

POSITION STATEMENT

March of Dimes Canada Clients Services – COVID-19 Vaccination

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to put significant stress on the Canadian healthcare system, on the Canadian economy, and on the physical and mental health of all Canadians. Despite having a high rate of vaccination in Canada, the highly contagious COVID-19 variants continue to evolve and are responsible for alarming rates of infection in Canada and globally.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic declared by the World Health Organization, March of Dimes Canada (MODC) has consistently followed public health guidance and evidence-based recommendations to reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure and transmission in our service delivery and work environments.

As a leading national service provider, resource, and advocate for people with disabilities, MODC recognizes the need to do everything we can to protect the health and safety of our clients, volunteers, staff, and our community. MODC is also committed to upholding its obligations under applicable provincial occupational health and safety legislation. That is why MODC implemented a mandatory vaccination policy for all MODC employees, volunteers, and students. The policy mandates that these individuals must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, with a Health Canada-approved vaccine.

All MODC employees, volunteers and students are also required to maintain all applicable pre-shift screening protocols, mandatory masking, physical distancing, and cleaning/disinfecting protocols throughout all locations and services. Although provinces are lifting restrictions in public places, MODC will continue to follow infection prevention and control practices by keeping the protocols applicable to high-risk settings.

Position

As COVID-19 vaccines have been demonstrated to be safe and effective in reducing the spread and impact of COVID-19 infections, MODC supports vaccination against COVID-19 and strongly recommends that all clients, caregivers, and other stakeholders engaging in programs and services offered by MODC get vaccinated, including the boosters.

Clients, caregivers, and other stakeholders wishing to participate in in-person activities or services offered by MODC will not be asked to provide proof of vaccination prior to participation, however they will be asked to complete a COVID-19 symptom screener. If they fail the screener, the individual will be asked to participate in virtual programming where available, and not attend in person activities until they are able to pass the screener and have followed all safety measures precautions outlined by their local public health office and by MODC.

When participating in in-person activities or services offered by MODC, clients, caregivers, and stakeholders will also be required to wear a mask (unless exempted by a medical professional), adhere to physical distancing requirements, and practice hand hygiene.

We are all accountable to ourselves and our communities. We wish to provide a safe environment for our clients, caregivers, staff, volunteers, students and other stakeholders, and hope that we can work together to do so.