

COVID-19 vaccine reactions

In most cases, vaccination reactions are not work-related and do not need to be reported to WCB-Alberta.

When will WCB accept a COVID-19 vaccination reaction?

If a worker has an adverse reaction to a COVID-19 vaccination, they are entitled to compensation when the immunization is a mandatory condition of employment:

*“When immunization is required for the prevention of a work-related disease or infection and as a result of a reaction to this **compulsory immunization** of a worker experiences a loss of earnings, WCB will consider the reaction and its consequences to be compensable.”*

In all cases, we adjudicate work-relatedness and benefit entitlement based on the specific and unique circumstances of each case.

*Policy 03-01, Part II, Application 3 Q4

When will WCB not accept a COVID-19 vaccination reaction?

- When the vaccination is recommended but not a requirement of employment. Thus, the choice remains with the worker and there are no employment repercussions from this choice.
- When the employer offers an incentive or payment of the vaccination but the options still remain with the worker and there are no repercussions from this choice.

Work-related examples

- An extended care facility worker was advised by their employer that in order to continue providing direct care to patients, they will be required to get the COVID-19 vaccination. Vaccination is mandatory.
- A daycare worker was advised by their employer that in order to ensure their own protection and the safety of the children and community, they will be strictly enforcing a mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for all employees.

- An employer has implemented a vaccination policy or guideline that requires staff to be either vaccinated or provide proof of negative covid test on a regular basis to continue with employment. Workers who do not comply are placed on leave of absence or suspended. As there are employment repercussions associated with this choice, vaccination is considered mandatory.

Non work-related examples

- A health care worker is strongly encouraged by their employer to get the COVID-19 vaccine. The choice belongs to the worker.
- An employer offers an incentive to workers who get vaccinated in an effort to promote vaccinations for the safety of all staff and clients.
- An employer authorized and paid for the worker's time off to get the COVID-19 vaccine.
- An employer paid for or arranged the worker's travel to a vaccine clinic.

In these cases, although the employer is making every effort to remove any barriers to obtaining the vaccine, the choice still belongs to the worker.

If I chose not to be vaccinated and I contract COVID-19 at work, will I still be eligible for WCB coverage?

Under these circumstances a claim for compensation will be adjudicated based on Policy 03-01: Part II – Occupational Disease.

When a worker contracts COVID-19 as a direct result of the duties of their employment, they are entitled to compensation if the following conditions are met:

- The nature of employment involves sufficient exposure to the source of infection, - and –
- The nature of employment creates a greater risk of exposure for the worker.

If a worker chooses to be vaccinated and still contracts COVID-19 at work, are they eligible for WCB coverage?

The same approach as above applies.

For more information on COVID-19 and how it applies to work, please see the [worker](#) and [employer](#) fact sheets on our website at www.wcb.ab.ca.

