

# Covid-19 Vaccination Requirements Policy

## 1. PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

This COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements (**Policy**) applies to all employees and other workplace participants of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT). This Policy is subject to review annually, and from time to time in line with changing occupational health and safety risks and public health advice issued under Pandemic Orders or by the Chief Health Officer of Victoria.

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (**OHS Act**) requires that employers ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that they provide and maintain a working environment for their employees that is safe and without risks to health and that other persons are not exposed to health and safety risks arising from the Employer's activities.

The following principles underpin this Policy regarding the vaccination requirements

- VIT is responsible for providing a safe working environment, consistent with the duties of employers under the OHS Act. Both infection and serious illness resulting from COVID-19 are workplace health and safety risks
- Vaccination is a reasonably practicable measure in controlling the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in the working environment of VIT
- To ensure that VIT discharges its obligations under the OHS Act, employees and other workplace participants are to attend the workplace only when they have an 'up to date' COVID-19 vaccination status.

## 2. SCOPE

This Policy outlines the vaccination requirements for employees and other workplace participants attending VIT's workplace, to ensure a safe workplace for all employees, stakeholders and visitors.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Acceptable Certification</b>	<p>Acceptable certification for the purpose of determining an employee's status as an Excepted Person is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a current COVID-19 digital certificate issued by Services Australia and displayed through the Medicare App, Service Victoria App or equivalent smartphone wallet, that states that the person is unable to receive a dose, or a further dose, of any COVID-19 vaccine that is available in Australia; or</li> <li>b) a printed version of the COVID-19 digital certificate referred to in subclause (a) above; or</li> <li>c) a current Immunisation History Statement displayed through the Medicare App, that states that the person is unable to receive a dose of a COVID vaccine that is available in Australia (whether that person has already received one or two doses of a COVID vaccine); or</li> </ul>

	d) a printed version of the Immunisation History Statement referred to in subclause (c) above.
<b>ATAGI</b>	Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation.
<b>Booster Dose</b>	Booster dose means one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine after receiving one dose of a one dose COVID-19 vaccine; or</li> <li>b) a third dose of a COVID-19 vaccine after receiving two doses of a two dose COVID-19 vaccine, including different types of two dose COVID-19 vaccines.</li> </ul>
<b>Employee</b>	In this policy 'employees' is defined inclusively to include the CEO, Council and Committee members, Hearing Panel members and staff covered by VIT's Enterprise Agreement.
<b>Employer</b>	The Victorian Institute of Teaching.
<b>Medical Contraindication</b>	A contraindication to a COVID-19 vaccine in accordance with ATAGI Clinical Guidance on COVID-19 vaccine contraindications, as updated from time to time (last updated 21 February 2022).
<b>Temporary Medical Exemption</b>	<p>An exemption made by a medical practitioner in accordance with "ATAGI Guidance on acute major medical conditions that warrant a temporary medical exemption relevant for COVID-19 vaccines", as updated from time to time (last updated 25 February 2022). Current ATAGI guidance indicates that valid reasons for a temporary medical exemption may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For a mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, inflammatory cardiac illness within the past 3 months, e.g. myocarditis or pericarditis; acute rheumatic fever or acute rheumatic heart disease (i.e. with active myocardial inflammation); or acute decompensated heart failure</li> <li>• For all COVID-19 vaccines - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ acute major medical condition (e.g. undergoing major surgery or hospital admission for a serious illness).</li> <li>○ confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection, where vaccination can be temporarily deferred up until 4 months after the infection.</li> <li>○ any serious adverse event attributed to a previous dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, without another cause identified, and with no acceptable alternative vaccine available.</li> <li>○ if the vaccinee is a risk to themselves or others during the vaccination process this may warrant a temporary vaccine exemption.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>In accordance with current ATAGI guidance, temporary exemptions for acute major medical illness for longer than six months are not recommended in the first instance.</p>
<b>Under-vaccinated</b>	The vaccination status of an employee whose vaccination status is not up-to-date or an Excepted Person.
<b>Up to date</b>	<p>Current ATAGI guidance indicates Up to date means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For individuals aged 16 years and over:</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ having completed an appropriate primary course of a Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) approved or recognised vaccine; and</li> <li>○ if six months has passed since the completion of that course, having received a booster dose.</li> <li>• For children and adolescents aged 5-15 years, having completed an appropriate primary course of a TGA approved or recognised vaccine.</li> <li>• For severely immunocompromised individuals aged 5 years and over: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ having completed an appropriate primary course of a TGA approved or recognised vaccine; and</li> <li>○ if six months has passed since the completion of that course, having received a third dose.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• For individuals who have had prior COVID-19 (including asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infection): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ having completed an appropriate primary course of a TGA approved or recognised vaccine; and</li> <li>○ if both six months have passed since the completion of that course and four months have passed following their infection, having received a booster dose.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Vaccination Status</b>	<p>Vaccination status means one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Up to date; or</li> <li>b) Under-vaccinated; or</li> <li>c) Excepted Person.</li> </ul>
<b>Workplace</b>	<p>Any place where work is carried out for VIT outside of an employee's usual place of residence, inclusive of, but not limited to Level 12, 717 Bourke Street.</p>
<b>Workplace Participant</b>	<p>Includes contractors, subcontractors, consultants, service providers, an employee of a labour hire company and other individuals employed by a third party to perform work on the Employer's behalf.</p>

## 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY

To ensure a safe workplace for all employees, visitors, and other workplace participants who attend the workplace so far as is reasonably practicable.

### 4.1 EVIDENCE OF VACCINATION STATUS

Prior to attending a workplace other than their home, all employees and other workplace participants must provide evidence of their Vaccination Status by emailing the People and Culture inbox ([vitpeopleandculture@vit.vic.edu.au](mailto:vitpeopleandculture@vit.vic.edu.au)).

If an employee or other workplace participant does not do so, they will be treated as if they are under vaccinated.

#### 4.1.1 EVIDENCE

Evidence of an employee or other workplace participant's vaccination status may be recorded in a variety of documents, for example, in a current COVID-19 digital certificate issued by Services Australia.

All employees and other workplace participants must provide this information as soon as reasonably practicable after the commencement of this Policy and by no later than 1 October 2022.

#### **4.1.2 RECORD KEEPING**

Information pertaining to vaccination status and evidence will be accessible to authorised persons only for the purposes of implementing and ensuring compliance with this Policy. Once compliance with this Policy has been confirmed, any copies of health records will be securely disposed of.

VIT will not store copies of documents with visible individual healthcare identifiers, as it is an offence to use or disclose this information under s 26 of the *Healthcare Identifiers Act 2010* (Cth). Employees are encouraged to redact healthcare identifiers, where relevant, from their current COVID-19 digital certificate or other documentation before providing evidence of vaccination to the VIT.

Once the authorised persons have sighted the relevant information and confirmed compliance with this policy, the records will be securely disposed of.

A copy of the collection notice required under the *Health Records Act 2001* is accessible on VIT's Staff Hub.

## **4.2 VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **4.2.1 EXISTING EMPLOYEES AND OTHER WORKPLACE PARTICIPANTS**

Subject to the exceptions specified in Clause 4.2.3, only employees or other workplace participants with up to date vaccination status against COVID-19 and who provide evidence of their vaccination status are permitted to work for VIT outside their ordinary place of residence.

### **4.2.2 PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEES OR OTHER WORKPLACE PARTICIPANTS**

When recruiting, the advertising and engagement documentation should clearly state that engagement is subject to the person providing evidence to VIT confirming their vaccination status is up to date or that they are an Excepted Person. The person must provide evidence of vaccination status as part of the recruitment or onboarding process.

### **4.2.3 EXCEPTIONS**

An employee or other workplace participant may be permitted to work outside their ordinary place of residence for VIT if the employee is an Excepted Person (see definitions above) and has produced Acceptable Certification to VIT to substantiate that they are an Excepted Person. Prior to granting such permission, VIT will carry out a risk assessment and determine measures to ensure a safe working environment.

## **4.3 COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY**

Employees who do not comply with the directions outlined in this Policy within a three-month period of this Policy's implementation may be subject to disciplinary action, and/or to a show cause process relating to their capacity to undertake the role, and/or otherwise dealt with in

accordance with the Management of Misconduct clause (Clause 24) of the *Victorian Institute of Teaching Enterprise Agreement 2021*. Workplace participants may have their contract for the provision of services with the VIT terminated.

#### 4.4 SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO VIT EMPLOYEES TO RECEIVE A COVID-19 VACCINATION

Employees can access up to half a day's time off without loss of pay to receive a COVID-19 vaccine dose. In addition, sick leave entitlements may be available for employees who suffer any adverse reaction to the vaccine. For further information see [Supports for Victorian Public Service and Victorian Public Sector employees getting a COVID-19 vaccination](#).

### 5. RELATED LEGISLATION AND POLICY

- *Occupational Health and Safety Act* 2004 (Cth)
- Victorian Institute of Teaching Enterprise Agreement 2021
- Supports for Victorian Public Service and Victorian Public Sector employees getting a COVID-19 vaccination: <https://www.vic.gov.au/vps-guidance-note-covid-19-vaccination-rollout>
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance note for the Victorian Public Service and Sector: <https://www.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-note-victorian-public-service-and-sector>
- [Victorian State Government Pandemic Register](#)
- Amendment to Occupational Health and Safety Regulations authorising employers to collect, record, hold and use Covid 19 information: <https://content.legislation.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-07/22-053sra%20authorised.pdf>

## 6. APPENDICES

APPENDIX	DOCUMENT NAME	DOCUMENT CODE
1	Charter Assessment	CORP-POL-2022-052
2	Collection Notice	CORP-POL-2022-053

## 7. DOCUMENT CONTROL

DOCUMENT CONTROL DETAILS			
Document code	CORP-POL-2022-051		
ECM No. / Ref. No.	6225883		
Endorsement ECM No. / Ref. No.	6225965		
Document author	Strategy, Policy and People Manager		
Responsible Officer	People and Culture Manager		
Document Approver	CEO		
Status	Approved	Version	1.0
Approval date	27 September 2022	Commencement date	1 January 2023
Major review date	1 January 2024		

This Document replaces / supersedes all previous documents that relate to the same or similar subject matter. This includes, but is not limited to, the following Documents

SUPERSEDED DOCUMENT	
Document name	N/A
Document code	
ECM No. / Ref. No.	

## 8. VERSION HISTORY

VERSION	CHANGE DATE	DESCRIPTION
0.1	4 August 2022	Draft approved by CEO for wider consultation.
0.2	14 September 2022	Draft amended to incorporate changes after the consultation period.
1.0	27 September 2022	Approved by CEO.