

Mandatory COVID-19 Testing Policy

BACKGROUND

St. Francis Xavier University is committed to protecting our students, employees, and our local community from COVID-19. Although vaccinations have reduced the risk of individuals contracting COVID-19, new variants create an increased risk of transmission and illness. The University, in accordance with Provincial Public Health regulations and guidelines, continues to implement policies and practices aimed at safeguarding the campus community.

The message shared by local and national public health officials has been clear: the COVID-19 vaccine is our path towards a return to normalcy. With this in mind, we encourage all students and employees to get their two doses of an approved COVID-19 vaccine at first opportunity.

As an additional step in the overall COVID-19 Response Plan, the University is implementing a mandatory COVID-19 testing policy for all students and employees.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all students and employees.

POLICY STATEMENT

Commencing on October 14, 2021, all students and employees are required to be tested for COVID-19 twice a week, with tests being at least 48 hours apart.

Those that have been vaccinated for at least two weeks with two doses of a vaccine approved by the federal government (or a single dose of the J&J vaccine) are exempt from testing ("Vaccine Exempt").

NOTE: International Students who have a WHO approved vaccine, are considered fully vaccinated. This includes Sinopharm or Sinovac.

PROCEDURES

- Students and employees who are not Vaccine Exempt must attend the University's Testing Clinic located at the Keating Centre on their scheduled time.
- A confidential list of all students and employees who have received tests with their results will be maintained by the University.

- The University will not make any inquiries as to the reason why individuals being tested are not vaccinated.
- The tests used by the University are approved by Provincial Public Health and may change from time to time based on emerging information and guidance. The tests are a non-invasive, self-administered swab screening test.
- If an individual tests positive, they must:
 - immediately self-isolate
 - contact the University at covidtest@stfx.ca for further information and instructions
 - contact the Provincial Assessment Centre to schedule further testing
 - Employees must notify their immediate supervisor or Dean
 - students must also contact isolate@stfx.ca for information and assistance regarding isolation
- Students who provided proof of full vaccination through the Nova Scotia Safe Check-in form before arrival in Antigonish will not need to provide proof to the university.
- All students are required to upload proof of full vaccination to the University's E-Rez system to be granted Vaccine Exempt status.
- All employees must present proof of vaccination to the University's Human Resources Department to be granted Vaccine Exempt status. Details on time/place to present proof of vaccination will be provided to the Campus Community.
- Vaccination records and information on vaccination status will be maintained for the sole purpose of administering this policy and will be stored in a secured manner with restricted access.

ACCOMODATION

Any individual who cannot be tested based on protected grounds recognized by the Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act* can request an accommodation through the Human Rights & Equity Office.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THIS POLICY

- Failure to Comply means an individual refuses to get tested as required by this Policy and is not Vaccine Exempt and does not have an approved accommodation.
- Employees who Fail to Comply will receive a written warning. If non-compliance continues after two written warnings, the employee will be placed on an unpaid leave of absence and will be required to pay 100% of their benefits during their period of unpaid leave. The unpaid leave will continue until such time as the either the employee agrees to participate in the testing program or they are fully vaccinated.
- Students who Fail to Comply will receive a written warning on the first offence. On the second offence the student will be required to meet with Student Life and create a testing schedule to which they must adhere. If non-compliance continues the student will be subject to suspension

through the University's Code of Conduct or will be permitted to withdraw from the University without financial penalty.

- Other breaches of this Policy will be addressed by the University's Code of Conduct for students and by the Human Resources Department for employees.

REVISION

This Policy will be reviewed and potentially revised in accordance with emerging information from the Department of Health and in accordance with Covid-19 trends on campus, in the Community and in the Province.

This Policy will continue to be in operation until such time as it is officially revoked by the University.