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Subject: CASLPO Practice Advice Answers - Ontario News Release: Ontario to require proof of vaccination in select settings



College of Audiologists and
Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
Ordre des audiologistes et
des orthophonistes de l'Ontario

September 3, 2021

To: All CASLPO Registrants (Please share with CASLPO Colleagues)

On September 1, 2021, the government of Ontario published a News Release: *Ontario to Require Proof of Vaccination in Select Settings*. The CASLPO Practice Advice team has been receiving important questions. Here are the answers to the **three most commonly asked questions**, at this time.

We encourage you to regularly review the websites of the [Ministry of Health](#) and [Public Health Ontario \(PHO\)](#) for the most accurate, up-to-date information.

1. What do I do as an employer? Can I require employees to be vaccinated?

Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health's [Directive #6 for Public Hospitals within the meaning of the Public Hospitals Act, Service Providers in accordance with the Home Care and Community Services Act, 1994](#) mandates that vaccination policies be put in place for employees who work in hospitals, home care provision and paramedic services ("Covered Organizations"), with:

- a) "proof of full vaccination"
- b) "written proof of a medical reason..."
- c) "proof of completion of an educational session... about the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination".

You may find the [Directive #6 - Resource Guide](#) useful in the development of a policy. Both the policy and resource guide outline **minimum** requirements.

Additionally, on August 17, 2021, the Ontario government in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health announced: [Ontario](#)

[Makes COVID-19 Vaccination Policies Mandatory for High-Risk Settings](#), which states the expectation that vaccination policies be implemented in higher-risk settings such as:

- “licensed retirement homes”
- “congregate group homes and day programs for adults with developmental disabilities, children’s treatment centres and other services for children with special needs and licensed children’s residential settings”.

The Ministry of Health is encouraging organizations that are not covered by Directive 6, like private practices and school boards, to implement vaccination policies that are similar to the Directive.

Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists may choose to enroll in the province’s rapid antigen screening program. More information is here: [Provincial Antigen Screening Program | COVID-19 \(coronavirus\) in Ontario](#).

2. **Can I ask my patients if they’ve been vaccinated?**

Yes - You may ask patients about their vaccination status, but they are not required to answer. Audiologists and speech-language pathologists are required to continue to provide services irrespective of a patient’s vaccination status and following the [Pandemic Practice Advisories](#).

3. **Can I only see patients who are double vaccinated?**

No – **Patients are to be seen regardless of vaccination status.** Appropriate precautions are needed in all circumstances, including COVID-19 screenings, Point of Care Risk Assessment, and use of PPE. Continue to use your professional judgement for the most appropriate service delivery – providing virtual care or in-person services. As above, refer to the [Pandemic Practice Advisories](#) for additional guidance.

If you have further questions about Directive #6 and your practice you may contact the Ministry’s Health Care Provider Hotline at 1- 866-212-2272 or by email at emergencymanagement.moh@ontario.ca.

As the pandemic continues to evolve, the provincial and federal government continue to update their resources. Please visit websites often.

If you have questions, please contact us at: [Practice Advice Team](#)

Stay Safe. Stay Healthy!

Brian O’Riordan
Registrar

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