they qualify
 - Meet the criteria for at least one additional dose
 - bring a list of medications and other documentation which they may have (e.g. prescription bottles, insurance notes) which shows they qualify
- More information will become available October 15.

Thank You