

 KAIPARA DISTRICT <small>The Ocean's Two Harbours</small>	Title of Policy	COVID-19 Vaccination Policy		
	Sponsor	Hannah Gillespie, General Manager People and Capability	Authorised by	Executive Team
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Kaipara District Council (**Council**) is committed to ensuring the health and safety of our employees, contractors, consultants and volunteers. The Council recognises that COVID-19 poses a real and serious risk to the safety of its people and the community at large.

In accordance with our health and safety obligations and guidance from Worksafe, we are required to take reasonably practicable steps to put in place control measures to eliminate, and where not possible, minimise any such risk. COVID-19 vaccinations are an effective way of reducing the risk of spreading COVID-19 and can reduce the severity of the impact that COVID-19 has on people if they contract the virus.

As the COVID-19 pandemic situation evolves, the Council will review this policy and may amend it or revoke it from time to time, on reasonable notice to you.

Purpose

To outline the Council's requirements and management of health and safety in relation to potential exposure to and transmission of COVID-19. The Council recognises that successful health and safety management is best achieved through engagement and good faith co-operation with our people.

As a local government organisation, we have many public touch points across the District, with most roles requiring contact with the public. This potentially exposes our people to greater risk of infection or transmission of COVID-19 and/or transmitting COVID-19 within the community.

Scope

This policy applies to all our employees (permanent, fixed term, casual and on call), contractors, consultants and volunteers who undertake work on behalf of the Council.

Vaccination Requirement

The Council has completed risk assessments for all roles employed by Council. The Council's risk assessments identified three categories of work as being at a higher risk of infection or transmission of COVID-19 which cannot be sufficiently mitigated with existing control measures. The higher-risk categories are:

- a) Customer facing;
- b) Field officer; and
- c) Office-based roles (high contact).

From 17 January 2022 all Council employees, contractors, consultants and volunteers performing work within the above identified high-risk categories must be **fully vaccinated** against COVID-19.

Fully vaccinated means having received a full course of any of the COVID-19 vaccines in accordance with Ministry of Health guidelines and includes any booster vaccinations.

COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate

The Council has also identified the following workplaces/sites as being at higher-risk of infection or transmission of COVID-19 and/or at greater risk to the community at large:

- a) Kai Iwi Lakes Campgrounds (Workplace)
- b) Glinks Gully Campground (Workplace)
- c) Northern Wairoa War Memorial Hall (Site)
- d) Lake Waikare Education Centre (Site)

The Council will use the COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate (**CVC**) system at these workplaces/sites. The CVC system requires all people attending the workplace/sites (including visitors) to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and provide proof of their vaccination status. The workplaces/sites that the Council will use the CVC system at may be updated from time to time on reasonable notice to you. The Council will consult with you if this would affect your employment.

Therefore, from 10 December 2021, all Council employees, contractors, consultants and volunteers performing work at the workplaces/sites listed above must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and will be required to use a CVC for entry.

Exemptions

If someone believes they have grounds for an exemption from this policy, Council will manage that on an individual basis. However, in the absence of the Council's ability to make reasonable arrangements or any available and suitable redeployment opportunities, the Council may have to consider termination of employment. This would however be the last resort and only after all reasonable alternatives have been exhausted.

Paid time off for vaccination

Employees are entitled to reasonable paid time off during normal working hours to receive a dose of COVID-19 vaccine (provided the time off would not unreasonably disrupt our business or the performance of an employee's employment duties). Before taking paid time off, employees and their manager should agree the date and time on one or more days which they intend to receive a dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and the amount of time that the employee expects to take as paid time off in order to receive that dose, including any time spent travelling to or from a location to receive the dose.

Attendance at Work

Employees who experience COVID-19 symptoms must immediately notify their Manager or Team Leader. Employees may be required to leave the workplace and use any existing sick leave entitlement. The Council may consider providing COVID-19 special leave in accordance with the Council's COVID-19 Leave Guidelines, subject to approval from the Chief Executive or a General Manager.

Employees who have symptoms of COVID-19 should take a COVID-19 test in accordance with the relevant Ministry of Health New Zealand guidelines. Employees must not attend the workplace until

such time that they are deemed safe to return in accordance with the relevant Ministry of Health New Zealand guidelines. The Council may require confirmation and/or evidence of a negative Covid-19 test before a return to work.

Employees that have been at a location of interest must follow Ministry of Health and Public Health guidance.

Working at other locations or meeting with third parties

If employees are asked or invited, for work-related reasons as part of their role, to:

- attend in-person any other location and that location does **not** use vaccination certificates for entry; and/or
- meet with a third party who is unvaccinated or their vaccination status is unknown;

they must ask the meeting organiser what health and safety measures are in place to protect them. Employees are expected to attend and follow the health and safety protocols in place for each location. In addition, employees must ensure they wear a face mask, maintain a 1 metre distance and use hand sanitiser upon leaving the location and follow Council health and safety protocols. If an employee is uncomfortable with the measures in place, they should discuss with their manager in the first instance or their P&C Business Partner as soon as possible.

COVID-19 Testing

In addition to requiring some roles to be performed by vaccinated workers, our risk assessment has determined that COVID-19 testing provides an additional layer of protection as there is the potential for a person to have been infected with COVID-19 but not have any symptoms. Therefore, as part of our health and safety management planning and control measures, employees may be directed to undertake COVID-19 testing. Given the serious risk that COVID-19 poses, the Council considers this to be a reasonable and practicable health and safety measure. However, we will consult with employees on any testing requirements that may be applicable to them.

Where regular surveillance testing is implemented, all relevant employees will be informed of the testing process, including when testing will occur, how often, the method of testing, and the location of the testing stations. This will be subject to change, however, testing will occur during work time and on pay.

The Council will not receive or keep a record of all test results, but rather, we will be notified of any positive COVID-19 test results which will include details of the employee's full name and date of birth. If notified of a positive test we will take all reasonable and necessary steps, including contacting public health officials and cooperating with contact tracing. The Council may also have to notify others in accordance with this policy.

Positive test result

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, in order to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 we may need to inform other employees and customers of the potential exposure to COVID-19 so that they can take appropriate steps to watch for symptoms, be tested and/or to self-isolate as directed by the Ministry of Health. The Council will endeavour to do this without identifying the employee who is the source of the exposure. However, there may be times where this is unavoidable (e.g. due to a small workgroup where only one person is absent). The Privacy Act 2020 allows us to disclose an employee's identity if we

believe that this is necessary to prevent or lessen the risk of serious threat to someone's health or safety. In that case details would be provided on a strictly need to know basis and with the requirement that the recipient(s) keep the information confidential.

Proof of vaccination

Where roles are identified as requiring vaccination through the risk assessment process employees are required to provide proof of their vaccination status to the Council for the purpose of assessing whether you are vaccinated or you have been issued with a COVID-19 vaccination certificate.

Proof of vaccination must be by one of the following methods:

- a digital vaccination certificate;
- a copy of your vaccination record from the Ministry of Health My Covid Record page;
- a vaccination confirmation letter from the Ministry of Health; or
- an official record of an approved vaccination endorsed by the Ministry of Health (or equivalent from OECD jurisdictions).

The vaccination record cards provided to individuals at the time of vaccination appointments do not constitute proof of vaccination.

Individuals who do not provide proof of vaccination status, will be presumed to be unvaccinated against COVID-19.

Privacy

The Council recognises that an individual's vaccination status is personal information. All vaccination information disclosed will be collected, stored, used, and disposed of in compliance with our obligations under the Privacy Act 2020.

All vaccination-related information provided will be stored securely. Access to vaccination information will be limited to the People and Capability team and the General Manager – People & Capability. The Council may also disclose employees' vaccination status (and proof of vaccination status) to third parties so they can ascertain whether the employee is vaccinated or have been issued with a COVID-19 vaccination certificate.

Applicants for employment

All new employees from an identified higher-risk category are required to be fully vaccinated. The Council requires all applicants to provide proof of their vaccination status. The Council will consider on a case by case basis whether it can reasonably accommodate new employees with a valid medical exemption or other valid reason for not being fully vaccinated.

The Council will be entitled to discontinue an application/recruitment process subject to an applicant's vaccination status. Failure to provide evidence that is satisfactory to Council may result in the recruitment process being discontinued, or any offer of employment being revoked.

Potential impact to employment

Refusal to be vaccinated or to disclose vaccination status

While we strongly encourage vaccination, it is a personal decision for our employees to make. A decision not to be vaccinated will not be treated as a disciplinary matter. However, it may have implications for an employee's ongoing employment if that role can only be undertaken by a vaccinated person.

Our process in this situation will be to:

- a) Re-affirm vaccination status;
- b) Discuss the employee's reasons for not being vaccinated (if they are willing to share these) and whether they intend to be vaccinated and, if so, when;
- c) Consider and deal with any potential exemptions (for example, medical exemptions are likely to be very limited given that there is only a very small percentage of the population who cannot be safely vaccinated);
- d) Explore all suitable alternatives and any available and suitable redeployment opportunities.

Termination of Employment

Following engagement with the employee, and exploration of all reasonable alternatives that may be available, if no suitable alternative is identified, or agreed between the parties, the Council may consider ending the employment relationship. The employee will be informed of the potential for this, and provided reasonable opportunity to put forward their views, before any decision will be made.