





Murrumbidgee
COUNCIL

COVID 19 VACCINATION POLICY

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
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1. BACKGROUND

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic virus.

COVID-19 is an acute respiratory illness caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARSCoV-2). It may be characterised by fever, cough, shortness of breath, and other symptoms.

Asymptomatic infection is also possible. The risk of severe disease increases with age, however, is not limited to the elderly and is elevated in those with underlying medical conditions.

Variants of the virus have circulated, with varying degrees of transmissibility and disease severity.

Regardless of which SARS-CoV-2 variant is predominant in any area, vaccination, in combination with public health and individual measures, continues to work to reduce disease spread and severe outcomes.

In particular, evidence continues to demonstrate that a complete initial two-dose series, plus boosters, of approved COVID-19 vaccine provides substantial protection. Based on current data, only a fraction of fully vaccinated people became infected, with the majority of recent cases and hospitalisations occurring in unvaccinated or partially vaccinated people.

2. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this policy is to outline Murrumbidgee Council's expectations with regards to COVID-19 immunisation of elected representatives, employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers and work experience.

Unless medically contra-indicated, it is mandatory that all eligible elected representatives, employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers and work experience are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (i.e. against infections caused by SARS-CoV-2).

3. DEFINITIONS

Council - means Murrumbidgee Council

Fully Vaccinated – elected representatives, employees, contractors, volunteers and work experience who are up-to-date with the initial double dose course of the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) approved vaccinations and where provided in the ATAGI definition of Fully Vaccinated booster vaccinations, as well as those who are medically contraindicated and cannot have the vaccine

4. APPLICATION

The General Manager, or their delegate, of the Murrumbidgee Council can reasonably enquire as to the vaccination status of its workers, if its workers work in a location with common areas or its workers could have contact with clients, customers or the public.

Regardless of how often or how much time spent in their respective workplace, this policy applies to:

- Elected Representatives
- Employees
- Contractors/Consultants
- Volunteers and Work Experience

5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

All elected representatives, employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers and work experience will be required to provide one of the following:

1. Proof of COVID-19 vaccine administration as per the following requirements:
 - a. If the individual has only received the first dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccination series, approved proof that the first dose was administered and, as soon as reasonably possible, proof of administration of the second dose;
or
 - b. Proof of all required doses of a COVID-19 vaccine approved.
2. Written proof of a medical reason, provided by a physician, that sets out:
 - a. that the person cannot be vaccinated against COVID-19; and
 - b. the effective time period for the medical reason (i.e., permanent or time-limited).

Copies will be held in Murrumbidgee Council record management system, periodically requests will be made to ensure documentation is up to date and current.

Contractors and consultants, in tendering and quoting for work, must provide proof of full vaccination for all key personnel working at Murrumbidgee Council sites. The contractor must, prior to any additional contractor, sub-contractor, tradesperson, staff member etc. setting foot on the Murrumbidgee Council worksite, provide proof of full vaccination for each person.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Implications will vary depending on classification:

Elected Representatives - May be subject to actions for breach of Council Policy, inclusive of, but not limited to, breach of Code of Conduct.

Recruiting - Interviews will not be granted or offers of employment provided to candidates whom are not fully vaccinated.

Employee – May be subject to disciplinary procedures for breach of Council Policy, which may result in termination of employment.

Contractors/Consultants – Will not be awarded any contracts with Murrumbidgee Council until proof that 100% of those working at a Murrumbidgee Council worksite or building under contract or agreement are fully vaccinated, and maintain full vaccination. Failure to maintain full vaccination once engaged will be a breach of contract with penalties applicable.

Volunteers and Work Experience – Will not be able to enter any work site or building or carry out any function of the Murrumbidgee Council until proof of full vaccination is provided.

7. EXCEPTIONS

Any elected representative, employee, contractor, consultant, volunteer or work experience who are not fully vaccinated at the time this policy is enacted, must wear a face mask and maintain social distancing where practicable at all times until a determination under this Policy is finalised.

8. LEGISLATION

This policy is aligned with the employer's general duty under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)* to take every reasonable precaution to protect its workers (broadly defined) and the responsibility to assess the workplace for risks, including that of COVID-19 transmission.

This Policy is applied in accordance with the *Local Government State Award 2020*, *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and any other applicable legislation and/or agreement.

Information collected under this Policy is in compliance with relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)*

9. REVIEW

This policy:

- To be reviewed within the first year of the new Council term;
- May be reviewed and amended at any time at Council's discretion (or if legislative or State Government Policy changes occur).