



September 24, 2021

Re: COVID-19 Update

Dear Residents,

Many of you have been watching the growing number of COVID-19 cases once again and are aware about the Province of Alberta's recent restrictions specifically as it relates to vaccinations. And many of you have probably been wondering, what does this mean for Shalem?

Shalem recognizes the unique vulnerability of Residents with regards to COVID-19 and the risk of developing severe health outcomes for those who are unvaccinated. Accordingly, I strongly recommend and encourage all Residents and Staff to become vaccinated against COVID-19 as recommended by the Ministry of Health and Provincial Health Officer.

Impact to Residents

As you are aware, Shalem is under the directive of Alberta Health Services (AHS) rather than the Province of Alberta. That means that we must follow the protocols set out by AHS which have not been updated since the changes this summer.

So, for now, there will not be any specific changes to Residents. Residents are able to continue to move about Shalem, participating in the various events and activities as you have been doing. That said, we do ask Residents to be mindful of the following:

- About 90% of our Residents have been fully vaccinated with a high percentage having received the third booster. Statistics are showing that the risk of severe outcomes is to those who are unvaccinated.
- If you are concerned about transmission of the virus, please continue to wear your mask and physical distance from other Residents.
- Although we are not able to mandate that visitors of Residents be vaccinated, we do ask Residents to make wise choices of who you invite onto our premises.
- Although this will not be mandated across the board, due to the level of comfort by our volunteers and other facilitators, there may be activities that masking will be required either by all Residents or just those that are unvaccinated.
- We ask Residents to follow the provincial guidelines for the number of visitors set out by the provincial guidelines, namely a maximum of 10 vaccinated individuals and no indoor social gatherings for vaccine eligible people who are unvaccinated.

However, if a Resident is directly exposed or if there is an outbreak in our facility, there are different protocols for those that are vaccinated and those that are unvaccinated. Because of this it will now be **required that all Residents disclose their vaccination status to management.**

We already have the records for those that obtained their vaccinations in the clinics held at Shalem, but if you obtained your vaccinations elsewhere (including the third booster shot) please provide a copy of this record to Susan in the Residential Life office by **Tuesday, September 28.** Thank you for your cooperation. Know that this is for your own protection and all records will be kept confidential.

Impact to Staff and Volunteers

To protect Shalem Residents and Staff, the Board has approved a COVID-19 Vaccination Policy as it relates to staff, volunteers, and contractors.

Within this policy, all staff will also be mandated to disclose their vaccination status. If an employee is not vaccinated, they will not be able to have close contact with Residents or other staff unless they are able to provide a recent negative COVID test.

All volunteers will also be required to disclose their vaccination status and must be fully vaccinated prior to volunteering in any capacity on site at Shalem. Additionally, all contractors providing services at Shalem at the request of Shalem staff must be fully vaccinated.

Unprecedented Times!

Please know that these have not been easy decisions either in not implementing further restrictions or in imposing further restrictions. I realize that in many situations the protocols don't always make sense. Thank you for your patience, understanding and grace as we navigate through it all. Please know that I and our staff are committed to keeping Shalem safe to the best of our ability while yet balancing the need for community. As that is also important to stay healthy!

Let's continue to find our hope and confidence in our God. He truly is worthy of our praise and thankfulness!

With much love for all of you,



Dorothy de Vuyst
Executive Director