



# COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY

Title	<b>COVID-19</b>
Sphere	<b>Leadership</b>
Intended Audience	<b>Community</b>
Author	<b>Principal</b>
Last Update	<b>April 2022</b>

## POLICY STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

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The Victorian Government has released the *Pandemic COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination (Specified Facilities) Order 2022 (No. 3) (Health Orders)*.

These Health Orders require the School to take steps to ensure staff are vaccinated in order to limit the spread of COVID-19 in school settings, and effectively require that staff (unless exempt):

- are fully vaccinated; and
- after the booster deadline, are fully vaccinated (boosted).

Compliance with the Health Orders is mandatory under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* (Vic). Failure to do so is an offence.

Marcellin College (**the School**) is committed to the health and safety of its staff, students and broader school community, which includes preventing the spread of diseases such as COVID-19 on campus and amongst members of the school community.

There is a high risk of COVID-19 infection in the context of a public-facing school environment which requires staff – during on campus learning – to regularly come into contact each day with a large section of the school community (including staff, students and parents), having regard to the increased rates of community transmission of the Delta and Omicron variants of COVID-19, as well as the increased health risks of the virus to people who might not previously have been considered to be vulnerable.

The School will comply with the Health Orders.

This policy accordingly sets out the measures which the School is taking to ensure that staff are vaccinated in compliance with the Health Orders, and outlines the limited medical exemptions which are available.

## SCOPE

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This policy applies to all staff members.

## DEFINITIONS

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**Booster deadline** is 25 March 2022.

**COVID-19 vaccination** means a COVID-19 vaccine approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration for use in Australia, or where a person has been vaccinated overseas, a World Health Organisation-COVAX approved COVID-19 vaccine.

Current one-dose vaccine: COVID-19 Vaccine Janssen.

Current two-dose vaccines: Vaxzevria (AstraZeneca), Comirnaty (Pfizer), Spikevax (Moderna), Coronovac (Sinovac), Covidshield (Astrazeneca/Serum Institute of India), Covaxin (Bharat Biotech), BBIP-CorV (Sinopharm).

A person is **fully vaccinated against COVID-19** if the person has received either:

- a one-dose COVID-19 vaccination; or
- two doses of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccination (including two different types of two-dose COVID-19 vaccines).

A person is **fully vaccinated (boosted)** against COVID-19 if the person is fully vaccinated and has received a booster shot.

A **school** includes a boarding house, childcare or early childhood service, and outside school hours care service.

A **staff member** is 12 years and two months or older and includes:

- any person employed to work in a school (including teachers, early childhood educators and educational support staff);
- a person contracted to work at a school and who will or may be in close proximity to children, students or staff, whether or not engaged by the School (including casual relief teachers, Breakfast Club suppliers, IT personnel, NDIS providers and auditors, but excluding delivery personnel);
- staff of any other entity who attend a school;
- volunteers that attend a school and work in close proximity to children, students or staff (including parent helpers); and
- students on placements at a school.

## **THE HEALTH ORDERS**

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The following is a summary of the Health Orders which apply to the School.

### Collect, record and hold vaccination information

The Health Orders require the School to collect, record and hold vaccination information about any staff member who is, or may be, scheduled to work at a school.

Vaccination information includes:

- The staff member's vaccination status.
- If the staff member is fully vaccinated, the date on which they became fully vaccinated.
- If the staff member is fully vaccinated (boosted), the date on which they became fully vaccinated (boosted).
- If the staff member has a medical exemption, acceptable certification.

### Prevention of entry to premises for unvaccinated or partially vaccinated staff

The Health Orders require the School to take all reasonable steps to ensure that a staff member who is unvaccinated or partially vaccinated does not enter, or remain on, the premises of a school for the purposes of work.

If the School does not hold vaccination information about a staff member, the School must treat the staff member as if the staff member is unvaccinated.

### Prevention of entry to premises for fully vaccinated staff after the booster deadline

The Health Orders require the School to take all reasonable steps to ensure that a staff member must not, after the staff member's relevant booster deadline, enter, or remain on, the premises of a school for the purposes of work if they are not fully vaccinated (boosted).

### Exceptions

The exceptions to the above requirements include:

- The staff member was unable to become fully vaccinated (boosted) before the booster deadline because they were in self-quarantine or self-isolation, but has a booking within one week of the end of their self-quarantine or self-isolation, to receive a dose of a COVID-19 vaccine to become fully vaccinated (boosted).
- The staff member has a medical exemption.

## **ARRANGING A COVID-19 VACCINATION**

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To enable the School to comply with the Health Orders, staff are encouraged to take the following steps (if they have not done so already):

- If relevant, seek medical advice regarding the COVID-19 vaccination, as it relates to you.
- Where you do not fall within one of the medical exemptions outlined below, make appointments to receive your dose(s) of the relevant COVID-19 vaccination.
- Where you do fall within one of the medical exemptions outlined below, obtain an acceptable certification.
- If you have trouble making an appointment, please contact your manager.
- When you receive your first, second or booster COVID-19 vaccination dose, ensure that you keep a record of these.

Staff can access COVID-19 vaccinations at various locations including vaccination hubs, roving clinics, general practices, some pharmacies. The dedicated **COVID-19 Vaccine Helpline 1800 020 080** (select option 2) can answer any questions you may have about vaccination and can help you book a vaccination appointment. Vaccinations are free, and you do not need a Medicare card to make an appointment or receive the vaccination.

## **PROVIDING PROOF OF VACCINATION STATUS**

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Evidence of vaccination status (including proof of vaccination and booster or proof of a medical exemption) must be promptly submitted to Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) [via this link](#).

Proof of vaccination can include:

- A vaccination certificate or other evidence from a vaccine provider.
- An immunisation history statement which can be accessed from Medicare online or the Express Plus Medicare mobile app.
- A statement of your vaccination history which you can request from the Australian Immunisation Register.
- A record from a health practitioner.

## **EXEMPTIONS FROM COVID-19 VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS**

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If a staff member believes they are medically exempt from the vaccination requirements set out in this policy, for a reason specified in the Health Orders, they must promptly provide acceptable certification from a medical practitioner that the person is unable to be fully vaccinated or fully vaccinated (boosted).

The Health Orders recognise the following medical exemptions to the administration of a COVID-19 vaccine:

- anaphylaxis after a previous dose;
- anaphylaxis to any component of the vaccine, including polysorbate or polyethylene glycol;
- in relation to AstraZeneca:
  - history of capillary leak syndrome; or
  - thrombosis with thrombocytopenia occurring after a previous dose;
- in relation to Comirnaty or Spikevax:
  - myocarditis or pericarditis attributed to a previous dose of either Comirnaty or Spikevax; or
- where a person is in the process of completing a Federal Department of Health approved COVID-19 vaccine clinical trial;
- the occurrence of any other serious adverse event that has:
  - been attributed to a previous dose of a COVID-19 vaccine by an experienced immunisation provider or medical specialist (and not attributed to any another identifiable cause); and
  - been reported to State adverse event programs and/or the Therapeutic Goods Administration; or
- certification from a registered medical practitioner that a person is unable to receive a dose, or a further dose, of a COVID-19 vaccine due to an acute medical illness (including where the person has been diagnosed with COVID-19).

An 'acceptable certification' means:

- 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 the staff member is unable to receive a dose, or further dose of a COVID-19 vaccine that is available in Australia; or
- a printed version of a COVID-19 digital certificate.

A staff member who previously provided evidence of an Australian Immunisation Register immunisation medical exemption form that is completed and signed by the staff member's medical practitioner, and which states the staff member is unable to receive a dose, or further dose of a COVID-19 vaccine because of a medical exemption, will not be required to provide new certification. Staff members who have not supplied this form, and who do not provide evidence of a COVID-19 digital certificate, will no longer be regarded as medically exempt.

A staff member who is pregnant may provide evidence to the School that a registered medical practitioner has advised against vaccination due to the pregnancy, and specifying when the staff member may be able to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. Please note that pregnancy is not specifically recognised as a medical exemption under the Health Orders.

If a registered medical practitioner certifies that a staff member has a temporary medical exemption, which makes them unable to receive the COVID-19 vaccination, any exemption based on this only applies for the period specified in writing by the medical practitioner. If the medical reason continues beyond that period, the staff member must provide a new certification regarding the medical exemption.

The School may seek additional information regarding a medical exemption, either to confirm that an exemption applies or to manage the School's broader occupational health and safety obligations.

The Health Orders do not contain an exemption for a staff member who objects to the COVID-19 vaccination on personal, political or religious grounds.

## **WORKERS WITHOUT AN EXEMPTION WHO CHOOSE NOT TO BE FULLY VACCINATED**

Staff members who are not medically exempt, not fully vaccinated, or (after the booster deadline) are not fully vaccinated (boosted), will not be permitted to work or to attend School premises to perform the duties associated with their role. This may mean that the staff member is initially suspended from work without pay.

If the staff member is an employee, they will be provided with an opportunity to discuss their circumstances with their manager and any alternative options which may be available, including:

- alternative work arrangements, subject to the operational needs of School; and
- the staff member taking accrued annual or long service leave.

Any decision regarding alternative options will be at the absolute discretion of School, subject to its legal obligations. Staff who choose not to have a COVID-19 vaccination need to be mindful that this may ultimately result in dismissal.

## **RECORD KEEPING**

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The School is collecting vaccination information to:

- comply with the Health Orders;
- ensure that School knows who is eligible to attend work under this policy; and
- enable School to manage the risks to staff, students and the school community arising from COVID-19, including preparing for any possible future outbreaks.

When collecting vaccination information, the School will comply with its Privacy Policy, which is available at in CompliSpace in MyMC.

Vaccination information will be securely stored and kept confidential and will only be accessible to people who are required to access it. You can request to access your vaccination record information at any time and can also request that any relevant updates are made to it.

The School is required to provide access to vaccination information to an Authorised Officer under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* (Vic) if requested to demonstrate compliance with the Health Orders.

## **NEW EMPLOYEES**

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Staff engaged after this policy is implemented will be required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 before starting their employment/engagement.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

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Privacy Policy

[COVID-19 Vaccine Medical Contraindication Form](#)

## **REFERENCES**

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### **Legislation**

[Pandemic COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination \(Specified Facilities\) Order 2022 \(No. 3\)](#).

*Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* (Vic).

### **Links**

[Are COVID-19 vaccines safe?](#)

[Australian Immunisation Register](#)

[COVID-19 vaccine information in your language](#)

[The Fair Work Ombudsman's guidance on COVID-19 vaccinations](#)