Mandatory COVID-19 vaccination

Tuesday 5 October, 2021

Monash Health

Overview

- Last week, the Chief Health Officer released a direction on mandatory vaccination for healthcare workers.

- In line with this direction, all Monash Health employees are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to continue working in our health service.

- We are well on our way to achieving this with 88% of employees having already received their first dose.

Directions from Acting Chief Health Officer in accordance with emergency powers arising from declared state of emergency

COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Directions (No 4)
Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
Section 200

I, Professor Benjamin Cowie, Acting Chief Health Officer, consider it reasonably necessary to protect public health to give the following directions pursuant to section 200(1)(d) of the **Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008** (Vic) (**PHW Act**):

PART 1 — PRELIMINARY

1   **Preamble**
    (1)   The purpose of these directions is to impose obligations upon operators of **specified facilities** in relation to the vaccination of **workers**, in order to limit the spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (**SARS-CoV-2**) within the population in these settings.
    (2)   Previous versions of these directions imposed obligations on operators of:
        (a)   **residential aged care facilities**; and
        (b)   **construction sites**.
    (3)   These directions continue to impose those obligations, and extend them to to **operators** of:
        (a)   **healthcare facilities**; and
        (b)   **education facilities**.
    (4)   Key definitions are contained in clause 0.
    (5)   Facility-specific definitions are contained in clause 9.
    (6)   Other definitions are contained in clause 10.
    (7)   These directions must be read together with the **Directions currently in force**.

2   **Citation**
    These directions may be referred to as the **COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Directions (No 4)**.

3   **Commencement and revocation**
    (1)   These directions commence at 11:59:00pm on 29 September 2021 and end at 11:59:00pm on 21 October 2021.

COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Directions (No 4)   1 of 13

Who does mandatory vaccination apply to?

- Mandatory COVID-19 vaccination applies to all employees including:

  - clinical and non-clinical employees
  - casuals
  - administrative teams
  - volunteers, students
  - contractors
  - those working from home
  - those on long-term leave (who need to be vaccinated before returning to work).

Key dates

- **By 15 October 2021** all employees must:
  - have received a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine, or
  - provide proof of a vaccination booking to occur by 29 October 2021.

- **By 29 October 2021** all employees must:
  - have received a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine, and
  - provide proof of a second vaccination booking by 15 December 2021.

- **By 15 December 2021** all employees must:
  - have received two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine.

What you need to do

If you have not been vaccinated against COVID-19, you must do one of the following:

- **Visit a Monash Health clinic and receive your first dose before 15 October**

- **Visit a non-Monash Health vaccination clinic and receive your first dose before 15 October**
  If you choose this option, you must also complete the COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration Form* before 15 October.

- **Make a booking to receive your first dose by 29 October**
  If your booking is after 15 October 2021 (but before 29 October 2021), you must also complete the COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration Form before 15 October.

*You can find the COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration Form on coronavirus.monashhealth.org

What you need to do (continued)

If you have been fully vaccinated (2 doses) at Monash Health

- No further action is required at this stage.

- If you were vaccinated at a Monash Health clinic **before** commencing employment with us, you must make a declaration using the COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration Form before 15 October.

If you have been fully vaccinated (2 doses) elsewhere

- You must make a declaration using the COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration Form before15 October.

If you've had your first vaccine dose only

- You must receive your second dose before 29 October or make a booking to receive your second dose before 15 December and complete the COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration Form before 29 October.

How do I get vaccinated?

- Attend any Monash Health vaccination clinic with your employee ID and Medicare Card, state that you are a Monash Health employee, and **you will be given priority access**.

- Details on all our COVID-19 vaccination clinics can be found on the employee COVID-19 site.

- Or make a booking via coronavirus.vic.gov.au

Which vaccines are available?

- Monash Health vaccination clinics offer

- Pfizer,

- AstraZeneca

- Moderna (currently available only at the walk-up Sandown Racecourse Vaccination Centre).

What leave is available to me to attend a booking?

- You are eligible for time off without loss of pay to travel to and from a vaccination centre (if the centre is not at your usual place of work) to be vaccinated.

- Casual employees employed on a regular and systematic basis are also eligible for time off without loss of pay.

- Prior approval from your manager is required.

- You should return to work as soon as possible after receiving the vaccination unless you suffer an adverse event.

- If it is not practical or possible to receive the vaccination during work time, you may be eligible to receive up to four hours pay on a case-by-case basis.

What if I'm pregnant or planning to become pregnant?

- The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZOG) and ATAGI released a joint statement recommending that pregnant women be routinely offered the Pfizer vaccine at any stage of pregnancy.

- If you are trying to become pregnant, you do not need to delay vaccination or avoid becoming pregnant after vaccination.

What are the medical grounds for an exemption?

- For the vast majority of people, at least one of the vaccines available will be suitable. It is extremely rare that an individual will experience contraindications for all vaccines.

- We encourage you to speak to your medical practitioner to seek expert advice from Victorian Specialist Immunisation Services (VicSIS) to identify which vaccination is most suitable for you.

Are there religious grounds for an exemption?

- Consistent with national approaches, the Directions do not allow exemptions on religious, political or personal grounds.

- COVID-19 vaccination has been supported by a wide range of faiths and religious leaders in Australia and globally.

- COVID-19 vaccines are Halal and do not contain any human or animal tissue or cells derived from human or animal tissue.

What if I choose not to be vaccinated?

- If you choose not to be vaccinated by the required dates, you will not be able to continue working at Monash Health.

- You will be required to stand down from your current role with pay whilst an investigation process is commenced.

- If you decide you will not get vaccinated, you will be required to meet with your manager and People & Culture to review your continuing employment at Monash Health on the basis that you have failed to follow a lawful and reasonable direction of Monash Health and as required by the Chief Health Officer.

- This process may result in termination of your employment.

Where can I get further advice?

- For advice on vaccination visit coronavirus.monashhealth.org, coronavirus.vic.gov.au, or talk to your treating practitioner.

- For health and wellbeing support available visit the employee COVID-19 site - coronavirus.monashhealth.org

- You can also call the Employee Coronavirus Hotline (9594 5815), 7am to 8pm, 7 days a week.

This week's Managers Briefing (Wednesday 2pm-3pm) will focus on mandatory vaccination and how managers can support their teams.