

RE: Mandatory Vaccination

[Redacted]

Thu 1/13/2022 9:03 AM

To: Sabrina McGrath <[Redacted]>

Thank you for your submission to the Pebble in Your Shoe campaign. I have worked with Human Resources and Workplace Health & Safety to ensure our response to you is comprehensive and addresses your concerns.

We understand the past two years have been challenging as we work together through the COVID-19 pandemic. Along with our ongoing masking, social distancing and store capacity limits, the vaccine mandate is one part of our ongoing efforts to ensure the health and safety of you, your teammates, and your family. This mandate is in line with the directive from the province, supported by Public Health, which requires all public servants to be fully vaccinated.

Our declaration form does not require you to provide any personal medical information. We would like to assure you that your personal information, including your vaccine status, is kept confidential and shared only with individuals who need this information to do their jobs. If you have not submitted your declaration of vaccination, you will have received two reminder letters encouraging you to do so. If your declaration is not received by January 15 your direct manager will be informed in order to initiate your unpaid leave.

Thank you again for your submission.

Haley

From: Sabrina McGrath <[Redacted]>  
Sent: Saturday, October 9, 2021 4:13 PM  
To: [Redacted]  
Subject: Mandatory Vaccination

I have always been so incredibly proud to be part of the NSLC team. Corporate Social Responsibility, For the Good of the Community, and Inclusivity are a few of the wonderful attributes that make the NSLC one of the best employers in the Province, and in my opinion, in the Country. Inclusivity is top of mind for the NSLC and that is so very appreciated, especially for someone like myself who struggled for a long time to be comfortable with showing people the "real" me. Along my journey at the NSLC, I learned that we are not judged, ostracized, discriminated against or segregated for who we are, for our beliefs, or for our opinions. We are all one team!

The effect COVID has had on Mental Health has been astronomical. Some people feared for their personal safety and took an extended Leave of Absence, with some still not returning to the workplace. Some took advantage of the CERB program and decided to stay home to make more money than going to work, and some like myself went to work every day often putting in many hours of overtime, missing time with family and sacrificing my own mental health. I am one of those people that have kept an important essential service open for the good of Nova Scotia and its citizens throughout a very stressful and trying time in the world.

As if a global pandemic wasn't stressful enough, now we also need to worry about whether or not our employers are going to mandate everyone get vaccinated or risk losing our jobs, although many of us have been working through the entire pandemic. We stepped up and did whatever ever we needed to do, no questions asked. We still do. I understand that safety in the workplace is extremely important. It is always top of mind for myself and my team; however, how safe in the workplace are our team members going to feel when they are being forced to get a vaccination that they do not want just to keep their employment, and how safe are others that have had the choice to receive the COVID vaccination, a choice that others may soon be deprived of, going to feel knowing that our employer can force other procedures if desired. Boosters will most likely be required and those too will become mandated. It will feel like our bodies have become the property of our employer.

We are at a very scary point in our lives and the threat of having vaccinations mandated to keep one's employment is adding to the already mounting pressures of living during a global pandemic. Due to the vaccination status of some of our team, they may lose their jobs. Jobs that they love. Jobs where they are extremely valuable. Jobs where they will be incredibly missed. Jobs that they have courageously come to every day, where people are scared and where people need normalcy. We give them that, everyday. We comfort each other and our customers, making everyone feel safe.

The COVID vaccination does not prevent the spread of COVID, nor does it prevent one from contracting COVID. Being vaccinated will ( hopefully ) protect the vaccinated individual by ( hopefully ) lessening their symptoms, but it's also not a guarantee. Choosing to receive the COVID vaccination is a choice that we all need to make for ourselves, as is every other personal medical / health related decision. I have always been a germaphobe, however I do not feel any safer with my vaccinated friends than I do with my non vaccinated friends. Regardless of the vaccination status of my family, friends, team and customers ( which is none of my business, as is every other medical / health related issue or vaccination they may or may not have ), I will take the precautions that I am comfortable with to ensure my own personal safety, as I always have.

I have been living a very disciplined vegan lifestyle for almost 6 years, so I understand the passion people have about what they put into their bodies, as I too have that passion. I research every product before I purchase, use, wear, and put it on or into my body. People have many reasons why they do not want to be vaccinated and their reasons should not become invalid because they do not align with other opinions, other views. Please fight for our rights so that we can all make decisions with our own bodies without fear of losing employment. We are allowing the freedom of choice for our customers, so please keep the trust we have in the NSLC to stay inclusive and respectful with our choices, our decisions as well.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sabrina McGrath