

FOR USE WHERE THERE ARE NO MANDATORY DIRECTIONS IN PLACE

Please note this policy has been developed for implementation by homecare and CHSP providers in states and territories in which there is no Public Health Order or Direction mandating a requirement for Homecare/CHSP employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19. In the absence of an Order or Direction, we strongly recommend you consider the COVID-19 guidance provided by [Safe Work Australia](#) and your state or territory's safety regulator in addition to the information found on the Fair Work Ombudsman's [COVID-19 vaccinations: workplace rights and obligations](#) webpage. We also recommend you consider the consultation provisions of your Award or Enterprise Agreement which may include the requirement to consult with relevant unions.

PLEASE DELETE THIS PAGE PRIOR TO DISTRIBUTING AND IMPLEMENTING THIS POLICY

HOME CARE COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

[insert entity name] is committed to maintaining the health and safety of its clients and Workers and to preventing the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases such as COVID-19.

We have determined that the most effective way to meet our workplace health and safety obligations, and our duty of care to our clients, who are often vulnerable, is to require that all home care Workers are vaccinated against COVID-19. This Policy sets out the measures we are taking to ensure that all relevant Workers are vaccinated and outlines the limited exemptions which are available.

This decision reflects the high risk of COVID-19 infection in the context of a public-facing working environment which requires Workers to deliver personal care, domestic assistance and/or home maintenance for clients in their homes. The decision also has regard to the increased rates of community transmission of the Delta variant of SARS-CoV-2 in Australia.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all home care Workers, including:

- any person employed by us to provide home care services;
- any person engaged to provide home care services to or for our business, regardless of whether in a paid or volunteer role; and
- any person undertaking a placement, or work experience in home care services as part of their formal education.

DEFINITIONS

COVID-19 vaccination means a COVID-19 vaccine approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for use in Australia, or where a person has been vaccinated overseas, a COVID-19 vaccine determined by the TGA to be a “recognised vaccine” ([click on link for details](#)).

Worker means staff members, volunteers and contractors.

COVID-19 VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS

COVID-19 vaccinations are an effective way of reducing the risk of spreading COVID-19 between Workers and the community at large. COVID-19 vaccinations can also reduce the severity of the impact that COVID-19 has on people if they contract the virus.

We recognise that having a vaccination, including the COVID-19 vaccination, is a personal choice. However, we have decided to introduce a requirement that:

- from [insert date] all home care Workers may only perform their duties if they have provided evidence that they have received at least the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccination; and
- from [insert date] all home care Workers may only perform their duties if they have provided evidence that they have received the second dose of a COVID-19 vaccination,

unless they are covered by an exemption set out in this Policy.

This is a lawful and reasonable direction that [insert entity name] is implementing to keep its Workers and clients and the broader community safe. It is also an important aspect of our compliance with our duty of care to our clients and obligations under workplace health and safety laws to take reasonable steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

To ensure that they have had at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccination by [insert date], Workers should take the following steps (if they have not done so already):

- If relevant, seek medical advice regarding the COVID-19 vaccination, as it relates to you.
- Where you do not fall within one of the exemptions outlined below, make appointments to receive your first and second doses of the COVID-19 vaccination.
- If you have trouble making an appointment, please contact your manager.
- When you receive your first and your second COVID-19 vaccination dose, ensure that you keep a record of these.
- Provide us with confirmation that you have received your COVID-19 vaccination, after both your first and second dose.

[Option] All employees will be allowed paid time off to attend an appointment to receive their COVID-19 vaccination upon providing proof of this appointment. [End option]

Workers can access COVID-19 vaccinations at various locations including vaccination hubs, roving clinics, general practices and some pharmacies. The dedicated **COVID-19 Vaccine Helpline 1800 020 080** (select option 2) can answer any questions you may have about vaccination and can help you book a vaccination appointment. Vaccinations are free, and you do not need a Medicare card to make an appointment or to receive the vaccination.

Information on the COVID-19 vaccines can be found on [the Department of Health website](#) and is also [available in many languages](#).

If you believe you are exempt from our vaccination requirements, as set out below, or if you choose not to be vaccinated, you should promptly notify [insert Position of relevant person] before [insert date].

CONTRAINDICATIONS TO COVID-19 VACCINATION – VALID MEDICAL EXCEPTION OR EXEMPTION

A Worker may engage in work or duties, or provide services in our business, despite not meeting the vaccination requirements above if:

- the person is unable to receive a COVID-19 vaccination because they have a recognised medical contraindication (a medical condition that prevents them from receiving the vaccination) and provides a medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner:
 - certifying that the person is unable to receive the COVID-19 vaccination because they have a recognised medical contraindication;
 - indicating whether the medical contraindication will permanently or temporarily prevent COVID-19 vaccination; and
 - if the medical contraindication only temporarily prevents a COVID-19 vaccination, specifying when the person may be able to receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

The best way to provide this evidence is by asking your medical practitioner to complete the 'COVID-19 Vaccine Medical Contraindication Form'. You can request a copy of this from [insert Position of person]

who provides the Form to Workers]. Medical exemptions under this Policy are in line with the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) [clinical guidance on COVID-19 vaccine in Australia in 2021](#).

If a registered medical practitioner certifies that a staff member has a temporary medical contraindication, which makes them unable to receive the COVID-19 vaccination, any exemption based on this only applies for the period specified in the medical certificate provided by the medical practitioner. If the medical reason continues beyond that period, the staff member must provide a new medical certificate from their doctor, regarding the medical contraindication.

Where a Worker has a genuine medical contraindication, **[insert entity name]** may consider implementing additional safety measures to protect the health and safety of the Worker and clients. These additional safety measures will be determined by the completion of risk assessments. A Worker may also seek to discuss with their manager whether redeployment is a relevant option for them.

UN-VACCINATED WORKERS WITHOUT A VALID EXCEPTION OR MEDICAL EXEMPTION

Any Worker who chooses not to have a COVID-19 vaccination by **[insert date]** and who does not have a valid medical exemption to a COVID-19 vaccination will not be able to provide the duties associated with their position as a Worker. As such, rosters or schedules will be changed (where relevant) so that only Workers who comply with the obligations set out in this Policy will provide service or perform duties.

If the Worker is an employee, they will be provided with an opportunity to discuss their circumstances with their manager. **[insert entity name]** may at its absolute discretion consider redeploying an employee to a position which does not require a COVID-19 vaccination, allowing them to take accrued annual or long service leave, or temporarily standing them down from their position without pay.

At any time from **[insert date]**, if the Worker continues to refuse to receive a COVID-19 vaccination, it may be determined the person is refusing to comply with a lawful and reasonable direction and their employment or their engagement may come to an end as a result.

RECORD KEEPING

All Workers are to provide evidence of their COVID-19 vaccination status as soon as possible. The purpose of collecting this information is:

- To enable **[insert entity name]** to comply with ongoing My Aged Care reporting responsibilities.
- To enable **[insert entity name]** to ensure that all Workers comply with the lawful and reasonable directions in this Policy.
- To enable **[insert entity name]** to take the necessary steps to if a Worker does not meet the directions in this Policy.
- As part of ensuring **[insert entity name]** is taking all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health and safety of Workers and clients, including preparing for any possible future outbreaks.

Evidence of your COVID-19 vaccination can include:

- a vaccination certificate or other evidence from a vaccine provider;
- an immunisation history statement or COVID-19 digital certificate which can be accessed from Medicare online or the Express Plus Medicare mobile app;
- a statement of your vaccination history which you can request from the Australian Immunisation Register;

- a record from a health practitioner.

[Applies to business with a turnover of \$3 mil or more] When collecting your vaccination information, *[insert entity name]* will comply with our Privacy Policy. In addition, you should note:

- *[insert information about your privacy policy]*; and
- *[insert if you are likely to disclose personal information to overseas recipients, and the countries where they are located]*.

Your vaccination information will be securely stored and kept confidential and will only be accessible to people who are required to access it as part of their role with *[insert entity name]*. Workers can request to access their vaccination record information at any time and can also request that any relevant updates are made to it.

NEW EMPLOYEES

Workers engaged after *[insert date]* will be required to comply with the COVID-19 vaccination requirements in this Policy. These requirements must be met before the employee commences their employment or a contractor or volunteer commences their engagement.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

[insert entity name] Privacy Policy

COVID-19 Vaccine Medical Contraindication Form

[Insert relevant entity documents]

REFERENCES

Legislation

[Insert any relevant legislation if Public Health Orders are made]

Links

[Are COVID-19 vaccines safe?](#)

[Australian Immunisation Register](#)

[COVID-19 vaccine information in your language](#)

[The Fair Work Ombudsman's guidance on COVID-19 vaccinations](#)