



POLICY & PROCEDURE

6.1 COVID 19 VACCINATIONS

Purpose

To set out the guidelines in relation to the requirements and process for mandatory vaccinations against COVID-19 as determined by the Queensland Government issued Health Directives.

Scope

This policy applies to all of the organisation’s Staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

Policy Statement

The Queensland Government requires all health care workers and disability support worker or those who work in health care settings to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Workers who are required to be vaccinated are not to be permitted to enter, or delivery any face to face support for employment, engagement (including volunteering), placement or work experience, unless sufficiently vaccinated against COVID-19.

Face to face services include, any service where a disability support worker is in a physical proximity contact with service users with a disability. This includes in an officer environment, the community, a service users home and any other scenario where a room, environment is shared with a person with a disability. Better Together is a disability service provider and provides onsite and external disability support services and is therefore subject to the Queensland Governments Chief health officers health directions and mandates.

In addition, on and after 15th December, a person is not permitted to provide health and medical services and treatments unless the person is sufficiently vaccinated.

Sufficiently vaccinated means a person who is fully vaccinated (two doses).

As Better Together is a disability support organisation and provides onsite and remote disability support services, all employees are required to be sufficiently vaccinated against COVID-19.

Employees must provide vaccination evidence no later than 5pm 15th December 2021 to ensure that the deadline of 15th December is met.



New employees must provide proof of vaccination prior to commencement. The requirement to provide proof of vaccination is in accordance with the Queensland Government Health mandate/ Directive.

The employee must provide one or more of the following documents to Better Together:

- If second dose received (fully vaccinated), a copy of their Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register, operated by or on behalf of the Commonwealth Government -OR- digital evidence of their COVID-19 digital certificate.
- If first dose received, a copy of their Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register and evidence of second dose appointment.

A step-by-step guide to attaining proof of your COVID-19 vaccination is available on the Services Australia website: servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/subjects/getting-help-during-coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-vaccinations/how-get-proof .

Where an employee chooses not to be vaccinated in accordance with the Queensland Health Directive, the employee must advise the employer in writing of this decision and detail the reasons why.

Exemptions for Mandatory Vaccinations:

The Health Directive does include some exemptions but there are stringent rules around how the exemptions for an individual will operate. If an employee claims they are not required to be vaccinated due to an exemption then the employee needs to have their GP or medical specialist complete the Medical Contraindication (Exemption) form.

Employees are required to provide the completed medical contraindication form to the business no later than 5pm 15th of December 2021.

Medical Contraindication (Exemption) forms are available from your GP or medical specialist.

The only valid exemption for not getting a mandatory vaccination with Better Together is a medical contraindication.

As an organisation, we will:

- Publish a policy regarding the COVID-19 vaccinations and update this policy as needed.
- Advise employees of the requirement to be vaccinated to enable them to undertake their duties.
- Consult with employees if they choose not to be vaccinated in accordance with the relevant Government Health Directives.
- Advise the employees who choose not to be vaccinated in accordance with the relevant Government Health Directives of the potential consequences of failing to be vaccinated.

Refusal to Vaccinate:



If an employee refuses to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in accordance with the Government Health Directive under the directive the employee will not be permitted to enter, or remain on, the premises of a medical or health facility for employment, engagement (including volunteering), placement or work experience.

Whilst we are respectful that every person has a right to make their own decision, a decision to not be vaccinated when there is a mandatory requirement to do so, means the employee is making a choice about their ongoing employment.

If an employee chooses to remain unvaccinated, without a valid exemption, this will mean that the employee is no longer able to meet the inherent requirements of working in their role with Better Together.

Better Together is required by law to comply with Queensland Government Health directions as they are issued. If refusal to be vaccinated in accordance with the health direction is happening we will undertake and assess of employee’s circumstances if they fail to meet the government health directives. Where there is not a valid Medical Contraindication (Exemption) form submitted by 5pm December 15th 2021, this may result in a review of ongoing employment based on an employee’s ability to undertake the inherent requirements of their role and may result in an end to an employee’s employment

Workforce Shortage Exemptions;

The Queensland government health directive as of the 16th of December 2021 provides exemptions for unvaccinated workers to continue to work if there is a workforce shortage.

Better Together will comply with the critical workforce shortage control measure as it is outlines within the directive:

Critical Workforce Shortage

17. The responsible person for a healthcare setting may permit a worker in healthcare who has not complied with the COVID-19 vaccination requirements to enter, work in, or provide services in the healthcare setting, for a maximum period of three months from 17 December 2021 or until the critical workforce shortage can be resolved, whichever is shorter, if:

- a) the responsible person has assessed the risk to other staff, patients and other persons accessing the healthcare setting; and*
- b) the responsible person reasonably believes it is necessary to respond to a critical workforce shortage; and*
- c) personal protective equipment is used by the worker in healthcare in compliance with the PPE guideline and any COVID safe plans for the healthcare setting; and the unvaccinated worker undertakes a COVID-19 PCR test before commencing each work shift in a healthcare setting, and provides the COVID-19 PCR test result to the responsible person for the healthcare setting as soon as reasonably practicable after the test result is received*



Useful Links:

The following are useful links to access information that is provided by both the Tasmanian and Australian Governments about COVID-19 vaccinations.

- Australian Government: [About Australia's COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout](#)
- Australian Government: [Australia's COVID-19 Vaccine and Treatment Strategy](#)
- Tasmanian Government: [Queensland Government COVID 19 Vaccination Information](#)
- Australian Government: [COVID-19 Vaccination – Patient Resources](#)