

# Arctic Winter Games International Committee Policy and Procedures

**NAME:** Policy on Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccines  
**APPROVED BY:** Arctic Winter Games International Committee  
**ORIGINAL APPROVAL DATE:** December 23, 2021  
**REVISION APPROVAL DATES:** **September 23, 2022**

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## PREAMBLE

Since 1970, the Games have been the catalyst for the growth of sport across the north. Held every two years, the Games are the circumpolar north's largest multi-sport event.

The Arctic Winter Games is a high-profile circumpolar sport competition for northern and arctic athletes. The Games provide an opportunity to strengthen sport development in the participants' jurisdictions, to promote the benefits of sport, to build partnerships, and to promote culture and values. The Games celebrate sport, social exchange, and cultures. The Games provide an opportunity for the developing athlete to compete in friendly competition while sharing cultural values from northern regions around the world.

The Whitehorse 2020 Arctic Winter Games were cancelled March 7, 2020, one week before the Opening Ceremony, due to the emerging risks presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. One year later, after extensive analysis by the Arctic Winter Games International Committee (AWGIC) the decision to postpone the Wood Buffalo 2022 Arctic Winter Games until January of 2023 was made.

This Policy has been developed in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic with the objective of maintaining the health and safety of Arctic Winter Games participants and other stakeholders who engage in the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games. This Policy is an evolving document and, if required, it may also be extended to the Mat-Su 2024 Arctic Winter Games and the 2026 Arctic Winter Games.

The primary stakeholders of this Policy are Participating Units, representing both permanent partners and guest units, the Host Society, as well as corporate and government partners.

The Government of Canada via Health Canada and Canada Border Services Agency are the authorities for vaccination requirements for all international guests. Up-to-date information for entry into Canada can be found at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/border-services-agency/services/arrivecan.html>

Spectators and other non-accredited individuals of the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games will be subject to the requirements of the host jurisdiction and or the respective venues used for the Games.

## DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions will apply.

**Fully vaccinated:** Having received a complete and up-to-date series (as determined by an individual's respective Government) of a Health Canada approved COVID-19 vaccine no later than 14 days prior to the start of the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games (or other timeframe required by Health Canada to be considered fully vaccinated). A list of Health Canada approved vaccines can be found here:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/covid19-industry/drugs-vaccines-treatments/vaccines.html>.

In the event that a Province/Territory/State/Nation does not have a definition of fully vaccinated or "up-to-date series of vaccines", fully vaccinated will be defined as having received at least two (2) doses of a Health Canada approved COVID-19 vaccine no later than 14 days prior to the start of the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games. The only exception is the Janssen Jcovden (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine which is a single dose vaccine and therefore only requires one dose to be considered fully vaccinated.

**Eligible individuals:** Individuals who meet the minimum eligibility requirements to receive a Health Canada approved COVID-19 vaccine in their home jurisdiction.

**Protected Grounds:** The reasons for which an individual can not be discriminated against. While each Canadian Provincial/Territorial Human Rights Code established its own grounds, they all generally contain the following: age, ancestry citizenship, colour, creed (religion), disability, ethnic origin, family status, gender identity/expression, marital status, place of origin, race, sex, sexual orientation. For the purposes of this Policy, applications for exemptions on the basis of protected grounds are limited to creed (religion) and disability (which is addressed under Medical Grounds).

**Medical Grounds:** The medical (health) reasons for which an individual is unable to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

**Participants:** Participants refers to individuals accredited for the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games as team members of a Participating Units, both permanent partners and guest units. Team members are, but not limited to, athletes, cultural performers, coaches, managers, chaperones, translators, technical support, safe sport personnel, and mission staff.

**Host Society:** Refers to individuals accredited for the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games as board members, volunteers, technical officials and staff.

**Arctic Winter Games International Committee:** Refers to members of the Board of Directors, including Shadow Directors, Operations Coordinator, and the Technical Coordinator.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The Arctic Winter Games International Committee and the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games Host Society collectively believe the best mechanism to ensure the health and safety of the Arctic Winter Games family and members of the public in host communities during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is through vaccination.

As such, eligible individuals within the accredited client groups listed below are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to attend or participate in the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games.

- Participating Unit Team Members
- Arctic Winter Games International Committee

Individuals, subject to this Policy, as listed above, who have not provided proof of vaccination and have not received an exemption will not be permitted to attend or participate in the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games.

Participating Units are responsible to ensure individuals representing their Team are aware of this Policy.

Participating Units are responsible to confirm that each team member is fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have received an exemption from the AWGIC.

The AWGIC, in conjunction with the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games Host Society, will monitor the COVID-19 pandemic, vaccination requirements, and other mitigation controls via a risk management matrix.

**NOTE:** Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games board members, volunteers, technical officials, and staff vaccination requirements are found within separate organizational policies, and are outside the scope of this Policy.

## **EXEMPTIONS**

The Arctic Winter Games International Committee will implement a review process for individuals seeking an exemption from the mandatory COVID-19 vaccine requirement.

Individuals who are granted an exemption from the requirement may be subject to additional COVID-19 mitigation measures during the Games, such as testing and quarantines.

The Arctic Winter Games International Committee, in conjunction with the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games Host Society will make accommodations for individuals who are either ineligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination, or have received an exemption on medical or protected grounds.

Participating Unit Chefs de Mission or designate will be advised of all relevant team member exemption applications.

A non-refundable exemption application administration fee of CAD250 is payable upon receipt of application to the Arctic Winter Games International Committee via electronic money transfer ([operations@arcticwintergames.org](mailto:operations@arcticwintergames.org)) or wire payment (contact [operations@arcticwintergames.org](mailto:operations@arcticwintergames.org) for banking details)

## Medical

- Individuals who are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will require an exemption prior to being accredited for the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games.
- Individuals wishing to apply for a medical exemption must complete the exemption request form and submit it, along with all supporting medical documentation to Dr. David Ariano ([dariano@me.com](mailto:dariano@me.com)), Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games Chief Medical Officer. Forms must be submitted no later than **December 23, 2022** or within 24 hours of being named to a team if named to the team after December 23, 2022.

## Non-Medical

- Individuals wishing to apply for a creed-based exemption must submit their request, with supporting documentation, in writing to Moira Lassen, Operations Coordinator ([operations@arcticwintergames.org](mailto:operations@arcticwintergames.org)) no later than **December 23, 2023** or within 24 hours of being named to a team if named to the team after December 23, 2023.
- The following information is required:
  - ✓ Name
  - ✓ Contact Information
  - ✓ Participating Unit (Team)
  - ✓ Signed letter from Commissioner of Oaths clearly stating why an exemption is required.
  - ✓ Any documentation supporting the exemption request.
  - ✓ Applications for creed-based exemptions are considered on a case-by-case basis.

**NOTE:** Leaders and members of a number of religions and religious denominations have released public statements indicating their support for the COVID-19 vaccine specifically in the interest of public health including: Islam, Roman Catholicism, Judaism, Greek Orthodox, Mennonites, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Christian Science.

In addition, a number of provincial human rights commissions have taken the position that objection to vaccination for personal reasons is not a protected ground under their respective Code and does not need to be accommodated.

## Jurisdiction

- Exemptions from the Arctic Winter Games International Committee Policy on Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccines are limited to this Policy and may not be recognized by third party entities such as airlines, Games venues or service providers who have their own mandates and exemption policies and processes.

## Public Health Measures

- Individuals who are granted an exemption from the vaccination requirement may be subject to additional public health measures, such as testing, to be determined by the Arctic Winter Games International Committee, in consultation with the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games Host Society and its Chief Medical Officer.

## Non-Compliance

- Individuals who do not provide their Chef de Mission or designated representative proof of COVID-19 vaccination and have not received an exemption from the Arctic Winter Games International Committee, will not be issued accreditation for the Wood Buffalo 2023 Arctic Winter Games.
- Should the Arctic Winter Games International Committee become aware that an accreditation was issued to an individual who is not vaccinated against COVID-19 nor received an exemption from the Arctic Winter Games International Committee, the accreditation will be revoked, along with the privileges associated with the accreditation.