

Following a warning from Health Minister Christine Elliott that “there may be some restrictions...placed on people that don’t have vaccinations,” her office said in a statement that a dialogue is beginning on what consensus will develop given the highly contagious nature of the virus.

“We look forward to working with our health experts and Ontario’s businesses to discuss how we can continue to operate safely, and whether or not providing proof of vaccination will have a role to play.”

University of Toronto bioethicist Kerry Bowman said proof is expected for international travel, some airline flights, employment in hospitals and long-term-care homes once the shots are widely available.

But other areas are less clear and there is the complication that no vaccines have yet been approved for children under 16, in addition to people who cannot take certain vaccines because they are prone to severe allergic reactions and the charter rights of those who don’t believe in vaccination.

“It’s very unlikely a workplace could say you cannot return to work unless you’re vaccinated, but in Ontario there’s very strict legislation on making sure workplaces are safe...so there could easily be challenges there,” said Bowman.

He predicted “market forces” will prevail in some cases, with restaurants or other businesses boasting all their staff have vaccinations and using that as a competitive advantage.

Elliott said Ontarians will find proof of vaccination “essential” because proprietors may require it to get into movie theatres and similar venues where close contact is likely.

The proof may become moot in time, however, if enough people are vaccinated and herd immunity is achieved, Bowman noted.

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