



College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia

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How to verify a legitimate COVID-19 vaccine exemption or deferral

The College has received reports of illegitimate COVID-19 vaccine exemption and deferral letters circulating in the community that are being used by British Columbians who cannot show proof of vaccine through the BC Vaccine Card. In light of this, the College is issuing this guidance to assist members of the public who may be required to determine whether a vaccine exemption or deferral letter was legitimately issued by a physician.

Valid reasons for an exemption or deferral

According to the provincial health officer, the reasons outlined in the [deferrals to COVID-19 vaccination table](#) are the only valid reasons for a COVID-19 exemption or deferral. Legitimate exemption or deferral letters must state one of these valid reasons.

Other important information to look for

Legitimate vaccine exemption or deferral documents issued by a physician must also have the following.

- The patient's full name.
- The issuing physician's name and signature (digital signatures are not valid).

Who can issue vaccine exemptions and deferrals in BC?

Only physicians licensed and registered with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC and nurse practitioners licensed and registered with the [BC College of Nurses and Midwives](#) can issue vaccine exemptions and deferrals in BC.

A physician's registration status can be verified on the College's [registrant directory](#).

**This form can be completed only by a physician (M.D.) or nurse practitioner**

Last Name of Client	First Name of Client	Birthdate (YYYY / MM / DD)	Personal Health Number (PHN)
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Medical reason(s) for temporary deferral

(See overleaf for further information)

<input type="checkbox"/> Anaphylaxis to components of both mRNA and adenovirus vector vaccine (i.e., polyethylene glycol and polysorbate 80)	Refer to a qualified allergist for further management and periodic re-evaluation or consideration for desensitization
<input type="checkbox"/> Receipt of anti SARS-CoV-2 monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma for treatment or prevention of COVID-19 (except tocilizumab or sarilumab)	Defer for at least 90 days Expiration/ reassessment date (Month/Day/Year): _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Diagnosis of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome	Defer until fully recovered from illness and for 90 days after the date of diagnosis Expiration/ reassessment date (Month/Day/Year): _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Physician-diagnosed myocarditis or pericarditis following the first dose with no other cause identified	Defer until further information about the risk of recurrence is available. This event is reportable to the MHO.
<input type="checkbox"/> Serious adverse event following first dose of vaccine reported to the medical health officer (MHO) and awaiting recommendation for further vaccination by a MHO.	Defer until MHO recommendation is available.
<input type="checkbox"/> Serious adverse event following first dose of vaccine not yet reported to the MHO	Complete and submit a COVID-19 vaccine adverse event report using the form located here .

I, _____, **attest that proceeding with COVID-19 immunization for this individual would seriously jeopardize their health**

Print name of health care provider (first, last)

Signature of Health Care Provider	Date Signed (YYYY / MM / DD)
Address	Phone Number

**For more information refer to the BC Immunization Manual, [Part 4: Biological Products - COVID-19 vaccines](#):
<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/communicable-disease-control-manual/immunization>**

Please submit this form to the Provincial Health Officer at PHOExemptions@gov.bc.ca.

It is recommended to send using a password protected email and send the password by separate email.

Subject line should read: **Request for Reconsideration about Preventive Measures**

Personal information collected on this form is collected under the authority of Order of the Provincial Health Officer Orders and will be used by the Provincial Health Officer to determine exemptions from the Orders. The information will be used and disclosed in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. If you have any questions about the collection and use of this personal information, contact PHOExemptions@gov.bc.ca, with the subject line with the subject line "Requests for Reconsideration Questions".

Deferrals to COVID-19 Vaccination

For support of exemption requests under the Provincial Health Officer Orders

Vaccine Type	Deferral
<p>COVID-19 mRNA vaccines (Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>COVID-19 viral vector vaccine (AstraZeneca)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 Receipt of anti SARS-CoV-2 monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma for treatment or prevention of COVID-19 (except tocilizumab or sarilumab) – defer for at least 90 days Diagnosis of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome – defer until fully recovered from illness and for 90 days after the date of diagnosis Physician-diagnosed myocarditis or pericarditis following the first dose with no other cause identified – defer until further information about the risk of recurrence is available. This event is reportable to the MHO. Serious* adverse event following first dose of vaccine awaiting recommendation for further vaccination by the Medical Health Officer

The following are NOT contraindications to COVID-19 vaccination:

- Anaphylaxis to a previous dose of mRNA or adenovirus vector vaccine that has been confirmed by a qualified allergist. Such individuals may receive their 2nd dose using vaccine of the different type or undergo graded dose administration of the original vaccine type under allergist supervision.
- Anaphylaxis to any component of one type of vaccine that has been confirmed by a qualified allergist. Such individuals may receive vaccine of the different type or undergo graded dose administration of the original vaccine type under allergist supervision.
- History of non-anaphylactic reaction or suspected hypersensitivity to a component of the vaccine. Such individuals may receive vaccine of the different type that does not contain the same component, or may be immunized in a clinic prepared to deal with potential hypersensitivity reactions including anaphylaxis. Such patients should be observed for an extended 30 minute monitoring period post vaccination.
- History of thrombosis with thrombocytopenia following a previous dose of an adenovirus vector COVID-19 vaccine. Such individuals may receive mRNA vaccine pending advice of the involved hematologist.
- History of capillary leak syndrome. Such individuals may receive mRNA vaccine.
- History of cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST) with thrombocytopenia, unrelated to adenovirus vector COVID-19 vaccination, or heparin induced thrombocytopenia (HIT). Such individuals may receive mRNA vaccine.
- Immunocompromised and those with autoimmune disorders: such individuals may respond less well to vaccines if immunocompromised but COVID-19 vaccines are not live vaccines and are safe for such individuals.
- Pregnancy: pregnant women benefit from COVID-19 vaccination. The vaccine is not contraindicated for use at any stage of pregnancy or when breastfeeding.

* Serious AEFI are those that required urgent medical care, resulted in hospitalization, or permanent disability.

Any deferral related to an adverse event following immunization (AEFI) with COVID-19 vaccine must be reported for evaluation through the formal process for public health review and recommendations for subsequent doses.