

Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination

October 2021



Overview – Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination (PVC)



1) PVC overview:

- Benefits
- What is the standardized Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination



2) How are Canadians travelling now, and what is Canada doing to support clients

3) Indigenous and PT Engagement

- Responding to concerns raised
 - a. Equity & Cross-border Movement (Including Canada-U.S.)
 - b. Accessibility
 - c. Data Sovereignty
 - d. International Recognition of Canada's Mixed-dose Schedule & Communication



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1. Overview of Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination (PVC)

What

A Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination is a factual record of COVID-19 vaccination history for those vaccinated in Canada.

Access

A Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination will be provided to eligible individuals upon request and with consent via provincial/territorial (PT) & Indigenous collaboration.

Issuance

Provinces, territories and Indigenous organizations are the holders of health information in the majority of cases, and provide clients with a record of vaccination on the basis of that information. Provinces and territories are issuing the Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination at this time.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) is the federal government project coordinator for the Canadian PVC, working closely with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), who manages the relationships with provincial, territorial & Indigenous health authorities and sets vaccine policies and data standards.

Privacy

Information submitted by the user, including personal health information, is managed based on the privacy laws in that jurisdiction (federally, it is per the *Privacy Act*).

1. Benefits of a Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination (PVC)



To support a safe economic reopening

- A secure way of proving vaccine status allows businesses an efficient way to run more safely and to meet public health requirements (where required)
- Supports increase in travel and provide a boost for travel, tourism and hospitality related sectors
- A standardized PVC will facilitate use between provinces and territories



To support public health measures

- Some jurisdictions may use PVCs as a way to prove vaccination history for access to non-essential services (e.g. restaurants, sporting events) or to facilitate inter-jurisdictional travel
- Vaccination requirements may encourage people to get vaccinated – secure, easy-to-access PVCs make vaccination requirements easier to implement



For travel within and outside of Canada

- The Canadian COVID-19 proof of vaccination can facilitate inbound/outbound travel by providing border officials a consistent and reliable way to assess whether a traveller meets public health requirements

1. What is the Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination?

A standardized PVC with one technical specification and a common look and feel.

- 0 Requested and controlled by the individual
- 1 Uniform branding to be recognizable as issued in Canada for international verifiers
- 2 Identifies the PT issuing the information
- 3 Bilingual (French and English)
- 4 Uses SMART Health Card Framework, is verifiable (emerging preferred option)
- 5 Mandatory fields like lot number must be in the QR code for compatibility even if it is not captured in PT registries
- 6 Reflects COVID-19 vaccination event history, allowing foreign borders to make a determination based on their own domestic definition of fully vaccinated
- 7 Captures date of issuance of the certificate
- 8 Security features to prevent fraud and allow secure verifiability
- 9 If accepted/used across all PTs, only a single PVC will be required by each resident for Canada and international

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1 COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination / Preuve de vaccination contre la COVID-19

2 Issuing Province / Territory
Province / Territoire de délivrance
Yukon

Country of issuance /
Pays d'émission
Canada

0 Name / Nom : **Doe, Jane Liz**
Date of birth / Date de naissance : **02 JUL / JUIL 1985**

4 SMART Health Cards QR Code / Code QR de la carte Santé SMART



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6 **Vaccinations administered / Vaccins reçus : 2**

Date : **05 FEB / FÉV 2021**
Product / Produit : **MODERNA COVID-19 mRNA-1273**
Lot : **818364**

5 Date : **05 JAN / JAN 2021**
Product / Produit : **MODERNA COVID-19 mRNA-1273**
Lot : **Not available / Non disponible**

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illustrative example only

2. How are Canadians travelling now?



Inbound: ArriveCan app accepts PT issued vaccine records/receipts, though it does not verify authenticity.



Outbound: PT vaccine records/receipts generally accepted at foreign border on a case by case basis, (there have been isolated consular and border issues with credential recognition).

The Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination will

- Provide a common standard for PVCs issued across Canada
- Help facilitate travel to certain countries, such as those that may not recognize a non-standard document from a sub-national body (i.e. without a federal identity).
- Allow the federal government to better support Canadian PVC holders abroad (currently helping those without a verifiable PVC can be complicated, time-consuming, and resource intensive for GoC and PTs.)
- Reduce vulnerability to fraud at Canadian border crossings.



2. What is the federal government doing to support clients?

The Federal Government will promote the Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination to the international community

- Canada will engage foreign embassies in Canada, as well as our own embassies and international networks to promote the standardized PVC by distributing a sample to seek its recognition and acceptance at foreign borders. This will be combined with proactive engagement with a number of targeted countries (e.g. top tourist destinations), regions and multilateral organizations.
- In parallel, Canada is working with international partners to ensure the recognition of its successful, science-based vaccination approach, including mixed vaccination and vaccine type.

The Federal Government will support a comprehensive communications campaign to promote the Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination to all those vaccinated within Canada

- A high-profile, comprehensive communications approach developed and will be implemented via Government of Canada channels and networks.

The Federal Government is preparing to provide direct assistance to clients

- Service Canada will provide information sourced from provinces and territories, respond to enquiries about the process, and redirect to issuing authorities if needed.



3. Engagement with Indigenous communities, provinces and territories

Indigenous Engagement

- Since May 2021, a series of engagement sessions were held with First Nations, Inuit and Métis partners, including communities that are close to the U.S. border, and those involved in frequent cross-border travel for cultural, work or familial purposes.
- The objectives of this engagement were to ensure that Indigenous partners are part of the conversation at an early stage, to provide informational updates, and hear considerations and potential issues that may arise for these partners. Concerns expressed included: issues of equity, cross-border movement (including Canada-U.S.), accessibility, data sovereignty/vaccination reporting gaps, international recognition of Canada's mixed-dose schedule and communications.

Provincial and Territorial Engagement

- Broad domestic engagement has also been taking place with provinces, territories to develop a standardized proof of vaccination.
- Most provinces and territories have agreed to issue the Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination, and some have already started to do so. We anticipate most provinces and territories to start issuing by the end of October.
- CBSA has indicated that they will likely be ready to verify the Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination by October 19.

3a. Responding to concerns raised: Equity & Cross-border Movement (including Canada-U.S.)

- Proof of vaccination is not required to enter Canada for Canadian citizens, permanent residents, persons registered under the *Indian Act*, or protected persons. However, those who cannot demonstrate that they are fully vaccinated or those who do not qualify for other exemptions listed in the [Emergency Orders](#) under the *Quarantine Act* may be subject to the public health measures outlined in the [handout](#) provided to them at the border.
- Unvaccinated children under the age of 12 must follow all testing and quarantine requirements upon entering Canada, unless they meet certain conditions and comply with the public health measures outlined in the [handout](#) provided to them at the border.
- Individuals can consult [COVID-19 Travel: Checklists for requirements and exemptions – Travel restrictions in Canada – Travel.gc.ca](#) to find out the requirements to travel into Canada and whether they qualify for exemptions listed in the Emergency Orders.
- Other countries' entry requirements will vary. Additionally, provinces and territories may determine how a PVC is used within their respective jurisdiction.
- Following the announcement that travellers on federally-regulated transport will need to be vaccinated as of October 30, Transport Canada is engaging with Indigenous organizations and communities to support the ability for remote and fly-in community members to travel.
- Vaccination continues to be the best way to protect ourselves from severe outcomes from COVID-19. Vaccines are safe, effective and widely available, and the Government of Canada encourages individuals to speak with a trusted source, including Elders and trusted healthcare providers, about the vaccine.

3b. Responding to concerns raised: Accessibility

- The federal government has worked with provinces and territories to develop the Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination, which has a common look and feel and contains standardized information, including the Canadian flag on the upper right corner.
- This PVC will be available in paper format in addition to a digital format that can be stored in a digital wallet.
- Provinces and territories also have a variety of client support options available, including online services, call centres and/or in-person services to assist people in accessing a paper copy of their PVC.
- Individuals can use Certificate of Indian Status (CIS) cards and Secure Certificate of Indian Status (SCIS) cards – among other options, depending on mode of travel (though a Canadian passport is strongly recommended for international travel) – alongside their PVCs to confirm their identity, and this information will not be linked to the PVC. The PVC will be a companion health document that a traveller can carry, for example, on their smartphone or as a paper copy, along with their ID, when travelling internationally and returning to Canada.

3c. Responding to concerns raised: Data Sovereignty / Vaccination Reporting Gaps

- The Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination contains the information needed by border officials to verify a traveller's vaccination history. The Government of Canada is engaging with key international partners so they will recognize and accept the Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination as a trusted and reliable Canadian document.
- An individual's COVID-19 vaccination record needs to be included in a vaccination registry that is able to issue a PVC to the Canadian specification.
- Several provinces and territories have processes in place for individuals to request that their provincially or territorially issued vaccination record be updated to include COVID-19 vaccinations administered in other jurisdictions, including other countries.
- We are aware that there are gaps in reporting of some Indigenous vaccination records into provincial and territorial registries, which could have an impact on access to the PVC issued by the province. The Government of Canada is working with Indigenous communities to identify and address these gaps.

3d. Responding to Concerns Raised: International Recognition of Canada's Mixed-dose Schedule & Communication

- Work is currently under way to provide vaccine effectiveness data to other countries to advocate for recognition of Canada's approach to vaccination.
- Some countries already recognize individuals with mixed-dose schedules.
- As of November 8, the United States will require that all foreign travellers entering the country be fully vaccinated. The United States has confirmed that it will accept mixed doses.
- Communication to Indigenous peoples on how to obtain the Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination for international travel will be clear, and can be obtained at multiple levels (e.g. federal, provincial, territorial) and by trusted partners.
- The Government of Canada's [website](#) on proof of vaccination outlines the plans for international travel and contains links to information for each province and territory.

Next Steps

Continued engagement with Indigenous communities to:

- Ensure messaging related to movement is clearly articulated in the various communications products being developed in support of PVC.
- Provide culturally appropriate messaging that responds to concerns raised in engagement sessions.
- Continue engagement with provinces and Indigenous communities and organizations to identify the gaps in inclusion of Indigenous vaccination records in provincial and territorial registries.