

18 February 2022

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Mark Brown

By email: fyi-request-17730-238fb905@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202117897

Tēnā koe Mark

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your follow up request (referenced H202116789) under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) on 15 December 2021 for:

*If the Issue Date is on the date the person requests the pass, then please provide documentation discussing how this was determined as the efficacy of the vaccine for early adopters could have waned by the time they Pass is issued.
You have responded to this by providing a persons eligibility criteria, which is the "outcome" of a discussion and decision making process. Our request is for documentation (meetings, discussions, communications, notes, emails etc) discussing how the issue date was to be set/determined.*

Vaccine Passes are used for providing an 'authority to access' a service, to support the Traffic light framework as part of our public health response. The Vaccine Pass is not used to determine or show if someone is 'fully immunised' which is a clinical description.

You can request a My Vaccine Pass if you are aged 12 or over and:

- have had 2 doses of the Pfizer or AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine in New Zealand, or
- been vaccinated overseas with an approved vaccine, or
- have a medical exemption.

My Vaccine Passes do not record 'issue date', and instead only include an 'expiry date'. Vaccine Passes expire 6 months from the date of issue, or on 1 June 2022, whichever comes sooner.

My Vaccine Pass expiry dates are not linked to immunity and there is currently no provision within the legislation for someone to have received two doses to be considered "not fully vaccinated" after a certain time period. My Vaccine Pass were therefore given a blanket expiry date of no later than 1 June 2022, to allow flexibility in how we respond to the changing nature of the pandemic, for example so that decisions could be made regarding the inclusion of boosters to access My Vaccine Passes. These decisions are yet to be made.

One document was found within scope of your request, entitled "*Domestic CVC – Outstanding Policy*". The document is attached to this letter as Document 1 and is released

to you in full. The presentation was used in several discussions with stakeholder groups, including clinical, public health, policy and technological stakeholders.

The National Immunisation Programme's (NIP) Programme Leadership Group (PLG) met on 18 November 2021 to make decisions on expiry dates for My Vaccine Passes in order to develop the business rules required to achieve the planned release date of My Vaccine Pass. At this meeting it was decided that the expiry date would now to be fixed at the 1 June 2022 for all domestic passes

This decision was recorded in the decision minutes below:

| <u>Recommendation</u> | <u>Decision</u> |
|---|--|
| 1. Change expiry date on certificates to be related to the date of the last dose, so that people simply cannot refresh their certificate at the end of the year and get another 6 months, which is currently the case. Suggest a 1 year from last vaccination expiry date, instead of 6 months from certificate issue as it stands. | Agreed to adopt 1 June 2022 as a blanket expiry, people can refresh certificate to add boosters. |

Please note that the substance of discussions in this meeting were not recorded. The decision was made with the knowledge held at the time around the use of boosters overseas and the considerations being made through our own advisory groups around the introduction of boosters in New Zealand. Decisions were made to allow the pass to be generated with a fixed expiry date so that these could be updated based on the changing environment.

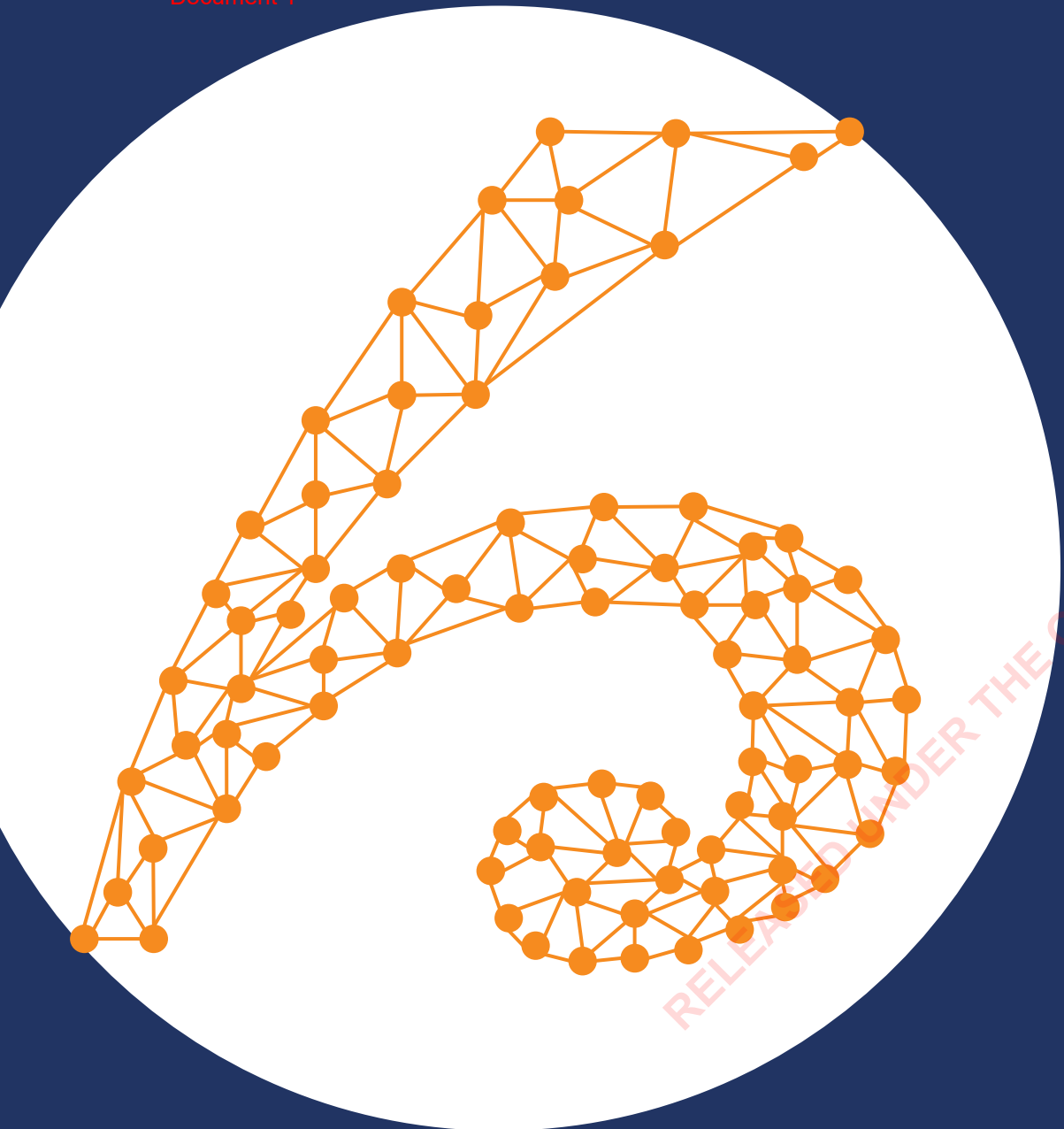
Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā



Astrid Koornneef
Director
National Immunisation Programme



Domestic CVC – Outstanding Policy

20 October 2021

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982

What the vaccination pass is (and isn't)

In the broadest sense, the initial release of the CVC achieves the following:

- It provides a digitally verifiable record that the person the pass was issued to is **considered vaccinated** for COVID-19, up **until the pass expiry** date. For the purposes of the CVC this includes:
 - people who have received a suitable schedule of a recognised COVID-19 vaccination, including vaccinations administered overseas, or
 - a very limited number of people who are medically exempted from being vaccinated for COVID-19.
- It could be used for any health status where we consider the holder to be treated the same as a vaccinated person, provided we do not care for the ability for a verifier to be able to distinguish that status from a person who is considered vaccinated.
- It *does not* provide assurance that the person presenting the pass to be verified is the person it was issued to.
- It *does not necessarily* guarantee that the person is immune from COVID-19. They may still carry or transmit the virus while immunised, or they may be exempt from vaccination.

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Process for issuing a vaccination status pass

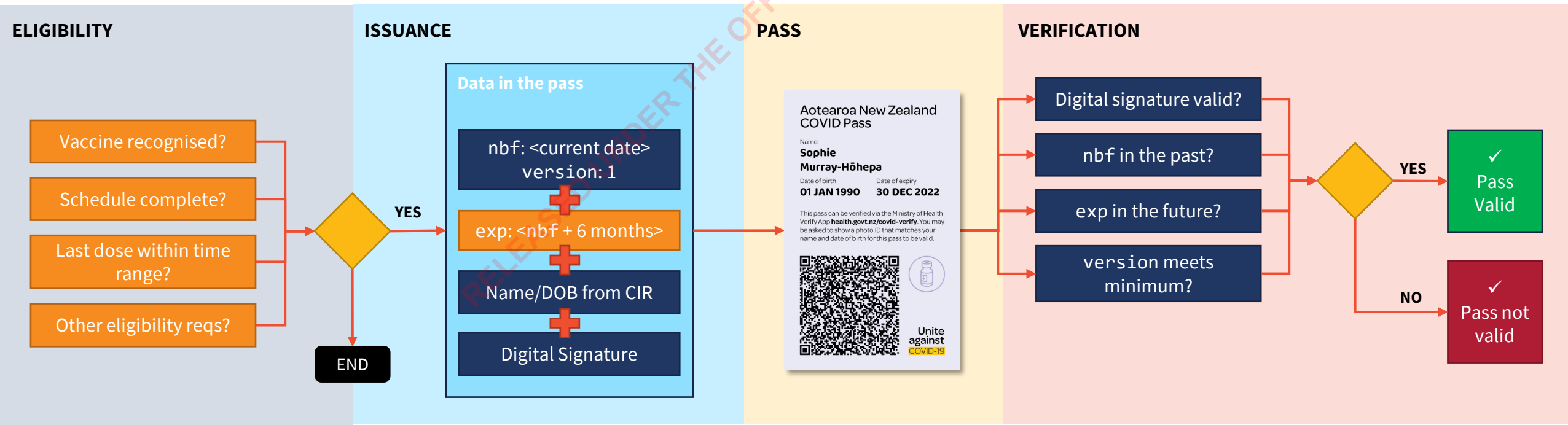
Individual is eligible for a CVC when their vaccination records meet chosen requirements. These requirements are set based on public health/clinical guidance.

This eligibility is calculated at request time. If the individual meets requirements, a pass is issued. Once issued, the pass remains valid until the pass expiry date. The expiry date can also be set by public health/clinical guidance.

If the rules change, we either need to run out the long tail of expiring passes, or invalidate all passes.

Verification checks if the signature is valid, that the pass has not expired, and that the version number of the pass is still accepted.

- These items are set by policy/rules, based on health advice
- These items are based on available technology/standards



Data elements in the pass

| Field | Name | Value | Notes |
|------------|----------------------------|---|---|
| type | The type of pass | Set to “PublicCovidPass” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be additional values if new passes are needed in future (e.g. RegionalTravelExemption) |
| version | Pass version | Set to “1” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to indicate which spec version to follow • Could be incremented to invalidate all previously issued passes with this version (the big red button) |
| nbf | Not before date | Recommended: <i>The date the certificate was requested</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not based on the date the vaccine was administered, to avoid issues around changing efficacy periods and to avoid disclosing health data • Rules about whether someone is ‘immunised’ are evaluated before a pass is issued. |
| exp | Expiry date | Recommended: <i>6 months after the nbf date.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After this date people will need to request a new certificate. It will not work after that. • Should be a fixed time period after issues to spread out renewals, and long enough that people don’t have to get one too often. • Could be 6 months, or when immunity ‘expires’, whichever is shorter, and based on vaccine product used. |
| givenName | Individual’s given names | As recorded in the NHI | |
| familyName | Individual’s family name | Optional, as recorded in the NHI | |
| dob | Individual’s date of birth | As recorded in the NHI | |



Levers to control how the pass is issued and used

| Lever | Affects | Options |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Which vaccines are recognised | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether a pass is issued or not How long a pass is valid for | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More recognised vaccine products includes more people vaccinated overseas. Fewer may exclude people. Different vaccinations may be effective for different lengths of time, and could influence the pass expiry time |
| How many doses are required | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether a pass is issued or not | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowing after only one dose of any approved vaccine means people can get a pass, but it is perhaps a less effective public health measure |
| Any delay after receiving a dose | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When a pass becomes valid Whether a pass is issued | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requiring 14 days from last dose of full schedule aligns to generally accepted advice of when 'fully vaccinated status is achieved'. Makes it slightly more tricky to issue passes at the time of vaccination, although not impossible. Issuing immediately after the 'last dose' might make it slightly more accessible to issue, but perhaps a less effective public health measure. |
| Other conditions to issue a pass | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether a pass is issued or not | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could include people who are exempted from being vaccinated, or who have a health status where we'd otherwise want them to be <i>considered as a vaccinated person</i> for the purposes of the CVC. |
| The expiry period of the pass | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How long the pass is valid for for | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shorter period reduces risk that if the rules change we have lots of passes that remain valid Longer period means people have to get a pass less frequently |
| Minimum accepted version | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a pass is valid or not | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If necessary, the minimum required version can be incremented to invalidate all passes with that version. Only to be used in exceptional circumstances where existing issued passes present a real public health risk. Mitigated by a shorter expiry period at the time of issuance |



Outstanding questions for issuing a pass

Eligibility to request a CVC:

- What vaccination products are accepted for issuing a domestic pass? Do we require a booster for some products?
- Does someone need to have a complete schedule, or can a pass be issued on a partial schedule?
- If a full schedule, is the pass only valid after X days from the schedule being completed?
- How long after their last dose can they request a pass (before they would need to get another shot)?

Once a CVC is issued:

- How long does the pass last for before it expires?

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Accepted vaccinations for creating domestic certs

| Rule | Number of Vax | Vax Types | Minimum Not before Date (nbf) | Create a domestic cert | How long can people be continue to generate passes | Expires |
|------|---------------|---------------|---|------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | Pfizer/Pfizer | Date of last vax or date of turn on of system | Yes | 12 months from date of last vax | 180 days from Minimum not before date |
| 2 | 1 | Pfizer | N/A | No | | N/A |
| 3 | 1 | Exemption | From Exemption Date | Yes | | 90 days from creation |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Additional rule types in development:

1. Different vaccination types
2. Incorporate vaccinations from different sources (eg. international)
3. Incorporate different schedules (eg. boosters)

