

# Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

## Questions and Answers (Q&A)

### 1. Why is Mandatory vaccination being introduced?

COVID-19 vaccine is highly effective against severe illness, hospitalisation and death, and will help keep staff, patients, residents, clients and visitors safe from COVID-19.

Calvary is required under Work Health and Safety laws to implement “all reasonably practicable control measures to ensure the health and safety of staff, and those who attend” Calvary sites.

### 2. Has a Public Health Order / Directive been made?

Yes, there have been a number of Public Health Orders / Directives made across the various Australian States and Territories. These can be found by following the links in section 8 – *References* within the Calvary COVID 19 Mandatory Vaccination Policy.

Residential Aged Care workers were already required to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine by 17 September 2021.

Various States and Territories have begun implementing further Public Health Orders / Directives to cover Health Care Workers.

For more information on whether your role is covered by a Public Health Order / Directive and by what date you may be required to obtain a COVID-19 vaccination, please speak to your manager.

### 3. Have the vaccines been properly reviewed by regulatory agencies?

All vaccines available in Australia are approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for safety, quality and effectiveness. Vaccine scientists from around the world are working together to ensure that rigorous processes are followed and no testing or ethical approvals have been bypassed.

COVID-19 vaccines must meet the same high standards as any other vaccine approved for use in Australia.

For more information on COVID-19 vaccine safety, visit the Australian Government Health Department’s COVID-19 Vaccination Website here: <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/learn-about-covid-19-vaccines/are-covid-19-vaccines-safe>

### 4. Is there vaccination information in languages other than English?

The Australian Government has added information translated into 15 languages including Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Arabic, Vietnamese, Italian, Greek, Punjabi, Korean, Turkish, Bengali, Serbian, Khmer, Spanish, Hindi and Assyrian.

These can be accessed at: <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-information-in-your-language>

Approved by: Head of People and Culture	Approved Date: 28/09/2021
UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED	Review Date: 28/09/2022

## 5. What if I have been vaccinated overseas?

Under the respective health orders, vaccines that are provisionally approved by the TGA are accepted. The list of approved vaccines is available on the TGA website.

## 6. Does the Calvary Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy apply to all Calvary staff or just health care workers?

The policy applies to all Calvary staff. Our obligations under Work Health and Safety apply to all Calvary Workers.

## 7. Are contractors, such as photocopiers technicians or maintenance contractors coming on to site to do work required to be vaccinated as they are not Calvary staff?

For those contractors who regularly perform work at Calvary sites and with whom Calvary have ongoing contractual arrangements yes, they will be required to be vaccinated.

For those contractors who are performing one-off attendances (delivery persons, water meter readings as an example) they do not, but will be risk assessed on a case by case basis to ensure they do all that is reasonably practicable to avoid direct contact and maintain hygiene and social distancing standards.

## 8. How will Calvary assist staff to meet the requirements?

Calvary will provide two hours of paid time if you obtain the vaccine outside of work hours. Calvary will also make a retrospective payment for those that have already obtained the vaccine in their own time prior to this policy coming into effect.

This payment applies for each dose of the vaccination.

Calvary will also provide a letter of evidence to any requesting Calvary Worker to assist you to gain priority access to the COVID-19 vaccination.

## 9. Can I get vaccinated in work time?

Talk to your manager before accepting an appointment so rosters can be adjusted to accommodate your absence if possible.

If you are experiencing trouble obtaining a COVID-19 vaccination booking please contact your manager immediately.

## 10. What if I get vaccinated in my personal time, is there Vaccination Pay?

Yes. Those who are vaccinated in their own time can claim a 2 hour special leave payment on each occasion of the COVID 19 vaccination.

## 11. What do I have to do?

You are encouraged to get your COVID 19 vaccination as soon as possible if you are not already vaccinated. [\*\*You are encouraged to book now.\*\*](#)

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If you are having difficulties obtaining an appointment please talk to your supervisor about booking issues as soon as possible.

If you have medical concerns about being vaccinated you need to speak to your doctor. You also need to advise Calvary **as soon as possible** if you will not be receiving your COVID-19 vaccination by the proposed dates.

### **12. I have booked a vaccination appointment, but it is after the deadline applicable to my role. What do I do?**

Speak to your manager immediately so we can try to assist you obtain an earlier appointment (wherever possible).

### **13. I am pregnant or planning pregnancy. What should I do?**

You can get vaccinated if you're pregnant, breastfeeding or trying for a baby. Pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 and should get vaccinated now. Vaccination reduces the risk of severe disease during pregnancy and helps to keep you and your unborn baby protected from the virus.

For more information visit the [National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/research-and-surveillance/national-centre-for-immunisation-research-and-surveillance).

### **14. Who should I send my vaccination record to?**

You must provide evidence of COVID-19 vaccination to Calvary via your immediate manager and to payroll via [COVIDVaccinations@calvarycare.org.au](mailto:COVIDVaccinations@calvarycare.org.au).

### **15. I am concerned about the privacy implications of reporting my vaccination status. How will such information be held?**

All information is securely stored by Calvary and in accordance with its own Privacy Policy and the Australian Privacy Standards. Only authorised staff can view vaccination records.

### **16. What happens if I decide not to be vaccinated?**

Calvary will not force you to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine. That is your choice.

However, Calvary is required by work health and safety laws to manage risks associated with the COVID-19 virus and unvaccinated staff appropriately. If you do not meet the Calvary *Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy's* requirements on the date it applies then you will be in breach of the policy.

To apply for an exemption please refer to the following forms from the Calvary Intranet:

- *COVID-19 Exemption Request Form (Conscientious Objection)*
- *COVID-19 Exemption Request Form (Medical Contraindication)*

When we receive a COVID-19 Exemption Request Form we conduct a risk assessment to examine if your employment can be maintained. Your feedback will be included in this risk assessment. If maintaining your employment presents an unjustifiable hardship on Calvary or the risk of COVID-19 exposure and transmission is too great, regrettably, Calvary may determine the only course of action is to terminate your employment.

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**17. What happens if I cannot be vaccinated because of medical reasons?**

You will need to speak to your medical practitioner and ask them to provide relevant details as to your medical contraindication in writing for Calvary. You will need to present this evidence of your medical contraindication together with your *COVID-19 Exemption Request Form (Medical Contraindication)* (this form is available on Calvary's intranet) as soon as possible to allow Calvary time to process your request.

If all applicants for an exemption on medical contraindication grounds will then undergo a risk assessment regarding the performance of your ongoing duties and how they might be achieved.

**18. What happens if my doctor recommends a temporary exemption?**

The same process will apply regarding the evidence required and process to lodge an exemption application on the basis of medical contraindication. A temporary exemption may be granted for up to six months for people where clinically appropriate. For example, undergoing treatment causing temporary immunocompromised or having a confirmed infection with COVID-19 within the last 6 months.

As with a long term medical contraindication a risk assessment will be undertaken regarding the performance of your ongoing duties and how that might be achieved.

**19. Can I seek an exemption if I am currently working remotely?**

The *Calvary Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy* applies to all Calvary staff and regardless as to whether you are working on site or remotely.

To apply for an exemption please refer to the following forms from the Calvary Intranet:

- *COVID-19 Exemption Request Form (Conscientious Objection)*
- *COVID-19 Exemption Request Form (Medical Contraindication)*

**20. What if I have had COVID-19 in the last six months?**

A temporary exemption may be granted for people who have contracted COVID-19 in the last six months. You will need to have proof of recent COVID-19 diagnosis and speak to your healthcare professional about the best time to be vaccinated.

Once you have that information and evidence, please bring it to the attention of your manager as soon as possible.

**21. What leave is available if you experience an adverse reaction to the vaccination?**

You will be able to access personal ('sick') leave if you experience any side effects to the vaccination.

**22. What if I'm already on extended leave when vaccinations are due?**

If you are already on extended leave (e.g. parental or long term sick leave) at the time vaccinations are due, you are still encouraged to get vaccinated as this is in your best interests to protect you and your family.

However, you are required to have had your vaccination(s) before you return to duty and will be required to provide evidence of your vaccination status prior to resuming duty.

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If you want to lodge a COVID-19 Vaccination Exemption Request Form while on leave, please contact your manager who can provide you with the appropriate form.

### **23. Are religious volunteers covered by this policy?**

All volunteers that provide their time to Calvary are covered by the *Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy*.

Calvary has a duty under work health and safety laws to protect volunteers from the potential harm of COVID-19 too.