



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 as of Tuesday, September 21.

The program requires all people **18 and over** to show **one** of the following:

- proof of vaccination
- a printed privately-paid negative PCR or rapid test within 72 hours of service (Health Canada approved tests only)
- original documentation of medical exemption

Beginning November 15, as part of the provincial Restrictions Exemption Program (REP), **digital or printed** QR code proof of full vaccination (14 days since second dose) is required to enter spaces participating in the REP. The app used to scan the code does not store any personal information.

Some tips:

- **digital record** - turn up your phone brightness and zoom into QR code
- **paper record** - record might not scan if damaged, do not fold across QR code or print in small scale or low quality

More information about the transition to the requirement of QR code proof of vaccination is available at: <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-public-health-actions.aspx>

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 **adults 18 and over**.

- Parents who are required to support youth in their activities (e.g. parent and tot groups) are required to follow REP requirements in order to attend.
- Youth are subject to mandatory masking and physical distancing at all other times when not engaged in the physical activity (e.g. locker rooms, common areas, etc.).
- If youth wish to access other amenities beyond youth-specific sports, recreation or performance activities in a facility participating in REP, for these purposes they will be required to be screened per the REP, as applicable (12+ years of age).
- Coaches, instructors, trainers, referees etc. for youth activities, who are 18 years or older, are subject to the public health measures or REP requirements in the facility.
- School groups accessing facilities otherwise under REP (for the purposes of K-12 curriculum) are not required to be screened as part of REP.

Is identification required as part of the REP?

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.

How do I properly provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test?

- test result should be a printed copy that indicates the individual has tested negative for COVID-19 on a Health Canada approved rapid antigen, rapid PCR, or lab based PCR test approved by Health Canada or the lab accreditation body of jurisdiction and should also indicate the date and time of the test
- test must not be from the Alberta Health Services public COVID-19 testing system
- photos of a rapid test or result taken offsite are not sufficient
- self-tests completed offsite or self-produced documentation of a negative test result are not valid
- do not bring completed self-tests or rapid tests to businesses due to communicable disease risk

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, that is permitted as long as parents do not enter the facility. The Town encourages parents to reach out to friends, family or other parents in your child's activity to make arrangements to have your child accompanied if you feel that is what they need. Anyone 18 and over that accompanies your child is required to provide proof of vaccine, negative COVID-19 test or original vaccine exemption letter. The Aquatics Centre requires the following for child supervision:

- Children must be a minimum of 8 years old to use the Aquatics Centre for drop-in activities without a caregiver.
- Caregivers must be at least 14 years of age to accompany children for drop-in activities in the Aquatics Centre.
- Caregivers should stay within arm's reach of children at all times.

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.

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 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.

Is there anyone who is not required to provide proof as part of the REP?

The Provincial information states that employees, contractors, repair workers, delivery workers, volunteers, inspectors or others who are entering the business/entity/event for work purposes and not as patrons are not required to be screened.

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.