

# Playcentre Aotearoa's Covid-19 Vaccination Policy



## Introduction

Playcentre Aotearoa is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all tamariki/children, employees, members and volunteers and other persons who may be affected by our work. Playcentre Aotearoa's priority is to ensure we do everything we reasonably can to protect and prevent all persons within our community being exposed to the risk of COVID-19.

Playcentre Aotearoa has determined that under the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccinations) Order 2021 (Public Health Order) and under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 it is necessary to put in place a COVID-19 Vaccination Policy to minimise the risk of exposure to and transmission of COVID-19 in our workplaces and to ensure the safety, health and well-being of our tamariki, employees, members, volunteers, tertiary students and other persons who may be affected by our work.

Playcentre Aotearoa strongly believes vaccination provides the greatest protection against COVID-19 and wishes to ensure that all workers and volunteers have the opportunity to be vaccinated against COVID-19 without being disadvantaged.

## Commencement

This policy will come into effect on **16 November 2021** and will initially be reviewed monthly, subject to any further NZ Government announcements that may impact on that timing or the terms of this policy. Health and safety policy and procedures: including safety requirements, hazard identification and maintenance reviews

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- set out the obligations and responsibilities of all people covered by this Policy;
- outline Playcentre Aotearoa's responsibility and commitment to ensuring a safe and healthy workplace;
- ensure compliance with the Order; and
- ensure as far as reasonably practicable safe and healthy workplaces.

## Scope

This policy applies to all workers, including (but not limited to) employees, volunteers, tertiary students, visitors, and contractors/tradespeople who have been engaged to provide services to or on behalf of Playcentre Aotearoa.

This Policy applies subject to any NZ Government orders and/or legislation enacted relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and COVID-19 vaccines including the Order and the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

## Responsibilities

All workers, volunteers, members, tertiary students, and contractors are responsible for:

- familiarising themselves and complying with this Policy and its requirements;
- ensuring they are aware of any safety requirements (including COVID-19 control measures) and guidelines and procedures that apply to their role;

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- complying with all relevant legislation including the Order;
- following official NZ Government health requirements in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy:

- A **vaccinated person** is a person who has received a full course of the COVID-19 vaccine, as required by the Order, and who has provided Playcentre Aotearoa with satisfactory proof of vaccination. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes receiving further vaccine courses (including for example booster shots) which may be recommended from time to time. A vaccinated person may be only partially vaccinated until the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 under the vaccine mandate, thereafter a vaccinated person will be considered as fully vaccinated as defined by the public health order at the time.
- The **COVID-19 vaccine** means a COVID-19 vaccine that is listed in Schedule 3 of the Order or any subsequent applicable legislation. Vaccines which are currently included in Schedule 3 are Pfizer BioNTech (Comirnaty), AstraZeneca, Moderna, and Janssen (Johnson & Johnson). This includes any future vaccines or vaccinations that may be required under the Order.
- **Proof of vaccination** means written proof that a person has received a full course of a COVID-19 Vaccine. Examples include a covid vaccine pass, a Vaccine Certificate from [My Covid Record](#).

**Captured role** means a role that must be performed by a vaccinated person by virtue of Schedule 2 of the Order including any person who “may have contact with children in the course of carrying out that work; or will be present at the affected education service at a time when children

or students are also present”. This includes tamariki on a school or other education facility where the Playcentre, playgroup or SPACE Only Centre is located.”

## Workers and Volunteers Undertaking Captured Roles under the Order

Although Playcentre Aotearoa respects that each person is entitled to make their own choice about whether to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, under the Government Order workers and volunteers undertaking captured roles at Playcentre Aotearoa, where they are required to work with or be present when tamariki are onsite, are required to:

- have at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine by 11:59pm on **15 November 2021**; and
- a second dose by 11:59pm on **1 January 2022**.

## Medical Exemptions

Medical exemptions for workers and volunteers who are covered by the Order will be dealt with in accordance the requirements under s 9A and 9B of the Order. This requires those needing an exemption to have it approved by the Director General following a medical practitioner applying for the exemption on their behalf.

The Order does not allow for any other exemption or exception to vaccination beyond that contained in 9A and 9B of the Order.

## Other Workers, Visitors and Third Parties – Activities Restricted to Vaccinated Persons

In addition to the requirements of the Order, we have identified and assessed that the risk of

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COVID-19 infection and transmission, and also the risk of serious illness, is highest for tamariki under 12 years of age and persons who are unvaccinated. A significant portion of our community we engage with are vulnerable and at high risk to COVID-19 or come into regular contact with people who are high risk. The consequences of COVID-19 infection are therefore more severe for our tamariki and those people.

Accordingly, we have determined that to ensure so far as reasonably practicable the safety, health and wellbeing of all tamariki, workers, tertiary students, volunteers, our community, and other persons they may come into contact with (including workers who are not working in captured roles, third parties, contractors, parents who are not volunteers, caregivers or family members over the age of 12 years) these workers, visitors or third parties must have the first vaccine by 16th November 2021 and the second vaccine by 1st January 2022, they will then be permitted to:

- Attend Playcentre Aotearoa Centres, Playgroups, SPACE/Babies Can Play Only Centres, Playcentre Shops and Associated Offices (NSC, Regional Hubs) when tamariki are present;
- Attend in-person meetings or events held by Playcentre Aotearoa at a Playcentre, Playgroup, or SPACE/Babies Can Play Only Centre or other Playcentre Aotearoa site where tamariki are present;
- Undertake work whether paid or voluntary at any Playcentre, Playgroup, or SPACE/Babies Can Play Only Centre or other Playcentre Aotearoa site where tamariki are present;

Unvaccinated persons (including workers and volunteers in captured roles, non-captured roles, third parties, tertiary students, contractors,

parents who are not volunteers, caregivers or family members of the age of 12 years) will not be permitted to attend Playcentre sites/premises during licensed Playcentre, Playgroup or SPACE/Babies Can Play Sessions and related activities, i.e. clean-up, session evaluation, with the exclusion of drop-off/pick-up.

## Exceptions for persons not covered by the Order who are unable to be vaccinated for a protected reason

Playcentre Aotearoa recognises that certain persons are unable to be vaccinated for reasons which are protected by the Human Rights Act 1993. An example of this may include where a person is unable to be vaccinated due to a diagnosed health condition.

Playcentre Aotearoa will, upon request, consider exceptions for other persons (who are not covered by the Order) who are unable to be vaccinated due to a protected reason, and who need to engage in an activity which would otherwise be restricted by this policy.

Exception requests need to be made in writing to the [askHR@playcentre.org.nz](mailto:askHR@playcentre.org.nz). When making a request, the person will need to explain why they are unable to be vaccinated, and provide adequate supporting evidence, e.g., exemption certificate approved by the Director General.

An exception will only be granted if Playcentre Aotearoa is satisfied that:

- The persons reason for not being vaccinated is supported by adequate evidence and is protected under the Human Rights Act 1993; and
- It is reasonably practicable to implement any additional safety or control measures which would be required if the exception is granted; and

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- Granting the exception will not expose the person or other persons to unacceptable risk; and
- any accommodation or changes required to accommodate the person does not unreasonably disrupt Playcentre Aotearoa activities.

## Unvaccinated Workers and Volunteers

Unvaccinated workers and volunteers (including workers and volunteers who have declined to share their vaccination status with Playcentre Aotearoa) will not be entitled to engage in the restricted activities outlined above until they have received a vaccine in accordance with the timeframes of the Order or are fully vaccinated by 1 January 2022.

Where possible and practical, Playcentre Aotearoa will still support unvaccinated workers and volunteers to continue to perform their roles remotely. Such an arrangement will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is meeting the needs of both parties.

Where it is impractical for an unvaccinated worker or volunteer to perform their role remotely, and/or if it is necessary for an unvaccinated worker or volunteer to engage in restricted activities or attend Playcentre in order to discharge their responsibilities, Playcentre Aotearoa will consult with the worker or volunteer about how to manage this. As part of this consultation, Playcentre Aotearoa may give consideration to alternative work arrangements including:

- Possible modifications to the worker or volunteer's role including for example reduced or alternative duties; and

- Redeploying the worker or volunteer into an alternative role which can be performed remotely.

In the event that an alternative work arrangement cannot be identified, is impractical to implement, or is not agreed to by the worker or volunteer concerned, Playcentre Aotearoa may consider termination of the worker or volunteer's engagement or employment as a last resort.

## Additional Health and Safety Measures

It is recognised that vaccination is only one part of managing the risks posed by COVID-19.

Accordingly, all workers, volunteers, tertiary students, contractors and visitors regardless of their vaccination status, are required to comply with any further health and safety control measures which Playcentre Aotearoa may put in place from time to time. These measures may include (but are not limited to) requirements relating to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) use, physical distancing, or contractor/third party site visits, and may include restrictions on activities which are otherwise permitted for vaccinated persons under this Policy.

Given the speed with which the COVID-19 pandemic can evolve, any additional measures will be set out on the Playcentre Aotearoa website and/or a review of Playcentre Aotearoa's H&S Risk Assessment as needed. Updates will be actively communicated to all staff and members via the current communications methods.

## Vaccination Register

In order to administer and ensure compliance with this Policy, Playcentre Aotearoa is required to compile and maintain a Vaccine Register which includes the following information:

- The names of all workers and volunteers;

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- Whether they have provided satisfactory proof of vaccination; and
- Whether they have been granted a medical exemption by the Director General or exception under this Policy and the conditions of any exemption or exception.

The Vaccine Register, and/or any information contained within it, will:

- Be used solely for the purposes of:
  - ensuring the health and safety of all tamariki, workers and volunteers and other persons who interact with workers or volunteers and/or attend Playcentre Aotearoa workplaces;
  - monitoring compliance with the requirements of this Policy; and
  - demonstrating compliance with the Order, any third party or Playcentre Aotearoa requirements, relating to the vaccination status of Playcentre Aotearoa's workers or volunteers (subject to appropriate consent being obtained from that person);
- Be stored in a secure manner;
- Only be disclosed to a third party if required by law or with the consent of the worker or volunteer concerned (for example if a third-party requests proof of vaccination before allowing a worker to attend their premises);
- Only be retained for as long as there is a need to have knowledge of a worker or volunteer's vaccination status and/or to distinguish between vaccinated and unvaccinated workers and volunteers;

- Be destroyed in a safe and secure manner once there is no longer a need for Playcentre Aotearoa to retain information about a worker's vaccine status.

Visitors who are not workers or volunteers will need to provide proof of vaccination (Vaccine Pass) as a condition of entry, scan the QR code and sign in to each premises.

## Where to Obtain Further Information

If anyone has any questions about this policy and how it applies to them, they should speak with their line manager for staff, check the [www.playcentre.org.nz/covid-19/frequently-asked-question-bank/](http://www.playcentre.org.nz/covid-19/frequently-asked-question-bank/) website for FAQs or submit a question via the Covid Feedback Form on the website.

## Where can I Find More Information about Vaccinations?

Playcentre Aotearoa recommends anyone seeking further information about vaccinations, or who has any health concerns, to speak to their medical practitioner. General information can also be found online at <https://covid19.govt.nz/> or at Ministry of Health New Zealand website: <https://www.health.govt.nz>

## Reviews

Playcentre Aotearoa will periodically review this Policy and the need for such restrictions and requirements in accordance with NZ

Government orders and or legislation enacted relating to COVID-19 pandemic and COVID-19 vaccines.

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## Policy details

- Name: Playcentre Aotearoa's Covid-19 Vaccination Policy
- Version: 9.10 Rev 1
- Issued: Dec 2021
- Owner: National H&S Manager
- Approver: Chief Executive
- Last Reviewed: Dec 2021
- Scheduled Review Date: Jan 2022, thereafter monthly, or due to a change in circumstances

## Regulatory references

- COVID-19 Public Health Response Vaccination Order 2021
- Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008, 45, 46 and 47
- Licensing Criterion PF1-38, HS1, HS4, HS5, HS6, HS7, HS8, HS12, GMA6
- Health & Safety at Work Act 2015
- Children's Act 2014
- Fire Service Act 1975
- Disabled Person in Community Welfare Act 1979

## Other related references

- Playcentre Aotearoa H&S Risk Assessment
- Playcentre Aotearoa Cleaning and Office Cleaning Protocols
- Centre/Workplace Emergency Plans\*
- Hazard and Risk Register\*
- Centre current First Aid certificates (on file)

\* To be displayed and/or available at each Centre

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