

COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

Effective date 14 December 2021

Introduction

Since early 2020 all countries around the world have been facing a global pandemic as a result of the coronavirus known as COVID-19. New Zealand followed an elimination strategy to keep the country free from COVID-19 while the population was vulnerable and unvaccinated.

New Zealand has moved to the next phase of managing COVID-19 in our community with a highly vaccinated population. We have moved from an elimination to suppression strategy and acceptance of community transmission of COVID-19.

The COVID-19 Protection Framework (also known as the traffic light system) introduces a new system to manage COVID-19 in the community.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA) a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) must identify whether there is a risk to the health of their workers from exposure to COVID-19 at their workplace. Where a risk is identified, employers must eliminate the risk, so far as is reasonably practicable. When elimination is not possible, they must reduce the risk so far as reasonably practicable.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish and communicate Upper Hutt City Councils position regarding COVID-19 vaccination and its implication for our employees and volunteers. This is based on:

- Our requirements under the Public Health Orders.
- Our obligation to provide a safe work environment without risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- As a Council, we have an obligation to our community and should be encouraging vaccination to reduce the potential risk to the community for exposure to infection.

Scope

This COVID-19 Vaccination Policy applies to Upper Hutt City Council employees who are either covered by the requirements of the Public Health Order or whose role is deemed to require vaccination following the risk assessment process that was undertaken. All employees covered by this policy are required to comply with the policy in its entirety.

Council volunteers are classed as workers under the HSWA; therefore, they need to meet the requirements of this policy. We will also ensure contractors meet the requirements of this policy if the role they perform is covered under a Public Health Order or they work in a role identified as requiring vaccination.

Policy

Council strongly encourages all employees to receive the COVID-19 vaccination as this is the main form of defence against COVID-19.

Employees covered by this policy are required to be fully vaccinated (two doses) with an approved Ministry of Health COVID-19 Vaccine and are required to provide Council with evidence of vaccination within the timeframes set out below in Appendix A.

The timeframes have been set in accordance with the Public Health Order requirements or with business requirements following a risk assessment process.

We know that additional periodic vaccination may be required for COVID-19. In this case, employees covered by this policy will be required to continue to receive periodic booster vaccinations as required based on the Ministry of Health public health advice, in order to remain fully vaccinated in accordance with this Policy. Employees who are not fully vaccinated in accordance with this Policy will be required to get vaccinated at the earliest opportunity, but no later than the specified date set in the Public Health Order (if it applies to their role) or the date identified in Appendix A.

Employees will be required to provide evidence of vaccination; this process is already under way for employees working in roles covered by the Public Health Order, those employees that go into education services or corrections facilities as part of their role.

Where an employee is not able to be vaccinated with an approved COVID-19 vaccine due to a medical condition they must seek an exemption. There is a process via the Ministry of Health that employees must go through to gain an exemption. If this situation applies to you, please speak with your Manager or the Performance and Capability team in advance of the required vaccination dates.

Work that may only be undertaken by a Vaccinated Person:

Roles covered by the Governments mandatory vaccinations order (COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccinations) Order 2021).

Some of the Council's workforce is covered by the Mandatory Order. Accordingly, they are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to be able to continue to perform work covered by the Mandatory Order. This includes employees who have contact with children or students in the course of carrying out work for or at an affected education service.

The Council has already identified specific roles that this order covers and are working through the implications with the employees that this affects. Employees were required to have a first vaccination by 15 November 2021 and a second vaccination by 1 January 2022.

Future Mandates or changes to the order may affect this policy, employees will be advised of any changes.

Risk Assessments

Employers can require work be done by a vaccinated worker (not covered by the Order), if a risk assessment identifies this is necessary for work related health and safety purposes.

Council has undertaken a health and safety risk assessment of all council roles in accordance with the Health and Safety at work Act 2015 (HSWA) and the current Worksafe guidelines on how to decide what work requires a vaccinated employee. These risk assessments were undertaken by Managers and Team Leaders in conjunction with employees.

From this process Council has identified roles where there is a high risk of being exposed to COVID-19. High risk roles were identified as scoring between 23-35 via the risk assessment process. After considering the existing controls we have in place such as public health measures - mask wearing, distancing, capacity limits and staying home if sick. These controls will not mitigate the risk posed down to an acceptable level; the only effective control is requiring staff that undertake these roles to be fully vaccinated. The list of high-risk roles which have been identified as roles which should only be conducted by a vaccinated person are listed in Appendix A.

Those unable or choosing not to receive a vaccination

Council recognises that some employees may be unable to for medical reasons, or decide against, vaccination.

In some situations, employees may not be able to be vaccinated with an approved COVID-19 vaccine due to a medical condition and they may be able to apply to get an exemption from being vaccinated. Applications for a medical exemption need to be made to the Ministry of Health.

We will work with those employees that are unable or choose not to receive a vaccination and where possible will look for ways to accommodate their needs. For some roles there may be other controls that could be implemented to minimise the risk, though vaccination is the most effective mitigation of the risk posed by COVID-19.

We will also consider options like redeployment before giving a worker notice of termination. However, there may be instances when there are no options for redeployment especially if many roles within council require an employee to be fully vaccinated, and other options like working from home are not realistic. During the time that an employee does not meet the vaccination obligations of this policy and while we are working through with them to look at alternative options, we may require the employee to remain away from work or work from a different location or undertake alternative duties.

New Employees

Any offers of employment made to new employees may be contingent on the applicant being fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Roles where there is a legal requirement to be vaccinated (covered by the governments mandatory vaccination orders). Any new employee joining in a high-risk role (as assessed through the risk assessment) will also be required to be fully vaccinated before they commence employment

Where there is a lawful reason for requiring that certain work be carried out by a vaccinated person, a hiring manager may request that applicants for that role confirm their vaccination status as a pre-condition of employment.

Record Keeping and Privacy

Employees or prospective employees will be required to provide evidence of vaccination by the dates specified under Appendix A in this policy or as otherwise directed. Any vaccination information collected, used, and stored under this Policy will be handled in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020 and any other applicable legal requirements.

If you have any privacy concerns you can speak with the Privacy Officer or our General Counsel, who is responsible for our compliance with the Privacy Act 2020.

Support

Council has put in place measures to support people to get vaccinated, including allowing employees reasonable paid time off during working hours to get vaccinated. We will continue with this support.

If you are feeling anxious or uncertain, please do not hesitate to reach out to Councils confidential employee assistance programme provider Vitae on 0508 664 981.

Speak with your GP if you have any questions about the vaccine or COVID-19.

Employee obligations under this policy

Employees are required to meet the obligations outlined in this policy.

If an employee fails to advise Council of their vaccination status or does not meet the vaccination requirements of this policy their manager will first engage with the employee about this to seek to understand their barriers to vaccination such as health related concerns, concerns about the vaccination, or why they are refusing to provide information relating to their vaccination status.

If an employee continues to fail to disclose their vaccination status, they will be treated as unvaccinated under this policy.

If an employee decides not to get vaccinated, we will consider options like redeployment before giving a worker notice of termination. However, there are likely to be instances when there are no options for redeployment, and other options like working from home are not realistic.

Roles and Responsibilities:

| Roles | Responsibilities |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Employees | Employees covered by this policy are responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being fully vaccinated with an approved COVID-19 vaccine and providing evidence of vaccination on or before the required date.• Continuing to receive periodic vaccinations as required, based on public health advice, to remain fully vaccinated in accordance with the policy.• Notifying their manager if they are seeking a medical exemption from complying with the policy.• Notifying their manager if they are otherwise unwilling or unable to comply with the policy. |

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| | A table is contained in Appendix A of this policy which sets out the date by which employees must be fully vaccinated (two doses) with an approved COVID-19 vaccine and provide the Council with evidence of vaccination. |
| Manager | <p>Managers are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring employees covered by this policy are aware of the requirement to be fully vaccinated with an approved COVID-19 vaccine and provide evidence under the policy. • Ensuring job advertisements and recruitment processes for roles covered by this policy set out the requirements to be fully vaccinated with an approved COVID-19 vaccine and provide evidence of vaccination under the policy. • Managing requests from employees who need paid time off to get vaccinated. • Working through the process with their team and seeking support and guidance in any of the following instances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If an employee notifies them that they are seeking a medical exemption as they have a medical condition that prevents them from getting the vaccine. ○ An employee advises them that they will not be complying with the policy and getting fully vaccinated with an approved COVID-19 vaccine. ○ An employee is refusing to confirm if they are vaccinated. • Handling any information associated with people's health or wellbeing sensitively and in accordance with the Privacy Act. |

Other Controls – Public Health Measures

In addition to vaccinations, we will need to continue to implement all reasonably practicable control measures to be compliant with all control measures required through public health orders and Ministry of Health guidance. This includes:

- Meeting all up-to-date infection prevention controls
- Complying with all public health requirements and guidance, including physical distancing, mask wearing, limits on people gathering, record keeping and scanning requirements, staying home when sick
- Identifying risks and eliminating, or otherwise controlling them as reasonably practicable

Appendix A

This table sets out the roles which must be full vaccinated (two doses) with a Ministry of Health approved COVID-19 vaccine and the dates employees must provide the Council with evidence of vaccination.

| Role/facility | First Vaccination By | Second Vaccination By |
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| <p>All roles covered by COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccinations) Order 2021 covering Education and/or Corrections Mandate (already identified)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Management Officer • Aquatics Coordinator • Aquatic Programmes Instructor • Assistant Librarian – Heritage • Assistant Librarian – Outreach Services • Building Compliance Officer • Building Control Officer – Consents • Building Control Officer – Inspections • Building Control Inspector Cadet • Building Control Services Manager • Community Development Advisor • Community Development Advisor- Youth Employment • Community Development Team Leader • Community Heritage Coordinator • Customer Experience Outreach Services Team Leader • Economic Development Manager • Holiday Programme Supervisor/Assistant Supervisor • Librarian – Children and Youth Central Services • Librarian – Heritage and Research • Librarian – Outreach Services • Librarian – Youth Engagement • Marketing and Communications Coordinator • Marketing and Promotions Advisor Recreation Services • Parks and Reserves Officer • Parks Officer • Play Advisor • Recreation Advisor – Clubs and Schools • Recreation Advisor – Community | <p>15 November 2021</p> | <p>1 January 2022</p> |

| Role/facility | First Vaccination By | Second Vaccination By |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation Services Manager • Road Safety Co-ordinator • Senior Advisor Communications and Engagement • Senior Building Control Officer – Consents • Senior Building Control Officer – Inspections • Senior Librarian – Children and Youth Services • Senior Waste Minimisation Officer • Sustainability Officer • Team Leader – Activation • Team Leader – Aquatics • Waste Minimisation Officer | | |
| <p>List of roles identified via risk assessment process as high-risk roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Library Staff (some roles within Library already identified under Education Mandate) • All Recreation Services Staff (some roles within Recreation Services already identified under Education Mandate) • Assets and Programme Manager • Assets Team Leader • Building Support Officer • Building Control Services: Some roles within the building team were covered under the Education/Corrections Mandate and are on the above list) • Business Analyst • Business Improvement Manager • Chief Executive • Compliance Services Manager • Compliance Services Officer – Parking • Compliance Services - Some roles within the compliance team were covered under the Education/Corrections Mandate and are on the above list) • Customer Services Manager • Customer Services Team Leader • Customer Services Officer • Development Engineer • Director Asset Management and Operations • Director Community Services | 20 December 2021 | 17 January 2022 |

| Role/facility | First Vaccination By | Second Vaccination By |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director Finance, Risk and Digital Solutions • Director Planning and Regulatory Services • Director Strategy, Partnerships and Growth • Environmental Health Officer/Technician • Facilities Officer • Horticulture Officer • Parks Officer – Community Assets • Principal Assets Advisor • Project Manager • Projects Officer -AMO • Recycling Station Officer • Roothing Engineer – Operations • Roothing Engineer – Renewals • Roothing Inspector • Senior Asset Analyst (RAMM or AssetFinda) • Senior Roothing Engineer – Operations • Waste Minimisation Officer • All Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Staff. To carry out a role within the EOC a staff member will need to be vaccinated. The EOC has the following functions/desk roles and support staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Controllers ○ Deputy Controllers ○ Recovery Managers ○ Controllers Assistants ○ Iwi/Maori Liaison ○ Response Managers ○ Risk and Legal Advisors ○ EOC Support Staff ○ Safety Team: Function Manager and Function Team ○ Intelligence Team: Function Manager and Function Team ○ Planning Team: Function Manager and Function Team ○ Operations Team: Function Manager and Function Team ○ Logistics Team: Function Manager and Function Team | | |

| Role/facility | First Vaccination By | Second Vaccination By |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Public Information Management (PIM): Function Manager and Function Team ○ Welfare Team: Function Manager and Function Team | | |