

November 5, 2021

Earlier this week, the BC Ferry & Marine Workers' Union and BC Ferries advised you of Transport Canada's Interim Order No. 7, *Respecting Passenger Vessel Restrictions Due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)*. Today we're writing to share details of BC Ferries' new COVID-19 Vaccination Policy and provide you with some of the steps you will be requested to take, one of which is by **November 10**.

Despite the precautions already in place to face this pandemic, COVID-19 continues to circulate in B.C. communities. Public health and the health and safety of our entire BC Ferries family is of paramount importance. That's why BC Ferries is implementing a company-wide vaccination policy. BC Ferries and BC Ferry & Marine Workers' Union are committed to following all health and safety protocols and doing our part to maintain access to critical health care services for those in need.

The new policy covers everyone including contractors and third parties working for or on behalf of BC Ferries – it complies with and exceeds Transport Canada's Interim Order and aligns with other transit agencies in British Columbia. BC Ferries believes implementing a company-wide mandatory vaccination policy is the right thing to do to protect everyone who works for BC Ferries. The policy doesn't cover passengers.

In short:

- All employees need to attest their vaccination status by November 10, 2021.
- Ship-based employees and employees boarding vessels must be fully vaccinated and provide proof by January 24, 2022.
- All other employees, administrative and shore-based employees, must be fully vaccinated by February 28, 2022.
- Employees who do not provide attestations or are not fully vaccinated and have not been granted accommodation from Employee Relations, will be placed on leave without pay. This is a matter on which the parties do not currently agree.

Detailed information will be issued shortly by the special Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), the group that is coordinating all aspects of policy rollout. Please read the information and instructions carefully so you can attest to your vaccination status and provide proof. Receiving full workforce attestation information as quickly as possible allows us to work together to minimize workforce impacts. You may complete your attestation through [Employee Self Serve \(ESS\)](#) or manually by paper form.

BC Ferries acknowledges that some employees may not want to disclose their vaccination status. BC Ferries is required to collect employee vaccination information to comply with Transport Canada's Interim Order No. 7, which puts onerous reporting requirements on employers if they do not implement a company-wide vaccination policy.

Deliberate implementation of the policy mandate will be in two phases. The first phase is to comply with Transport Canada regulatory requirements while giving consideration to individual accommodation requests. The second phase will focus

on all other workers, again giving consideration to individual accommodation requests.

We anticipate some employees may choose not to get vaccinated. If so, we will do everything we can to mitigate service interruptions and workforce impacts.

Over the past several weeks the company and BC Ferry & Marine Workers' Union have worked together to lay the foundation for minimizing workforce impacts. Everyone is firmly committed to maintaining the health and safety of our workforce, our customers, and the communities we serve. At this time, the company does not require passengers be vaccinated. Individual circumstances will be evaluated against guidance that has been provided by Transport Canada on limited grounds for accepting accommodations for employees in regulated positions. The complete BC Ferries vaccination policy is available to all employees on the Intranet <https://access.bcferries.com/Safety/covid-19/default.asp> and will soon be in your email inbox.

BC Ferry & Marine Workers' Union and BC Ferries acknowledge there are various perspectives on the sensitive topic of vaccinations. There are many resources to support employees who are uncertain. In addition to already available resources, on December 1, BC Ferries employees will have access to additional virtual health services including access to counselling support. The emotional and mental health support already in place remains available for our workforce through Homewood health 1-800-663-1142 [homeweb.ca](http://homeweb.ca).

For those of you who are already fully vaccinated, thank you. For those of you who are uncertain, we support you. As always, if you have any questions, reach out to your local Employee Relations office and Union representative.

This is another step in the fight against COVID-19. Please continue to use the many safeguards in place including the safety protocols that have served us so well through the pandemic. By using the tools available to us, we will come through this together.



Mark Collins  
*President & CEO*  
BC Ferries



Eric McNeely  
*Provincial President*  
BC Ferry & Marine Workers' Union