

BLOSSOMING MINDS LEARNING CENTRE INC COVID VACCINE POLICY

Created: Friday, August 20, 2021

Blossoming Minds Learning Centre Inc (BMLC) is committed to safeguarding the health, wellbeing, and safety of our children and their families, our employees and their families, and the community at large. BMLC has an obligation to take all reasonable precautions to protect the health and safety of the vulnerable children placed in its care including hazards posed by infectious diseases such as COVID-19 and associated variants. BMLC is obligated to take all reasonable precautions to protect the health and safety of workers in the workplace including hazards posed by infectious diseases such as COVID-19 and associated variants.

During the pandemic BMLC is taking additional steps to protect our employees by implementing a vaccination policy based on the guidance and recommendations from the Federal Ministry of Health Public Health, Health Canada, and the Public Health Agency of Canada. The COVID vaccines are considered an effective intervention in reducing the impact and spread of Covid-19 in the workplace.

Due to the close proximity of staff to children, parents and other staff members, staff are at increased risk of contracting COVID. BMLC has for several months strongly encouraged staff to obtain Covid vaccinations, has provided time off work for staff to get vaccinated, has helped staff to obtain Covid vaccination appointments, has provided educational counselling through a doctor from Michael Garron Hospital, and for several months has been providing rapid testing 3 times weekly for staff.

Any staff not fully vaccinated **will continue to be required to undergo rapid Covid testing by BMLC 3 times weekly until the conditions for full vaccination (including a two-week period following the second vaccine) have been met.** Anyone not complying with the testing requirement will be placed on a two-week unpaid leave of absence. **A second infraction of this condition will result in termination.**

BMLC is requiring all staff to do one of the following by **September 7, 2021**:

1. Provide BMLC with proof of vaccination of at least their first COVID vaccination
2. Provide BMLC with a valid medical certificate stating the employee is unable to be vaccinated with a COVID vaccine due to a medical condition

Any staff needing reasonable assistance and/or time off work to get vaccinated will be given such by BMLC.

Any staff not complying with one of the above will be placed on a two-week unpaid leave of absence. **Following this absence, any staff placed on this leave will be required to either provide a valid medical certificate, proof of vaccination, or be terminated.**

Staff who comply by providing proof of their first vaccination **will continue to require rapid Covid testing by BMLC 3 times weekly**, and to provide proof of their second vaccination by **October 29, 2021**. Anyone not complying with the testing requirements will be placed on a two-week unpaid leave of absence. **A second infraction of this condition will result in termination.**

Anyone not providing proof of 2nd vaccination **by October 29, 2021** will be placed on a two-week unpaid leave of absence so that they may complete their second vaccination. **If they do not provide proof of the second vaccination after the leave, or a valid medical certificate, they will be terminated.**

Staff who provide a valid medical certificate will **be accommodated if possible** based on:

1. The need to protect both vulnerable children and staff
2. The operational needs of BMLC
3. Accommodation may result in changes to the individual's duties, location, and hours of work.
4. If it is not possible for BMLC to accommodate the request for medical accommodation, **the staff member has the option of taking an unpaid leave of absence.**

BMLC will continue to ensure the medical information of employees will be kept confidential. Employees and families will be reminded not to question other employees regarding their vaccination status as this information is considered confidential medical information.

Staff not presently working at BMLC due to a protected absence such as short-term layoff, leave of absence, or protected leave (maternity, disability leave, etc.) will have to provide proof of full vaccination prior to returning to work. **All new staff, visitors, students or volunteers will continue to be required to provide proof of full vaccination to BMLC prior to starting any contact with children or other staff.**

BMLC hopes that all families and household members recognize that exposure in the home presents a high risk to all of the children and adults in the Centre, and so we strongly urge all families and household members to do their part and if they have not already done so, get fully vaccinated.

This policy does not remove any of the existing COVID requirements set out by the Ministry of Education and Toronto Public Health (eg. Wearing of masks, screening etc.)

This policy may be modified at any time based on legislative changes or at the discretion of Blossoming Minds Learning Centre Inc