



College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia

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How to verify a legitimate COVID-19 vaccine exemption or deferral

The College has received reports of illegitimate COVID-19 vaccine exemption and deferral letters circulating in the community that are being used by British Columbians who cannot show proof of vaccine through the BC Vaccine Card. In light of this, the College is issuing this guidance to assist members of the public who may be required to determine whether a vaccine exemption or deferral letter was legitimately issued by a physician.

Valid reasons for an exemption or deferral

According to the provincial health officer, the reasons outlined in the [deferrals to COVID-19 vaccination table](#) are the only valid reasons for a COVID-19 exemption or deferral. Legitimate exemption or deferral letters must state one of these valid reasons.

Other important information to look for

Legitimate vaccine exemption or deferral documents issued by a physician must also have the following.

- The patient's full name.
- The issuing physician's name and signature (digital signatures are not valid).

Who can issue vaccine exemptions and deferrals in BC?

Only physicians licensed and registered with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC and nurse practitioners licensed and registered with the [BC College of Nurses and Midwives](#) can issue vaccine exemptions and deferrals in BC.

A physician's registration status can be verified on the College's [registrant directory](#).