



## Implementing the Restrictions Exemption Program (REP) Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the Restrictions Exemption Program?

New health actions, including the REP, have been put in place by the Government of Alberta in order to protect the health care system, stop the spread, and increase vaccination rates. For Okotoks, the REP will be effective in the Okotoks Recreation Centre, Pason Centennial Arenas and special events facilities (on a per-event basis) as of Tuesday, September 21.

The program requires all people **over 17** (including parents, guardians, coaches, referees, team managers, etc.) to show **one** of the following:

- proof of vaccination
  - partial vaccination (one dose) accepted September 20 to October 25 if received 2 weeks before time of service
  - full vaccination (two doses) required after October 25
- proof of a privately-paid negative PCR or rapid test within 72 hours of service (tests from AHS or Alberta Precision Laboratories not allowed)
- documentation of a medical exemption

Youth 12 -17 are **NOT** required to have proof of vaccination when taking part in sport, recreation or performance activities as part of the implementation of the Restrictions Exemption Program. REP will apply to **ALL adults 18 and over** regardless of why they are entering these facilities.

Individuals **18 and over** are required to provide personal identification (e.g. birth certificate, citizenship card, driver's license, health care card, passport, etc.). Youth (**under 18**) are not required to provide personal identification.

### What forms of vaccination proof will be accepted for those over 17?

- **Paper:** Immunization records received at immunization appointments OR paper card printable from MyHealth Records app
- **Digital:** Records shown from [MyHealth Records app or website](#) OR a screenshot of immunization records received at immunization

**A reminder that masks and 2 metres of physical distancing are also required in all indoor buildings.**

All provincial public health order information is available at: <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-public-health-actions.aspx>.

### **Why did the town choose to implement the REP and not operate at reduced capacity?**

The Town carefully considered the implications of both options given by the Province. The challenge with operating at reduced capacity was that it required the cancellation of all adult/senior group bookings and team bookings. The Town weighed these concerns and felt that the opportunity that provided access to the most residents was in the best interests of residents.

### **Do I have to show proof of vaccination when booking?**

Proof of vaccination will be requested at the entrance to the facility. Please be prepared to show your proof of vaccination, medical exemption or negative test result every time you visit a facility.

### **Can a parent who is unvaccinated drop their child off for a program or activity?**

Yes, if the child is 8 years or older and the parent does not enter the facility. For children under 8, existing facility requirements remain in place; all visitors under 8 must be accompanied by an adult or someone 16 years or older. This person would need to show proof of vaccination, medical exemption or negative test result.

### **What changes happened on September 16?**

- Mandatory physical distancing required (in addition to mandatory masking implemented on Sept 4) in all Town facilities
- Albertans required to work from home unless physical presence is operationally necessary
- Indoor gatherings - fully vaccinated individuals are limited to two households, up to a maximum of 10 people, with no restrictions on children under 12
- Unvaccinated individuals are not permitted to attend any indoor private social gathering
- Places of worship attendance is limited to one-third of fire code capacity
- Spectator attendance is restricted to 1/3 fire code capacity and attendees are limited to a single household or 2 close contacts if living alone and must be masked and maintain 2 metres physical distancing.
- Indoor youth group classes, training, and competitions are permitted; participants are required to:
  - screen for symptoms
  - maintain 2 metres distancing, except youth while engaged in physical activity
  - wear a mask, except youth while engaged in physical activity

### **Is extra staffing/security being put in place for REP program at Town facilities?**

Extra staffing/security is required to assist with the screening process to ensure access to the facility can happen as quickly as possible. This extra support will help reduce lineups and ensure we can maintain physical distancing and get you to your required activity as soon as possible.

### **Have user groups been notified?**

Yes, the Town worked with all sport organizations to ensure user groups are aware.

### **How will this affect the upcoming Municipal election?**

Regardless of vaccination status, all residents eligible to vote in the upcoming election. Voters will be able to vote at either the Okotoks Recreation Centre or the Foothills Centennial Centre. Voters are asked to follow Alberta Health Services COVID-19 protocols including masking, 2 metres physical distancing, and hand sanitizing.

### **Is the Town offering refunds if residents decide to opt out of a Town program because of the new rules?**

Yes, Recreation Services are processing refunds. Please contact at: [okrec@okotoks.ca](mailto:okrec@okotoks.ca) or call 403-938-8954.

Individuals cancelling third party sports such as hockey, figuring skating, etc. will need to contact the specific organization.

### **Why was the REP program not put in place as soon as possible on September 20?**

The federal election is being held on September 20 and we did not want to have any interference in the democratic process. The municipality will then implement the program on September 21 following the federal election.

### **Does the REP apply to Town employees?**

The Town is applying the directives from the Province for the restriction exemption program. The provincial program currently does not require the employees administering the program to be vaccinated. At this time, the Town is assessing our approach on requiring vaccines for Town employees.

### **Will the REP mean that the Town will lower taxes?**

Our facilities are still in operation and open. We are trying to ensure access for the maximum number of residents. If you have paid a fee to the Town for a specific activity and you can no longer attend, it will be refunded. Taxes are an obligation and are not based on personal facility usage.

### **How does the REP affect other Town facilities/services?**

The Okotoks Municipal Centre, Operations Centre, Southridge Emergency Services building, Fire Services building, Okotoks Art Gallery, Okotoks Museum & Archives, Rotary Performing Arts Centre, Eco Centre and Okotoks Transit are not part of the REP; residents will not be required to provide proof of vaccination to access services at these buildings or on Okotoks Transit. A reminder that currently, all Town facilities require mandatory masking and two metres physical distancing; users of transit are also required to wear masks.