

# Tō mātou whakaaro mō te kano āraimate mate KOWHEORI-19

## Our position on COVID-19 vaccination

Our top priority is the health, safety and wellbeing of our customers, our workforce and the communities we serve. We are using every available tool to help reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in our communities.

### You should know

We're currently reviewing our approach to vaccination. While we carry out our review, the policies and guidelines below remain in place. You can read more about the review of our risk assessment, policies and guidelines on [OurAuckland](#).

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Vaccinations play an important role in keeping everyone safe, especially in our workplaces, services and facilities. Led by experts and scientific evidence, we've carefully considered the role of vaccinations in helping to protect people from becoming infected or falling seriously ill from COVID-19.

We've also been guided by central government requirements to help manage the spread of the virus, legal obligations, such as roles covered by vaccination orders, and our duty of care to look after our people and the people of Auckland.

Our approach has taken into consideration the health and safety risks to our organisation and our communities and is being reviewed regularly to ensure we continue to manage any risks and new developments as effectively as possible.

Meanwhile, because of the very real and present risk of contracting and transmitting the COVID-19 virus, evidence of a My Vaccine Pass is currently required for:

- Employees who work in our facilities, offices, or out in the field
- Contractors and volunteers who work in our facilities and offices, or who work under our direct control and influence
- Elected members in order to enter council offices and meeting spaces
- All customers entering council facilities who fall within a My Vaccine Pass requirement.

Evidence of a My Vaccine Pass is not currently required for:

- Customers younger than 12 years and 3 months and school-aged children participating in education outside the classroom activities and school-organised sports.
- Customers who are accessing a service outside a council-controlled and staffed facility or confined space, such as library click and collect customers, park users and enforcement customers, such as animal and noise control
- Council staff who don't work within our offices, facilities or out in the field and have been given an exception to the requirement.

Additionally, third party hirers of our sites, buildings or facilities where no council staff are present can choose whether they work within the COVID-19 Protection Framework or require a My Vaccine Pass.

Below you will find more detailed information and background relating to vaccinations and how it applies to our people, customers, elected members and contractors.

## A vaccination policy for our people

We have developed a vaccination policy for our people in consultation with our workforce.

The policy currently requires all our employees who work in our facilities, offices or out in the field, and a range of people who work for us, to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

This policy was agreed after carefully considering feedback from our people, looking closely at the risk posed by COVID-19 and how we could best manage it.

Our top priority in making this decision is the health and safety of our people and that of our customers and the communities we serve.

What you need to know:

- When you engage face-to-face with an Auckland Council employee, you will be engaging with a vaccinated staff member.
- Our policy was implemented on 3 December 2021 and staff were given until 17 January 2022 to comply with the requirement to be fully vaccinated.
- Some of our people remain unvaccinated, and we're working with them on their options. Until we've reached an agreement with them, they won't be able to enter council workplaces unless they're fully vaccinated.

To learn more about how we developed this policy:

- [Read more about our staff vaccination policy on OurAuckland](#)
- [Read our staff vaccination policy \(PDF 235KB\)](#)
- [Read a summary of advice to the Executive Leadership team \(PDF 139KB\)](#)
- [Read a summary of feedback from our staff on this policy \(PDF 616KB\)](#)
- [Read the risk assessment documentation that informed our policy \(PDF 816KB\)](#).

## Vaccination guidelines for our elected members

Auckland Council has agreed vaccination guidelines for the Mayor, 20 councillors and 149 local board members, around access to council offices and meeting spaces across the region.

Allowing elected members to perform their democratic and representative roles, while maintaining their health and safety and that of staff and the public, was a key consideration in the final decision.

What you need to know:

- During the Red setting of the COVID-19 Protection Framework, political meetings and workshops are being held virtually. This reduces the risk to individuals, as well as the risk of an exposure event that might impact multiple members at the same time, which could affect a local board or committee's ability to reach a quorum and make decisions.
- Under the Orange and Green settings, the council can support more physical attendance at meetings and workshops and will align to organisational guidelines around office and meeting space capacity. This will include physical distancing requirements to ensure the safety of staff and members of

the public, and a mixture of in-person and hybrid meetings to ensure there is no disruption to meeting schedules.

- To ensure the safety of our staff, when our offices and meeting spaces are open, only those elected members who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will be able to attend meetings in person or work in council offices.
- Elected members who are not vaccinated, or don't want to disclose their vaccination status, are being asked to continue working remotely during periods where there is a risk of the virus circulating in the community. Council staff will continue to support them to work remotely and participate in all meetings and workshops online.
- The guidelines apply to the council's offices and meeting spaces. If an elected member wants to attend a local community meeting or hold a meeting with a constituent, they will need to meet the requirements of the venue of that meeting or meeting organisers.
- The guidelines will be reviewed in line with changes to COVID-19 Protection Framework.

To learn more about how we developed these guidelines:

- Read more about the guidelines on [OurAuckland](#)
- [Read our elected member guidelines \(PDF 100KB\)](#)
- [Read the risk assessment documentation that informed our policy \(PDF 914KB\)](#).

## Our interim customer vaccination position

All our staffed services and facilities will require the use of vaccination passes until the end of June 2022, although this position can be altered at any time when risk factors change.

We made this decision after considering several factors, including the government's [COVID-19 Protection Framework](#) (traffic light system) and vaccination order.

What you need to know:

- This position helps to protect our staff and customers, including those more vulnerable and children under the age of 12. It enables us to reduce the risk of any potential spread of COVID-19 within our facilities.
- We also comply with government-mandated vaccination requirements, for example in our education-based services and all council staff that work in our facilities must be vaccinated.
- Vaccine passes are not required at any of our facilities for anyone under 12 years and 3 months and school-aged children participating in education outside the classroom activities and school-organised sports.
- We will not ask our people to attend a call-out or visit a site if they don't believe the right COVID-19 safety measures are in place.
- Our sites are also covered by rigorous cleaning schedules and additional COVID protection measures are in place.
- We will undertake a review of the risk assessment that informs our position each month, which will allow us to adapt to any changes in Government health policies or risk levels.

Facilities that require vaccination passes:

- Gyms and fitness functions
- Learn to Swim programmes (for customers older than 12 years and 3 months)
- Recreation and leisure centres
- Pools and aquatic centres
- Holiday parks
- Libraries
- Arts facilities
- Community centres
- Animal shelters
- Service centres (integrated and standalone)
- Cemetery offices (with alternatives)
- Visitor centres – Arataki and Auckland Botanic Gardens
- Tipping Point (Waitākere) recycling centre.

To learn more about how we developed this position:

- Read more about the policy on [OurAuckland](#)
- [Read the risk assessment documentation that informed our position \(PDF 881KB\)](#).

# Using our services if you are not vaccinated

People without vaccination passes will still be able to access our services. The service may be delivered to unvaccinated customers in a different way than before.

Our obligation to our communities is to have our facilities available for use and provide alternatives to those without a vaccination pass. For example, in our libraries, we have continued to provide our highly popular Wi-Fi, digital and 'click-and-collect' services.

Facilities that do not require vaccination passes:

- Baches, camping sites and lodges (regional parks)
- Community venues for hire through booking
- Cemeteries (excluding offices)
- Waste transfer stations.

## Why we have applied this policy and the impact on unvaccinated customers

First and foremost, our vaccination policies and guidelines have been developed to protect our staff and customers, including those more vulnerable and children under the age of 12. They enable us to reduce the risk of any potential spread of COVID-19 within our council buildings, amongst our workforce and in our facilities.

The government's COVID Protection Framework makes allowances for public facilities to open at each 'traffic light' setting. However, it also allows local government organisations to make informed decisions on how they manage their facilities.

As an operational matter, the decision to require the use of vaccination passes at our staffed services and facilities was made by the council's Executive Leadership team based on government guidance and our own risk assessments.

The council's Governing Body were informed of the decision that was made.

While not everyone will agree with this approach, we feel it is the best way of managing safe access to our facilities for our staff and customers.

You can read the risk assessments for each policy (or guideline) in the above sections. These documents are referenced for source information and the following links offer additional information:

- [Government Unite Against COVID website](#)
- [Ministry of Health COVID-19 resources](#)

## Our request to our customers

Follow the [Ministry of Health](#) rules. This is for your safety and for the safety of our people.

Support us by using the full range of risk management measures that we have implemented by:

- Wearing face masks that are compliant with Government guidelines
- Physical distancing
- Record keeping and scanning in
- Using hand sanitiser (provided).

Like you, our people have had to navigate their way through this pandemic. This has been challenging for us all.

We are here to help you. Remember to treat our staff with kindness and respect.

## A policy for our contractors

Like our employees, contractors who supply services on our behalf will often interact with our customers, and work in or use our buildings, sites and facilities.

The vaccination policy for our contractors was finalised following consultation with many of our contractors and suppliers and agreed after carefully considering the feedback they gave.

What you need to know:

- The contractor vaccination policy requires contractors who provide services on behalf of, and under the direct control and influence of the council, and also requires them to interact in person with other staff, customers or members of the community, to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.
- This sits alongside our staff vaccination policy, which requires any contractors who provide services inside an Auckland Council workplace, to be fully vaccinated.
- Some contractors who have minimal or no interaction with council staff or members of the public, and don't need to access any council buildings, aren't required to be vaccinated. This also applies where the contractor has done a

risk assessment using the tool provided in the policy and determined that the risk is low.

- We also don't require anyone carrying out their work for us in their own office, premises or site, to be vaccinated.

To learn more about how we developed this policy:

- Read more about the policy on [OurAuckland](#)
- [Read our contractor vaccination policy \(PDF 296KB\)](#)
- [Read the risk assessment documentation that informed our policy \(PDF 146KB\)](#).

## Council-controlled organisations

Our policies do not apply to council-controlled organisations (CCOs) like Auckland Transport, Auckland Unlimited, Eke Panuku and Watercare. Our CCOs have their own responsibilities under the [Health and Safety at Work Act](#) and have formed their own policies.

- [Auckland Unlimited](#)
- [Eke Panuku vaccination policy](#)

## Official information requests

[Find information provided to requestors under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act.](#)