



Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health



Public Guidelines for Request for Reconsideration (Exemption) Process affected by the Provincial Health Officer Proof of Vaccination Orders¹

November 12, 2021

The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) has issued *Gatherings and Events & Food and Liquor Serving Premises Orders* under the *Public Health Act* that require individuals 12 and older to provide proof of vaccination against COVID-19 to access [certain INSIDE activities or events](#). Implementation of these Orders is supported by the [Proof of Vaccination and the BC Vaccine Card program](#).

The purpose of these Orders is to mitigate public health risks associated with transmission and outbreaks of the serious communicable disease known as COVID-19 by preventing and reducing the risk of infection in community settings. These orders are intended to reduce COVID-19 case rates, outbreaks, hospitalizations, critical care admissions, and deaths, protect people who cannot be vaccinated and those whose level of protection may be lowered due to age or immunocompromise, and protect our healthcare system.

For these reasons it is important that people who do not have a medical deferral be vaccinated. For those who are not yet vaccinated, alternatives to these activities or events are available, including taking out meals, exercising outdoors, or participating in an event virtually.

Under section 43 of the *Public Health Act*, a person who is subject to an Order of the Provincial Health Officer can submit a request for reconsideration (exemption) from an Order's requirements.

These guidelines provide some general principles for requests for reconsideration of these Orders. If you would like the PHO to depart from these general principles in considering your request, please explain why. If you have questions about this process, please contact the Office of the Provincial Health Officer at the contact information below, with the subject line "Requests for Reconsideration Question".

Process to submit a request for reconsideration (exemption)

Submitting an exemption request does not guarantee that you will receive an exemption.

¹ *Gatherings and Events Order and Food and Liquor Serving Premises Order*



A request for reconsideration from a person seeking an exemption from the requirement to be vaccinated or to provide proof of vaccination should follow these guidelines and be made on the basis that the health of the person would be seriously jeopardized if the person were to comply with Order.

Exemptions will generally only be considered for one type of activity or event, or recurring activities or events, per request.

To be considered for an exemption, you will likely have had a dose of vaccine and have experienced a serious adverse event or have a pre-existing medical condition that warrants being exempted for a period of time. It is important to note that being exempted from a PHO order requirement is not equivalent to a permanent deferral from vaccination. Some people for whom a vaccination deferral has been recommended may be able to get a dose at a later date. If you have been granted an exemption to a PHO vaccination or proof of vaccination requirement, and you do get vaccinated at a later date, you should notify the PHO at the contact information below to update your exemption status.

Conditions that could warrant an exemption include ²:

1. Anaphylaxis to components of both mRNA and adenovirus vector vaccine (i.e., polyethylene glycol and polysorbate 80) that has been confirmed by a qualified allergist who offers testing and graded dose administration procedures.
2. Receipt of anti SARS-CoV-2 monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma for treatment or prevention of COVID-19 (except tocilizumab or sarilumab).
3. Diagnosis of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome.
4. Medical practitioner-diagnosed myocarditis or pericarditis following the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine with no other cause identified.
5. Serious adverse event following first dose of COVID-19 vaccine awaiting recommendation for further vaccination by the medical health officer. Serious adverse events are those that required urgent medical care, resulted in hospitalization, or permanent disability.
6. Serious adverse event following first dose of vaccine not yet reported to the medical health officer.
7. Serious adverse event following a dose of vaccine and recommendation by the medical health officer to not receive further doses.

² Based on expert advice from BC Centre for Disease Control, BC public health officials, and allergy specialists.



To submit a medical exemption request, follow these directions:

For people who experienced a serious adverse reaction to COVID-19 vaccination

1. If you experienced a serious adverse reaction to a dose of vaccine that could warrant an exemption, you should have reported the reaction to the health care provider or representative of the health care organization that gave you the vaccination, and you should have received a recommendation from a medical health officer.

If you did not report the reaction, then the first step is to report that event to your health care provider or representative of the health care organization that gave you the vaccination, who needs to report the reaction to the medical health officer. You should also confirm that your health care provider reported your reaction to the medical health officer and wait for a recommendation from a medical health officer. Your health care provider should complete and submit a COVID-19 vaccine adverse event report using the form located [here](#).

2. If you have received a recommendation from a medical health officer about your reaction, or once you receive a recommendation after the reaction has been reported to a medical health officer, then send that information to the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, as described below.

For people who have a medical condition that warrants consideration of an exemption

1. You need to have a medical practitioner (a registrant of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia) or nurse practitioner (a registrant of the British Columbia College of Nurse and Midwives) fill out [the medical deferral form](#) and give it back to you so that you can submit it to the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, as described below.
2. Your request must be accompanied by [the medical deferral form](#) supporting the request.

Information to be submitted

You must submit the request package with the subject line **Request for Reconsideration about Proof of Vaccination** and the following information:

1. Your name and contact information
2. The activity(ies) or events you wish to participate in, and the date(s) and city of the activity(ies), estimated number of participants, whether you and other participants will be using a mask.



3. How you are negatively impacted by not participating in the activity or event and why alternatives to that activity (e.g., ordering food to take out, attending virtually) are insufficient, and the reasons you seek an exemption to attend in person. This information will provide officials with an understanding of your situation when they review your exemption request and consider whether the risk of infection arising from your participation in an activity or event might be safely managed.
4. If you have been informed by a medical health officer that you should not receive additional doses of a COVID-19 vaccine due to an adverse event following immunization, submit a copy of the letter from the medical health officer indicating that you should not receive additional doses of COVID-19 vaccine.
5. If needed to support an exemption request in relation to a medical condition, the COVID-19 Vaccine Medical Deferral form filled out, signed, and dated by a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner who assessed you.
6. Your preferred method of response i.e. email, mail, fax.

Submit the request by mail, fax or email to:

Office of the Provincial Health Officer

PO Box 9648 STN PROV GOVT, Victoria BC V8W 9P4

Fax: (250) 952-1570

Email: PHOExemptions@gov.bc.ca

Note: The PHO recommends that personal information sent using a password protected email and send the password by separate email.

After you submit an exemption request

1. You will be notified of receipt of your exemption request.
2. If your request is incomplete, you will be contacted to provide additional information to continue the review process.
3. Your request may be assessed by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, and/or it may be referred to the local medical health officer.
4. Once a decision has been made by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer or the local medical health officer you will be notified.



5. If an exemption is granted, you will be notified in writing of the exemption and be provided with written instructions and directions, as appropriate.
6. An exemption may contain instructions or directions about what you must do in order to reduce the risk of infection at an activity or event, you must follow those instructions or directions.
7. If you have been granted an exemption to PHO requirements, and you do get vaccinated at a later date, you should notify the PHO to update your exemption contacting the PHO as above.

