

January 17, 2022

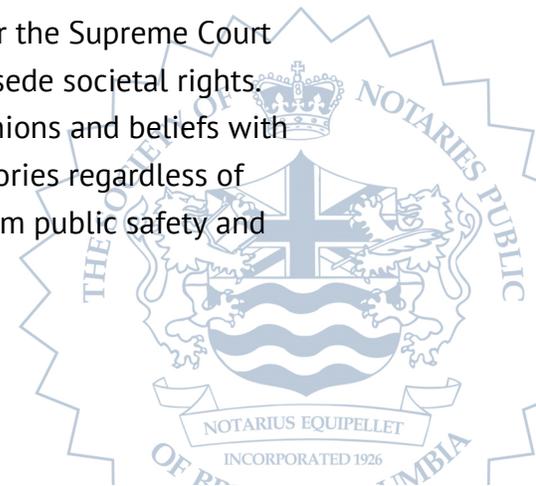
To: Students and Candidates
From: John Mayr, Executive Director

Re: Communicable disease (Covid) safety protocols for commissioning examinations

The SNPBC is sending this correspondence in response to questions and concerns regarding public health and safety initiatives including vaccination, mask, and testing requirements which will affect students and candidates for the commissioning examination and public practice.

In developing our safety plan, I have carefully considered public health guidelines and correspondence received from various sources. The perspective and safety of students/candidates, invigilators, and staff has been taken into consideration in the development of the SNPBC's communicable disease safety plan, which includes the vaccination policy.

The plans and policies are based on public health and WorksafeBC guidance and fully consider the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Human Rights implications of our policy and practices on society and individuals. Our primary concern is for societal (public) health and safety. While individuals may claim certain rights and freedoms, including from being vaccinated or wearing a mask; the rights, freedoms, and health and safety of those who are vaccinated and wish to take steps to reduce the chance of significant illness related to SARS-CoV-2 infection must also be considered. Until such time that the Human Rights Tribunal or the Supreme Court issue a contrary determination, individual rights do not supersede societal rights. The SNPBC acknowledges that individuals are entitled to opinions and beliefs with respect to COVID-19, vaccinations, masks, and conspiracy theories regardless of how disconnected those opinions and beliefs appear to be from public safety and science.



The Provincial Health Officer has published guidelines for requests and re-consideration for exemption from vaccination. Please see this link for further information.

[covid-19-public-guidelines-for-request-for-reconsideration-exemption-process.pdf \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/communicable-diseases/covid-19-public-guidelines-for-request-for-reconsideration-exemption-process.pdf)

Should any person wish to make an application for exemption, please submit the completed form at the link below for vaccine medical deferral.

[COVID-19 Vaccine Medical Deferral \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/communicable-diseases/covid-19-vaccine-medical-deferral).

Upon receipt of the completed form, the information will be assessed, and a determination made as to whether the information qualifies the applicant for medical deferral. In the event that an exemption is granted, specific accommodation will be made for an opportunity for the individual(s).

Please note that there does not appear to be an equivalent form or process for those who purport to have a medical condition or exemption from wearing a mask.

The SNPBC in consultation with the Board of Examiners has communicated with students and candidates that the written component of the commissioning examination will take place in person, in the Society office and that the communicable disease safety plan including the Vaccination Policy will apply to individuals attending for the purpose of writing the examination. In addition to showing proof of vaccine (in the form of the BC Vaccination Passport) the SNPBC will provide each person with a N95 mask (which must be worn at all times) for each day of the examination.

Consideration is currently being given to the use of Rapid Tests. The use of COVID tests is dependent on availability. More information on testing will be sent closer to the event.

At this time, the SNPBC in consultation with the Board of Examiners will accommodate non-vaccinated individuals by providing an opportunity to attempt the commissioning examination at a future time. That time will be determined after considering public health guidance with respect to COVID-19.

This accommodation and opportunity will also be made available to any student who has any symptoms or feels unwell, has travelled to another country and doesn't have the results of a PCR test, has had close or direct contact with a person confirmed or thought to have COVID-19, or has been advised that they may have COVID-19 or to quarantine.

The SNPBC will not provide for the administration of the examination outside of a controlled environment. Locations that would be suitable for the administration of a licensure examination have implemented communicable disease safety plans and require proof of vaccination. One-off arrangements are not accommodations that are consistent with licensure examination.

The decisions that have been made are based on public health information and guidance that has been established by Centres of Disease Control and Public Health. Excepting a change in that guidance, the SNPBC will not assess or be persuaded by pseudo research purporting to represent science or a valid position that is contrary to public health and safety.

Should any student/candidate after reviewing this communication wish to request a deferral from the dates of the scheduled examination, please respond in confidence by email to jmayr@snpsc.ca. At this time, we are unable to provide any information about alternative dates and advise students and candidates that the opportunity may coincide with the commissioning examinations anticipated for 2023.

John Mayr
Executive Director