

# Employee COVID–19 Vaccination Policy

## Purpose

This policy outlines Catholic Healthcare’s expectations and requirements in relation to COVID-19 vaccination.

## Scope & Applicability

This policy applies to all Catholic Healthcare employees.

### 1. Introduction

The COVID-19 virus is a highly infectious disease. Sick, frail, elderly and vulnerable persons can suffer severe health consequences as a result of this disease, including death.

Catholic Healthcare is a values-based, for purpose provider of quality aged and health care services. Our mission, to promote life in all its fullness, informs all that we do.

Consistent with our mission, Catholic Healthcare is enacting this Policy with the aim of promoting the health and wellbeing of our employees, residents, clients, patients and families.

As a Catholic organisation, we stand in solidarity with the most vulnerable. Consistent with Government advice, we consider that COVID-19 vaccination is the best protection available to us at this time against the serious and potentially deadly effects of coronavirus.

Catholic Healthcare has work health and safety responsibilities to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of our employees and other persons entering Catholic Healthcare premises.

Additionally, our residents, clients, patients and their authorised representatives and family members have shared with us their expectation that Catholic Healthcare employees providing care and support are vaccinated.

For each of these reasons, Catholic Healthcare considers that requiring all employees (including residential aged care, home and community, retirement living, health and corporate employees) to receive the COVID-19 vaccination is a reasonable and practicable means for managing the risks of COVID-19 for our sick, frail, elderly and vulnerable residents, clients and patients and our employees, in conjunction with our infection control procedures and other resident safety protocols.

Additionally, for many areas of our organisation, the government has also mandated the requirement for employees to be vaccinated for COVID-19 through Public Health Orders.

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## 2. COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement

It is a requirement that all Catholic Healthcare employees be vaccinated for COVID-19 by receiving a vaccine that has been approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration for use in Australia.

All employees are expected to have received:

- at least one dose of an approved COVID-19 vaccine by 16 September 2021; and
- a second dose of an approved COVID-19 vaccine by 31 October 2021; and
- a third dose of an approved COVID-19 vaccine as follows:
  - **NSW employees** by 12 April 2022 or 6 weeks from the due date of the persons third dose (due date is 13 weeks after the persons second dose)
  - **QLD employees** by 31 March 2022 or up to 6 months after the person received the second dose

**Please note** for employees who have tested positive for COVID-19, it is safe to receive a vaccination once you have fully recovered and are no longer symptomatic. In these circumstances, employees are expected to receive their third dose vaccination prior to returning to work.

## 3. Reporting and Evidence Requirements

### 3.1 Reporting to My Aged Care

All residential aged care providers and approved providers of home care package services to clients are required to provide weekly reports on the vaccination status of their workforce on the My Aged Care Portal.

The vaccination status reports include the following information:

- The total number of workers at each aged care service; and
- The number of workers at each aged care service who have received three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine.

Reports submitted on the My Aged Care Portal are de-identified so that personal information relating to the vaccination status of individual employees is not submitted.

### 3.2 Evidence of COVID-19 Vaccinations

To enable Catholic Healthcare to meet its reporting requirements, all Catholic Healthcare employees are required to provide evidence of their COVID-19 vaccination.

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Subject to different requirements being introduced by State or Federal Governments, the evidence required can be from one of three sources:

1. Medical Vaccination Statement from your GP; or
2. Australian Government COVID-19 Digital Certificate, located on myGov; or
3. Medicare Immunization History Statement, which can be shared via the Medicare app.

Please forward the above evidence to your manager or send to [covid19evidence@chcs.com.au](mailto:covid19evidence@chcs.com.au).

Evidence of COVID-19 vaccination will be stored securely within Human Resources COVID-19 records in line with all applicable privacy laws and the Catholic Healthcare privacy policy, [CHL Privacy Policy](#). The dates of vaccination will be recorded in the payroll system.

## 4. Medical Exemptions

Catholic Healthcare recognises that in exceptional circumstances a very small number of employees may not be able to have the COVID-19 vaccination for medical reasons. To apply for a medical exemption an employee must provide a Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) – Immunisation Medical Exempt Form (MO11) [Immunisation Exemption Form](#) completed by one of the following eligible professionals; general practitioner (GP), public health physician; infectious diseases physician or a clinical immunologist.

The medical practitioner must state if the medical contraindication exemption is temporary or permanent.

If the exemption is temporary, at the end of the temporary exemption period, the employee must obtain a COVID-19 vaccination unless another exemption applies. Proof of exemption as outlined in this Policy is required.

Evidence of medical exemption will be stored securely in the employee's file in line with all applicable privacy laws and the Catholic Healthcare privacy policy [CHL Privacy Policy](#). It will also be recorded in the payroll system.

## 5. Access to COVID-19 Vaccination

Catholic Healthcare has implemented several measures to assist employees receive the COVID-19 Vaccination. These include:

- education and information about COVID-19 vaccination
- onsite vaccination clinics

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- concierge service for all residential aged care and home and community services employees to assist them to book appointments for their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccination
- concierge service to assist with booking a second dose if requested
- paid leave to attend a vaccination appointment should the appointment be during the employee's normal working hours
- providing information and links to COVID-19 vaccination websites to enable employees who want to book appointments themselves
- providing general information about COVID vaccination from government and medical sources in a range of formats including email, video, group discussions, one-on one conversations.

Any employee requiring assistance to access a COVID-19 vaccination is requested to speak to their Manager immediately to ensure compliance with this Policy.

## 6. Record Keeping

Data and other employee information collected via the QR code and or sent to the covid19evidence@chcs.com.au email account will be collected, stored, used and disclosed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations (including applicable public health orders and directions) and Catholic Healthcare's Privacy Policy.

## 7. Further Information

Further information relating to your rights and obligations under this Policy can be found at Catholic Healthcare's COVID-19 Information Hub on Connect.

If you have specific questions relating to your individual circumstances, please speak with your manager in the first instance. You can also contact the HR Team via phone 02-8876 2177 or email [HR@chcs.com.au](mailto:HR@chcs.com.au).

## 9. Breach of this Policy

Failure to comply with this Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Consideration will be given to the employee's role and the risk(s) refusal to vaccinate presents for our residents, clients, patients and to other employees and any other factors Catholic Healthcare considers relevant in the circumstances.

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## Table Review History

18 August 2021	New Policy
28 February 2022	Revised Policy
24 March 2022	Update Policy

## Related Policies & Documents

Public Health (COVID-19 Care Services) Order (No 3) Amendment (No 1) Order 2022

Public Health Direction (Residential Aged Care) No 5 Qld

Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) Clinical guidance on use of COVID-19 vaccine in Australia in 2021 (v6.0)

Department of Health Mandatory Vaccination of Aged Care Workers 03/08/21

## Key words for search

COVID-19, Vaccination, Pandemic

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