EMPLOYEE COVID-19 VACCINATION DIRECTIVE FAQ

The following information is meant to address questions employees may have about the University of Alberta’s COVID-19 Vaccination Directive.

| Q: What is the purpose of the University of Alberta COVID-19 Vaccination Directive? |
| A: The general purpose of the COVID-19 Vaccine Directive (Directive) is to protect the health and safety of all members of the University community and, to the extent possible, ensure the vaccination of our students and employees, the general public; preserve workforce capacity; and enable educational programming, research, and other on properties opportunities to be in-person wherever reasonably possible in the circumstances.

In addition, the University has an obligation to take reasonable steps to combat the spread of COVID-19 in our working, learning and living environments. The Directive is a foundational piece in the University’s long-term plans towards pandemic recovery, built to ensure the ongoing safety and resilience of our campus communities.

Even though almost 96% of the university’s employees are compliant with the Directive and have uploaded proof of a fully vaccinated status, COVID-19 (including the recent Omicron variant and the potential need for booster vaccinations) remains a dynamic and challenging risk that health professionals have made clear requires ongoing vigilance to protect our University community, the larger community and our healthcare system. In light of this, it is critical that the University continues to enforce compliance with the Directive.

Q: Who does this Directive apply to?
A: The Directive applies to all individuals (including, but not limited to students, employees, volunteers, contracted service providers and suppliers, tenants, visitors, and guests) who attend any University properties for any reason.

Q: Which University of Alberta locations does this Directive apply to?
A: The Directive applies to all University of Alberta properties, meaning all University campuses, University owned, operated or leased spaces, field or contractor/partner locations where University work or study are undertaken, including but not limited to:
offices; student residences; classrooms; labs; libraries; study areas; recreational and sports facilities and fields; dining halls and eateries; buildings; research lands/stations, loading areas; University vehicles; outdoor areas.

Q: **How long will the directive be in effect?**
A: The Directive came into force on **September 27, 2021**. It is scheduled for review in **September 2022**. It may be reviewed and revised sooner if circumstances warrant.

Q: **Does being fully vaccinated exempt me from pre-shift screening, wearing a mask and/or physical distancing?**
A: No. Employees who are fully vaccinated or who have an approved accommodation are still required to adhere to all other University of Alberta workplace COVID-19 hazard controls. These may change depending on public health orders and guidelines.

### Vaccine Status

Q: **What does it mean to be fully vaccinated?**
A: Fully vaccinated means a status that an individual achieves 14 days after they have received the recommended number of doses of a COVID-19 vaccine approved by Health Canada or the World Health Organization, and requires the individual to maintain the recommended number and type of vaccine doses as updated and required by Health Canada thereafter. Note that if Health Canada requires booster doses, those will be required to achieve/maintain fully vaccinated status.

Q: **What is my deadline to become fully vaccinated?**
A: To be considered Fully Vaccinated by November 1, 2021, you must have received your second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine approved by Health Canada or the World Health Organization by no later than October 18, 2021.

Employees working remotely were granted an extension to January 4, 2022, to comply with the Directive. To be considered Fully Vaccinated by January 4, 2022, you must have received your second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine approved by Health Canada or the World Health Organization by no later than **December 20, 2021**.

Q: **Do I need to provide proof that I’ve been fully vaccinated?**
A: Yes. All faculty and staff are required to upload their proof of vaccination to receive a CampusReady pass.

Q: **How do I provide proof that I’m fully vaccinated?**
A: Individuals can verify their vaccination status using electronic or paper records of their vaccination receipt. In Alberta, official vaccination records are available on [MyHealth Records](#).
A: All employees must be fully vaccinated regardless of whether they have had COVID-19. You are also not considered fully vaccinated until 14 days after you have received the recommended number of doses of a COVID-19 vaccine approved by Health Canada or the World Health Organization.

Q: I am currently working from home. Why do I need to be fully vaccinated?

A: A temporary current arrangement to work from home does not create an exemption from the vaccination requirements in the Directive, nor is it permitted as a specific response to the Directive.

Most employees currently working from home are doing so pursuant to a temporary arrangement, may need to attend work in person for a variety of different reasons, and are subject to be called back to work in person at any time either temporarily or permanently. Such an employee cannot be in a situation where they are required to attend in person and are not fully vaccinated. In addition, it significantly hinders planning and resource deployment if the University is unable to have such a person available to return to the workplace when required on relatively short notice.

An employee's preference to stay working from home is not a means to address the requirements of the Directive. Certain employees who are not in the above-described situation may be able to defer compliance with the Directive, though the University will need to receive and consider such a request at its discretion and subject to any additional terms it may deem appropriate. No employee is permitted to unilaterally decide to work or continue to work remotely for any reason.

Rapid Testing

Q: I am currently on an approved accommodation and I am required to participate in weekly rapid testing as part of my accommodation. Will rapid testing still be available to me after January 4, 2022?

A: If you are on an approved accommodation and are required to participate in weekly rapid testing, then rapid testing will still be available to you as part of your accommodation.

Q: I am not willing to disclose my vaccination status or I am unvaccinated, why can't I participate in weekly rapid testing?

A: Rapid testing is only available for persons with an approved human rights-based accommodation which exempts them from the vaccination requirement set out in the Directive. In the absence of a human rights-based exemption, the Directive requires employees to be fully vaccinated and to provide proof of their vaccination status.
Q: If I require an exemption because I am unable to be vaccinated due to a medical reason or for another protected ground under the Human Rights Act what should I do?

A: If you cannot comply with the vaccination requirements on the basis of any ground protected by the Alberta Human Rights Act, you may apply for accommodation.

If you are awaiting a decision regarding an accommodation request, you will be required to comply with the University’s COVID-19 rapid testing requirements, in order to be permitted on University properties.

Q: How do I request an accommodation and is this process confidential?

A: Medical Accommodation:
First inform your manager you will be seeking an accommodation. Then contact Human Resources, Health, Safety and Environment at recovery@ualberta.ca or 780-492-0636 to review your situation.

In your application, you will be asked to provide medical evidence speaking to the specific reason why you are medically prevented from complying with the Directive (or otherwise supporting any different accommodation you are seeking), and any relevant work related restrictions/limitations.

Permanent Medical Accommodations for Employees | Human Resources, Health, Safety and Environment

Non-Medical Accommodation:
Review your accommodation needs with your manager. You will need to provide detailed information addressing why you are unable to comply with the Directive (or otherwise supporting any different accommodation you are seeking), how that relates to a protected human rights ground specifically, and any work related restrictions/limitations.
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeGd2lJymdyi8AwnboPIhqTXyYySeVN5Gzvy8hbWjCNRX-CrQ/viewform

Q: Is personal objection/opinion a valid basis for an accommodation exempting me from the Directive?

A: No, it is not.

Non-Compliance

Q: What if I am not fully vaccinated or I choose not to get vaccinated?

A: Effective January 4, 2022, ALL employees (faculty and staff), regardless of work location, who have not submitted their proof of vaccination or have not received an approved exemption or an approved deferral letter, will be placed on a non-disciplinary leave without pay.
Continued non-compliance may subsequently result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Q: Can I request an exemption from the Directive other than for human rights-based reasons?
A: No, the Directive applies to all employees of the University of Alberta except those with a valid need for accommodation on human rights grounds.

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**Privacy**

Q: Is my vaccination information confidential?
A: Vaccination information, including but not limited to proof of vaccination, vaccination status, requests for accommodation, and results of rapid testing, is collected, used, and stored in accordance with the University's obligations under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (Alberta) and will only be used and disclosed in accordance with that legislation, including but not limited to the purposes of the University (including its administrators and managers with a need to know) determining and addressing whether there has been a breach or satisfaction of this Directive, whether an individual is permitted to attend on properties as set out herein, and to address health and safety concerns on properties including whether additional or different safety protocols are necessary in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak or otherwise.

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**NEW SECTION Leave without Pay**

Q: I am currently working from home and have been since the start of the pandemic. If I am not yet scheduled to come to campus, why am I being placed on a non-disciplinary leave without pay effective January 4, 2022?
A: A temporary arrangement to work from home does not create an exemption from the Directive requirements, nor is it permitted as a specific response to the Directive.

Most employees working from home are doing so pursuant to a temporary arrangement and are subject to be called back to work in person at any time either temporarily or permanently. As such, an employee is required to be able to attend in person when requested.

Based on the above, effective January 4, 2022, if you are not compliant with the Directive and have not been approved to temporarily defer your compliance any further, you will be placed on a non-disciplinary leave without pay.

Q: If I am placed on a leave without pay, what happens to my benefits?
A: Non-Academic Employees:

Benefits:
If you wish to continue your benefits, you are required to make arrangements to
pre-pay 100% of your benefit premiums by completing and returning the Continuation Benefits Form no later than end of day on January 7, 2022.

How to access the Benefit Continuation Form:

Benefit Continuation Form

Upon completing the benefit Continuation Form, please submit the form to the Staff Service Centre at uab.ca/staffsrv

Academic Employees:
Benefits:
If you wish to continue your benefits, you are required to make arrangements to pre-pay 100% of your benefit premiums by completing and returning the Continuation Benefits Form no later than end of day on January 7, 2022.

How to access the Benefit Continuation Form:

Benefit Continuation Form

Upon completing the benefit Continuation Form, please submit the form to the Staff Service Centre at uab.ca/staffsrv

Failure to complete the Continuation of Benefits form by end of day on January 7, 2022, will result in your benefits being suspended until such time you are eligible to return to work.

Long Term Disability (LTD):
While on a leave without pay, participation in this benefit is mandatory. You are required to prepay 100% of the cost of LTD premiums.

Discontinuation of coverage is only permitted if you sign a waiver form to the effect that, during the leave of absence, you are covered by another long term disability benefit program.

Upon completing the waiver, please submit the waiver to the Staff Service Centre at uab.ca/staffsrv

Q: I need assistance with my benefits from the Staff Service Centre, how can I contact them?

A: You can contact the Staff Service Centre via email at uab.ca/staffsrv or you can contact them by phone by calling 7880 492 8000.

Please note: the Staff Service Centre will be closed from Saturday, December 25, 2021 to Monday, January 3, 2022. Requests submitted after December 24 will be reviewed when they reopen in January.
Q: If I am placed on a non-disciplinary leave without pay, what happens to my Pension?

A: **Non-Academic Employees (if applicable):**
Service during leave without pay is pensionable and you will have the option of purchasing the service upon return to work subject to the applicable Pension Plan and Canada Income Tax rules.

**Academic Employees (if applicable):**
Service during the leave without pay is pensionable and you will have the option of purchasing the service upon return to work subject to the Universities Academic Pension Plan and Canada Income Tax rules.

Q: If I am being placed on a non-disciplinary leave without pay can I use my personal leave, vacation, or banked time?

A: **Non-Academic:**
At this time you are not eligible to use Personal Leave, Vacation, or Banked Time, however, upon providing proof of a fully vaccinated status through the [CampusReady system](#), you may request a vacation payout.

**Academic:**
In accordance with the collective agreement, you are not eligible for a vacation payout.

Q: If I am placed on a non-disciplinary leave without pay, when will I be eligible to return to work?

A: You are eligible to return to work upon complying with the Directive, which includes meeting the requirement to provide proof of a fully vaccinated status through the [CampusReady system](#).

Continued non-compliance may subsequently result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Q: Am I still eligible for Winter Closure if I am placed on a non-disciplinary leave without pay?

A: If you are eligible to observe Winter Closure, being placed on a non-disciplinary leave without pay (LWOP) will not impact your eligibility.

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**Contact Information**

Q: I have more questions. Who can I contact?

A: Employees should contact their manager.

Managers should contact their HR Service Partner.
If you are unsure of who your HR Service Partner is, please refer to the Contact Us | Human Resources, Health, Safety and Environment.

General Inquiries COVID-19: U of A Public Health Response Team, phrtinfo@ualberta.ca

Q: I am feeling stressed. What supports are available to me?

A:  
- [Getting Through the Pandemic](https://ualberta.ca/human-resources-health-safety-environment) | Human Resources, Health, Safety and Environment
- [Injury and Illness](https://ualberta.ca/human-resources-health-safety-environment) | Human Resources, Health, Safety and Environment
- [Employee and Family Assistance Program](https://ualberta.ca/human-resources-health-safety-environment) | Human Resources, Health, Safety and Environment

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### Additional Support Resources

- [Academic Accommodations](https://ualberta.ca/human-resources-health-safety-environment)
- [Permanent Medical Accommodations for Employees](https://ualberta.ca/human-resources-health-safety-environment) | Human Resources, Health, Safety and Environment
- [Getting Through the Pandemic](https://ualberta.ca/human-resources-health-safety-environment) | Human Resources, Health, Safety and Environment
- [Employee and Family Assistance Program](https://ualberta.ca/human-resources-health-safety-environment) | Human Resources, Health, Safety and Environment
- [Vaccinations and Rapid Testing at the U of A](https://ualberta.ca/covid-19) | COVID-19 Information
- [COVID-19 Vaccination Directive](https://ualberta.ca/covid-19) | COVID-19 Information