



NEWS

## Vaccination certification holds positives and negatives for Kawartha Lakes businesses

Measure is focused on specific indoor venues that are deemed non-essential but could impact customer traffic at a time when one more shutdown could force permanent closures

By [Catherine Whitnall](#) Kawartha Lakes This Week  
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The pros and cons of vaccination policies, attestations and certification all depend on who is being asked.

Recently, Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit medical officer of

health Dr. Natalie Bocking expressed support for the province's decision to require proof of vaccination in "select settings." She pointed out there is not "one piece of this puzzle that is the answer to the (COVID-19 pandemic)" and "the measure is very focused on specific indoor venues that are certainly non-essential."

The province's list includes nightclubs, sports and fitness facilities, gaming establishments, theatres, meeting and event spaces, and restaurants and bars; excluding outdoor patios as well as delivery and takeout.

For Erastus Burley, general manager of the Pie Eyed Monk, providing proof of vaccination isn't a big deal personally, but, professionally, it's not great for the already damaged hospitality industry.

Burley cited the combination of lockdowns, restrictions and difficulty hiring staff — the latter forced the closure of the restaurant's north patio — has created a perfect storm for small businesses and restaurants that could see some permanently close their doors.

It's certainly had an impact on small business owner Roselyn Oudenampsen, who has decided to shut her Hair Station shop doors.

While she appreciates the support she has received since launching her business in March 2020 — which was only open nine days before the first pandemic shutdown — seven months of lost revenue and "new rules that keep changing" have taken a heavy toll on the Bobcaygeon business owner financially and mentally.

The recently announced certificate system was kind of the last straw said Oudenampsen who is now operating under a mobile model and plans to continue with her hat and accessory designs.

But requiring patrons to provide proof of vaccination is "not an entirely bad thing from a business standpoint," said Burley.

"The province has finally given businesses the legal stance they need to keep staff and clients safe," he said. "The challenge is that it's created an environment where, potentially, the restrictions do not lift. And it means people like me have to pay someone to stand at the door, like a border guard. At a time when revenue is down, that's an additional expense no one needs.

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Burley also empathizes with customers.

Some have outright declared they are “not coming back” while others, who have their reasons for not getting vaccinated, have booked “last meals” before the mandate comes into effect Sept. 22. For others, it’s no worse than being asked for a contact number in the event a COVID-19 case is reported.

*With files from Sarah Hyatt.*

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