



BC Vaccine Card: Considerations for Two-Spirit, Transgender, and Non-Binary People

Many Two-Spirit, transgender and gender diverse individuals have questions and concerns about how to navigate the potential challenges and safety concerns associated with using the [BC Vaccine Card](#) as proof of vaccination to access some events, services and businesses. These concerns include fear of being outed, having dead names listed on identification documents (ID), and whether or not they will be confronted if someone is confused about their identification.

Two-Spirit, transgender and gender diverse people have the right to be referred to by their correct name and pronoun, and to not be outed, even if they have not legally changed their name. The safety and human rights issues associated with dead-naming and being outed in situations when someone needs to show ID, or because various databases do not communicate with each other, are well-known in the province. There are multiple teams working hard to address these concerns. Unfortunately, these issues are logistically complex and developing solutions to solve them is a long-term and multi-pronged project. For these reasons, calling one's primary care provider, MSP, HIBC or ICBC to voice these concerns will not fix the problem on an individual or system-wide level.

The following information may be helpful when navigating these challenging situations.

1) If you have changed your legal name

- For some individuals who have legally changed their name, the BC Vaccine Card may not yet reflect this important update.
- The team responsible for this issue is aware and is working to fix it.
- If your card does not reflect your legal name change, you may find that if you re-generate your card, it may be automatically updated.
- If the problem persists, you can call the BC Immunization Line at 1-833-838-2323 and they will help you update this information.

2) If you have not done a legal name change

- If you would like to do a legal name change, there are resources that can help you and subsidies are available.
 - This process takes many months and your name will not be updated immediately.
 - The following resources offer free assistance to gender diverse individuals with name change process:
 1. [Catherine White Holman Wellness Center](#)
 2. [PACE Society](#) (Gender Self Determination Project)
 3. [Rise Women's Legal Centre](#)
 - Trans Care BC's '[Updating ID guide](#)' walks you through the steps to change various forms of ID.

- If you do not want to do a legal name change, it may be helpful to have an up-to-date picture on your ID and/or a “carry letter” from your primary care provider.
 - A “carry letter” is commonly used during travel and in other situations where identification is required and one’s photograph, gender marker or name does not align with one’s physical appearance.
 - “Carry letters” are not legal documents and do not guarantee that there will not be confusion, but they can be helpful.
 - Some clinics charge fees for completing letters & forms related to gender-affirmation. You can ask your primary care provider to consider waiving any associated fees.
 - See the last page of this document for a template you can share with your provider. The template can be downloaded at Trans Care BC as an [Adobe PDF](#) or [MicroSoft Word](#) file.

3) If you are concerned about your appearance being different from the picture on your identification documents

- Some people find it helpful to make sure that they have a government-issued photo ID that accurately reflects their current appearance.
- You may also wish to discuss a “carry letter” with your primary care provider (see above for details).

4) If you have legally changed your name or gender marker and this change is not reflected in a government or health record

- If you haven’t already:
 - Send a copy of your updated birth certificate to [Health Insurance BC](#)
 - Bring a copy of your name change certificate, your new birth certificate and your new BC Service Card to ICBC at a [Drivers Services Centre](#)
 - Update your voter information with [Elections BC](#)
 - See Trans Care BC’s ‘[Updating ID guide](#)’ for details
- There is not a single electronic medical record system in the province, which means your information will not be automatically updated at every clinic, hospital or lab.
 - You may want to contact each site separately to find out if your records have been updated, and if not, how to make sure that happens before you go in-person. Your primary care provider may be able to help you with this.
- Other provincial and private records need to be updated independently. Contact each agency separately. They may require your [Change of Name Certificate](#) and other matching ID.

5) If you are having difficulty accessing a BC Vaccine Card

- There may be reasons why someone may have difficulty accessing a vaccine card (for example, not having MSP, not having internet access, unable to access the process in English, needing assistance to fill out a form, not having ID or not being able to see a QR code).
- If you are having difficulty accessing a BC Vaccine card, the following options are available to have a card printed:
 - call the Province’s Call Centre at 1-833-838-2323 to get a card in the mail
 - visit [Service BC Centre](#) to get card printed in person

6) If you want to get vaccinated

- Registering is the first step to getting vaccinated.
- Options for how to register for the vaccine can be found here:
<https://www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca/s/>

7) If you have concerns about the vaccine, you can find information or speak to someone through these trusted resources:

- [Immunize BC](#)
- [HealthLinkBC](#) (or call 8-1-1) (translation and Video Relay Services available)

8) Information about the BC Vaccine Card, including where to go for help, can be found here:

- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/vaccinecard.html#help>

9) The Ministry of Health will post updates about the BC Vaccine Card as they become available:

- <https://news.gov.bc.ca/ministries/health>

CLINIC LETTERHEAD

Date: []
RE: “[Name Used]” [Legal First Name] [Legal Last Name]
DOB: []
PHN: []

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of my patient, [Name Used], who has been under my care since [month/year]. I am a [designation] in good standing with the [Registration Body], [license number].

This letter is to confirm that [Name Used] is transgender and living in [pronoun] [male/female/non-binary] gender. Any resulting discrepancy between [pronoun] identification documents and appearance is not intended to perpetrate fraud or cause harm to any individual. [Name Used] does so to increase [pronoun] personal comfort and safety.

Two-Spirit, transgender and gender diverse people have the right to be referred to by their correct name and pronoun, and to not be outed, even if they have not legally changed their name or gender. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please take steps to ensure that conversations happen in a safe and confidential way (discussing away from other patrons, using a quieter voice, etc). Consider respectfully and discretely requesting a secondary piece of ID.

Sincerely,

[Name] [Credentials]
[Contact information]