



MANDATORY VACCINATION PROTOCOL

Beginning on January 1, 2022, SAIT will require members of the SAIT community to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. On that date, rapid testing will no longer be accepted as an alternative to full vaccination, except as part of a previously-approved accommodation.

Application of Mandatory Vaccination Rule

The requirement to be fully vaccinated by January 1, 2022 will apply to all members of the SAIT community, including students, faculty, staff, contractors, and guests. In particular:

- **Students:** students are required to be fully vaccinated in order to participate in on-campus or blended learning. Students may study entirely online without being fully vaccinated, but are still encouraged to disclose their status. Students who are not fully vaccinated will be prohibited from accessing the SAIT campus. For clarity, this requirement includes students in credit programs, non-credit courses and programs, corporate training programs, apprenticeship programs, and high school students in dual credit programs.
- **Faculty & Staff:** all employees of SAIT must be fully vaccinated.
- **Contractors:** all contractors to SAIT who may have any requirement to attend on SAIT's campus must be fully vaccinated. Only contractors who work entirely remotely are exempt from this requirement.
- **Guests:** all guests to SAIT's campus must be fully vaccinated. An exception will be made for patients attending the health clinic and dental clinic, although these patients must still comply with all rules of the clinic.

Note: SAIT's campus includes the main campus, all satellite campuses, and any other property under SAIT's control, including all SAIT sanctioned events.

***** Important Note ***** The requirement is for members of the community to be fully vaccinated by January 1, 2022, and therefore individuals need to plan to start receiving required vaccine doses several weeks earlier. A final dose should be received no later than December 17, 2021.

Accommodations/Exemptions

Accommodations/Exemptions to vaccination requirements will be considered in accordance with the [SAIT COVID-19 Protocols](#).

SAIT will consider the advice of the Alberta Government, Alberta Health Services, and the Alberta College of Physicians & Surgeons when assessing requests for **medical exemptions**. Based on their current advice, very few medical conditions justify a permanent medical exemption. Temporary medical exemptions are more common while allowing certain medical conditions to resolve, while an individual seeks specialist care, or while an individual is obtaining a vaccine that will not trigger an allergic reaction.

The most common temporary medical accommodation will be to provide proof of a negative rapid test (not more than 72 hours old), at SAIT's expense.

Where an individual has recently recovered from COVID-19, they may be eligible for a temporary exemption from both the vaccination and rapid testing requirements.

Allowance will be made for inbound **international students** who do not have access to WHO approved vaccines because they are not available in the student's country of residence pre-departure. Students will be given a specific period of time (normally 9 weeks) during which they must bring themselves into compliance with the mandatory vaccination requirement. In the interim, such students will be permitted to provide proof of a negative rapid test (not more than 72 hours old), at SAIT's expense. This allowance will also be applied to students at SAIT as part of a study abroad program.

Allowance will also be made for **adjunct instructors** who have been hired to teach a course entirely online during the Winter 2022 academic term. Such adjunct instructors need not be fully vaccinated but must still disclose their status through the SAIT Alert app. Unvaccinated adjunct instructors will not be permitted to attend on campus, and must be able to receive anything they require remotely. This allowance is temporary, and all adjunct instructors must be fully vaccinated in order to teach in all subsequent academic terms. Academic Chairs and other academic administrators should start looking for candidates to teach courses who are willing to be fully vaccinated.

In exceptional circumstances, exemptions based on religion or other protected grounds under Alberta's *Human Rights Act* may be considered. The most common type of accommodation will be to provide proof of a negative rapid test (not more than 72 hours old), at SAIT's expense. Granted accommodations will be reviewed periodically (for example, each academic term), and may be extended.

Employees currently on a leave (LTD, parental, maternity, Four for Five, etc) are not required to provide a vaccination declaration while on leave. However, such employees must provide a vaccination declaration at least one month prior to returning to work.

***** Important Note ***** A personal belief which does not amount to a protected ground under Alberta's *Human Rights Act* is not the basis for an exemption. Similarly, privacy concerns are not a valid reason for failure to disclose vaccination status.

Method of Declaration

The SAIT Alert app is the mandatory method of declaring vaccination status for students, faculty and staff. All individuals who are required to be fully vaccinated (i.e. all employees, students in on-campus or blended learning courses) must have their information in the SAIT Alert app no later than November 15, 2021. Students must ensure they update their information in SAIT Alert as early as possible so submissions are received and any issues are addressed in a timely manner.

If a member of the SAIT community does not have a smart phone, they will be required to carry their government issued QR code in order to access campus. In such a case, faculty, staff, and students studying on campus will still be required to use the web-based version of SAIT Alert to access the app from a desktop computer or tablet, and upload their vaccination information to be verified.

The Alberta Government issued QR code is the preferred method for providing evidence of vaccination status. However, use of the Government QR code does not relieve members of the SAIT community from their duty to use the SAIT Alert app as described above.

Consequences of Non-Compliance

As of January 1, 2022, members of the SAIT community who are not fully vaccinated or who fail to disclose their vaccination status will not be permitted to enter SAIT's campus. Accommodations will not be made for the consequences of the inability to attend on campus, including unexcused absences and failure to complete assigned work, examinations, or evaluations.

Anyone found to have entered SAIT's campus without complying with vaccination requirements, bypassing access control requirements, or using fraudulent documentation, will be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion (students), a review (as described below for employees), termination of a contract (contractors), or prohibition from attending on SAIT's campus (guests).

Students

As of January 1, 2022, students who are not fully vaccinated or fail to disclose their vaccination status will not be permitted to enter SAIT's campus. In addition, students (both new and continuing) who are not fully vaccinated or who fail to disclose their vaccination status will be withdrawn (de-registered) from any in-person or hybrid courses in which they are enrolled.

No accommodation will be made for the academic consequences resulting from being unable to attend on campus, and no refunds will be provided in the event of a withdrawal. Students may be limited in their progression through a program if they are unable to attend on campus to complete required program elements, and no accommodations or refunds will be made in this regard.

Students who have been withdrawn (de-registered) will be eligible to register again for SAIT courses and programs after bringing themselves into compliance with the vaccination requirements, but should expect to be delayed in their academic progress.

Faculty & Staff

As of January 1, 2022, salaried employees who are not fully vaccinated or fail to disclose their vaccination status will be placed on an unpaid leave of absence.

- Salaried employees will be placed on a leave of absence of two months, commencing January 1 2022, and ending February 28, 2022.
- An employee who, during the leave, brings themselves into compliance with vaccination requirements will be able to resume work on either the 16th day or the first day of the following month (in order to align with pay periods).
- Employees returning from this type of leave of absence will be placed into a similar (but not necessarily the same) role.
- Employees will be provided with health and dental benefits for the duration of the leave of absence.

- Employees with optional benefits must pre-pay the cost of all premiums for two months no later than January 7, 2022 in order for them to continue. A gap in coverage could necessitate re-qualification.
- Sick leave and LTD coverage are not available to employees on a leave of absence.
- A leave of absence will cause a gap in pensionable service, for which the employee may be eligible to buy-back at a later date.
- Employees on a leave of absence will not accrue vacation.
- Four for Five contributions will not be collected during a leave of absence, resulting in a delay to start year Five.

At the end of the two-month leave, the employee's situation will be reviewed and a determination made as to whether the leave should be extended. An unpaid leave of absence cannot persist indefinitely, and may eventually lead to termination of employment or a finding of job abandonment.

As of January 1, 2022, hourly and casual employees (including adjunct instructors) who are not fully vaccinated or fail to disclose their status will have their contracts terminated.

Although SAIT is experimenting with hybrid work, there are no SAIT employees who work entirely remotely. As a result, assigning employees remote work is not an alternative to vaccination.

December 1, 2021