

Congregation Machzikei Hadas COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

Ottawa Public Health (OPH) continues to recommend that everyone eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine receive their vaccination as soon as possible. OPH is also supportive of vaccination policies that improve vaccine uptake and coverage in our communities. The shul policy will be subject to regular review in line with evolving OPH and provincial guidelines.

Vaccine Requirements:

Everyone 12 years of age and over entering our building is required to be fully vaccinated unless that person has a medical condition exemption or has undertaken PCR testing as described in detail below. Fully vaccinated includes both doses of an approved vaccine. The Government of Canada has authorized a number of COVID-19 vaccines for use in Canada, for individuals 18 years of age and older (or 12 years of age and older for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine).

Persons must show or submit proof of vaccination to the office when registering for entry to the shul. On Shabbat, there will be an initial verbal screening by volunteers or staff at the entrance to the shul. Unvaccinated adults who do not have a valid medical condition exemption or have not undergone PCR testing will not be permitted to enter the building.

Medical condition exemption: A person who is requesting an exemption from this policy on the basis of a medical condition must submit to the shul a letter from a medical practitioner, clearly stating the reason why the individual is exempted from receiving the vaccine. The medical exemption letters will be reviewed by Rabbi Idan Scher and by Dr. Mira Liebman (Board Member) to ensure compliance with the applicable OPH document (as published on their website on Sept 7, 2021, in the document: "Medical Exemptions to the COVID-19 Vaccine").

If a person does not have a valid medical exemption and wants to attend shul, that person will need to get a PCR test no later than 48 hours prior to entry. The person must show the negative test result at or before the time of entry to the synagogue.

Masks: In accordance with OPH Guidelines, everyone from the ages of 2 and over are required to wear a mask inside the building. Social distancing will be maintained.

Minyanim: The shul will continue to maintain a minyan exclusively for those that are fully vaccinated, have a medical exemption or valid PCR testing and those under 12 years of age. Social distancing and masks are required.

Children's Programs and Kiddushim: Plans are currently underway and will be announced when confirmed.

General: Those who are experiencing symptoms or have knowingly been exposed to COVID should not attend shul under any circumstances.