



COVID-19 BULLETIN – SEPTEMBER 8, 2021

By Keri L. Bennett and Katelin Dueck

BC's New "Vaccine Card" – What Do Employers Need to Know?

Vaccine passports have been a hot topic in recent weeks as the federal and provincial governments announce new requirements to access certain services.

On September 7, 2021 the Province and the Public Health Officer provided new information for businesses on the roll out of BC's version of a "vaccine passport", the "BC Vaccine Card".

When is a Vaccine Card Required?

By order of the PHO, proof of vaccination will be required to access various "discretionary activities" such as indoor ticketed sporting and arts events, restaurants with table service, pubs, movie theatres, gyms, and indoor organized events with 50 or more people, including weddings and conferences. The full published list is available [here](#).

The BC Vaccine Card will not be required for activities such as visiting a grocery store or shopping at a retail outlet or to access essential provincial or municipal services.

What is the BC Vaccine Card?

The BC Vaccine Card shows the individual's name and confirms vaccination status. British Columbians have the option of presenting the electronic version of the BC Vaccine Card – a QR Code that is readable by a smart phone -- or a paper copy.

In the September 7, 2021 press conference, the Public Health Officer (the "PHO"), Dr. Henry, noted that the BC Vaccine Card only discloses the individual's name and vaccination status for privacy and security reasons.

Who has to Present the Card?

British Columbians over the age of 18 must show the BC Vaccine Card and also government issued photo ID.

Out of province or international visitors will be required to show proof of vaccination from their home jurisdiction along with valid ID or passport.

No photo ID will be required for youth age 12 to 18, who can show the BC Vaccine Card only. The requirement does not apply to children under the age of 12 who attend with a vaccinated adult.



When Does the Requirement Start?

Effective September 13, 2021 British Columbians will be required to have their first dose of the vaccine for access to locations and events captured by the order. By October 24, British Columbians must have both doses of the vaccine.

Between September 13 and 26, 2021, British Columbians can use the proof issued from public health or the local pharmacy at the time of vaccination. As of September 27, British Columbians are required to present their BC Vaccine Card along with government issued photo ID.

The order will be in place until January 31, 2022 but is subject to extension.

What Does this Mean For Business?

Businesses captured by the order are required to verify proof of vaccination before entry, either through the new “BC Vaccine App” or by visual verification of the BC Vaccine Card and government issued photo ID.

Additional information for businesses on implementation is available [here](#). The Province announced that it is launching a call line next week to aid businesses in making this transition.

Are there Exemptions?

Not according to the PHO. The BC Vaccine Card is a temporary measure to get B.C. through a risky period. Masking and event capacity orders also remain in place.

What Does this Mean For Employers?

In the September 7, 2021 press conference, the PHO stated that the BC Vaccine Card applies to individuals attending locations and events captured by the order, and not to workers because of the unique nature of the employer/employee relationship.

However, employers must continue to comply with existing public health orders and WorkSafeBC requirements.

Employers will also need to ensure staff are adequately trained to manage the verification requirements.

Expect more information in the coming weeks as the BC Vaccine Card is fully rolled out.

To read more on the considerations around mandatory vaccination policies in the workplace please see our bulletin of August 13, 2021, [Vaccination Status and the “New Normal”](#).



Navigating COVID-19 in the Workplace

For further information relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and how it may impact your workplace, please look to our previous bulletins, which can be found on [Roper Greyell's COVID-19 resource page](#).

This memorandum is current to the afternoon of September 8, 2021, but the pandemic and the responses of federal and provincial governments continue to evolve, and this may impact the accuracy of the information in this bulletin. If in doubt about whether anything in this document is still current, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

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