

Victoria Police Manual

The Victoria Police Manual is issued under the authority of the Chief Commissioner of Police in s.60, Victoria Police Act 2013. Non-compliance with or a departure from the Victoria Police Manual may be subject to management or disciplinary action. Employees must use VPM Professional and ethical standards to inform the decisions they make to support compliance.

COVID-19 vaccination requirements

Context

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (OHS Act) requires that employers ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that they provide and maintain a working environment for their employees that is safe and without risks to health and that other people are not exposed to health and safety risks arising from the employer's activities. The following principles apply to this policy regarding vaccination requirements:

- Victoria Police is responsible for providing a safe working environment, consistent with the duties of employers under the OHS Act. Both infection and serious illness resulting from COVID-19 are workplace health and safety risks.
- Vaccination is a practicable measure that assists to control the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in the working environment of Victoria Police.
- To ensure that Victoria Police discharges its obligations under the OHS Act, employees and other workplace participants are to attend the workplace only when they have up-to-date vaccination status against COVID-19.

This policy outlines the vaccination requirements for employees and other workplace participants attending a workplace, to ensure a safe workplace for all employees, workplace participants and visitors.

This policy does not apply to members of the general public who require the assistance of Victoria Police or who are required to attend Victoria Police facilities, such as victims of crime, offenders and persons in custody.

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Definitions

- **Acceptable certification** for the purpose of determining an employee's status as an excepted person is:
 - (a) In any case:
 - (i) a current COVID-19 digital certificate issued by Services Australia that states that the person is unable to receive a dose, or a further dose, of any COVID-19 vaccine that is available in Australia; or
 - (ii) a printed version of the COVID-19 digital certificate referred to in subclause (a)(i) above; or
 - (iii) a current Immunisation History Statement displayed through the Medicare App, that states that a person is unable to receive a booster dose that is available in Australia; or
 - (iv) a printed version of the Immunisation History Statement referred to in subclause (a)(iii) above.
- **Booster dose** means:
 - (a) a second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine after receiving one dose of a one dose COVID-19 vaccine; or
 - (b) a third dose of a COVID-19 vaccine after receiving two doses of a two dose COVID-19 vaccine, including different types of two dose COVID-19 vaccines; or
 - (c) any additional booster doses as may be required to maintain up-to-date vaccination status as recommended by the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) from time to time.
- **Excepted person** means an employee who holds acceptable certification that they are unable to receive a dose, or a further dose, of any COVID-19 vaccine that is available in Australia due to a medical contraindication or acute medical illness in accordance with current ATAGI guidance.
- **Primary course** means that a person has received a primary course of a Therapeutic Goods Association (TGA) approved or recognised vaccine if they have received one dose of a one dose COVID-19 vaccine, or two doses of a two dose COVID-19 vaccine but have not yet received a booster dose.
- **Vaccination evidence** means any evidence relating to a person's vaccination status and includes:
 - (a) any information that is derived from a record of information that was made under, or in accordance with the *Australian Immunisation Register Act 2015* (Cth); and
 - (b) the name or type of any dose of an approved COVID-19 Vaccine received by the person; and
 - (c) the date on which the person received any dose of an approved COVID-19 vaccine.
- **Vaccination status** means one of the following:
 - (a) Up-to-date
 - (b) Under-vaccinated
 - (c) Excepted person.
- **Under-vaccinated** is the vaccination status of an employee whose vaccination status is not up-to-date or they are an excepted person.
- **Up-to-date** means, for the purposes of vaccination status, vaccination in line with ATAGI guidance, as updated from time to time, including the maintenance of vaccination status

currency through booster doses.

Current ATAGI guidance as at 10 February 2022 confirms that up-to-date means:

- For individuals aged 16 years and over:
 - having completed an appropriate primary course of a TGA approved or recognised vaccine; and
 - if six months has passed since the completion of that course, having received a booster dose.
- For individuals who have had prior COVID-19 (including asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2) infection:
 - having completed an appropriate primary course of a TGA approved or recognised vaccine; and
 - if both six months have passed since the completion of that course and four months have passed following their infection, having received a booster dose.
- **Workplace participant** includes contractors, subcontractors, consultants, service providers, an employee of a labour hire company and other individuals employed by a third party to perform work on Victoria Police's behalf.

Also refer to the general [VPM Dictionary](#) for definitions and acronyms.

Scope and application

This policy applies to all employees and other workplace participants of Victoria Police, except where there is an applicable direction made under any law, including a relevant pandemic order under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*.

Responsibilities and procedures

1. Vaccination requirements

1.1 Vaccination requirements

Existing employees and other workplace participants

Subject to the exceptions below, only employees or other workplace participants with up-to-date vaccination status against COVID-19 and who provide vaccination evidence of their vaccination status are permitted to work for Victoria Police outside their ordinary place of residence.

Prospective employees or other workplace participants

When recruiting and/or engaging, the advertising and engagement documentation should clearly state that engagement is subject to the person providing vaccination evidence to Victoria Police that confirms their vaccination status as up-to-date or as an excepted person. The person must provide vaccination evidence of vaccination status as part of the recruitment or on-boarding process.

1.2 Evidence of vaccination status

To ensure a safe workplace for all employees, workplace participants and visitors, all employees and other workplace participants who (or may need to) work outside of their ordinary place of residence and attend a Victoria Police workplace, or other workplace on behalf of Victoria Police must comply with the following directions:

- Prior to attending a workplace other than their home, all employees and other workplace participants must provide vaccination evidence of their vaccination status to the satisfaction of Victoria Police, as follows:
 - All employees must record their vaccination evidence of each dose of an approved COVID-19 vaccine confirming their vaccination status, or acceptable certification, within the 'Record COVID-19 Vaccination' tab of HR Assist.
 - All other workplace participants must provide vaccination evidence to Victoria Police confirming their vaccination status, or acceptable certification.

If an employee or other workplace participant does not meet the above requirements, they will be treated as if they are under-vaccinated.

All employees and other workplace participants must provide this information as soon as reasonably practicable after the commencement of this policy or as otherwise instructed by Victoria Police.

For employees, information pertaining to vaccination status will be recorded in HR Assist and maintained in accordance with the *Health Records Act 2001* and be accessible to authorised persons only for the purposes of implementing and ensuring compliance with this policy. Employees and other workplace participants are encouraged to redact healthcare identifiers, where relevant, from their current COVID-19 digital certificate or other document before providing vaccination evidence to Victoria Police.

1.3 Exceptions

An employee or other workplace participant may be permitted to work outside their ordinary place of residence for Victoria Police if the employee is an excepted person and has produced acceptable certification to Victoria Police to substantiate that they are an excepted person. Prior to granting such permission, Victoria Police will carry out a risk assessment and determine measures to ensure a safe working environment.

An employee or other workplace participant whose evidence of an acceptable certification has expired, meaning that they are no longer considered to be an excepted person, will be subject to the following requirements:

- to obtain and maintain up-to-date vaccination status in accordance with primary course and booster dose timeframes as set out in current ATAGI guidelines
- to provide vaccination evidence confirming their vaccination status
- to only work outside of their ordinary place of residence if they have an up-to-date vaccination status.

2. Compliance with this policy

Employees who do not comply with the directions outlined in this policy may be subject to one or more of the following:

- disciplinary action as described within the **VPMP Complaints and discipline**
- misconduct as described within clause 25, *Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2020*

- an assessment as to their capability to meet the inherent requirements of their role, which may result in termination of employment.

Workplace participants may have their contract for the provision of services with Victoria Police terminated.

Any employee who falsifies and/or knowingly and intentionally misleads Victoria Police in relation to their vaccination status or their status as an excepted person will be subject to disciplinary action and may face sanctions up to and including termination of employment.

3. Review

This policy will be subject to review every 12 months from the date of issue, or upon update of ATAGI guidance i.e., for employees to receive additional booster doses to maintain 'up-to-date' vaccination status to align with any changes to ATAGI guidance.

Related documents

- *Victoria Police Act 2013*
- *Public Administration Act 2004*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Healthcare Identifiers Act 2010 (Cth)*
- *Health Records Act 2001*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (ss. 7(2), 10(3), 13, 38)
- *Pandemic COVID-19- Mandatory Vaccination (Specified-Workers) Order 2022, Pandemic (Quarantine, Isolation and Testing) Order 2022* and any other pandemic order (as applicable) made by the Minister for Health under Part 8A of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2020*
- *Victoria Police (Police Officers, Protective Services Officers, Police Reservists and Police Recruits) Enterprise Agreement 2019*
- VPM Professional and ethical standards
- VPMP Complaints and discipline
- VPMP Management of misconduct (VPS Employees)
- VPM Mobility and redeployment (police members)
- VPM Information Privacy
- VPM Human rights standards

Further advice and information

For further advice and assistance regarding this policy, contact your supervisor or Human Resources Command.

Update history

DATE UPDATED	SUMMARY OF CHANGE	FORCE FILE NUMBER
12/07/22	First issue – replaces CCI 04/21 Mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for Victoria Police employees and 02/22 Mandatory COVID-19 booster vaccination for Victoria Police employees	FF-215300 1