

# COVID-19 Vaccination Policy & Procedure



<b>Policy Relevant to:</b>	All staff, Educators, Educator Assistants, contractors, volunteers, students on placement, Board members and service providers*
<b>Last Reviewed:</b>	November 2021
<b>Next Review:</b>	December 2021
<b>NQS:</b>	NQS2.1.2, NQS2.2.2, NQS6.1.3, NQS7.1.2, NQS7.2.1

## 1. Purpose

This policy addresses safety of staff, educators and children within our care in managing risks associated with the pandemic virus COVID-19.

The safety of staff, educators and children within our care is of utmost importance. With Tasmanian borders opening on 15<sup>th</sup> of December 2021 the risks associated with the community becoming adversely impacted by COVID-19 is considered to be at a greater level than exists prior to 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

To manage and minimise this risk, the Board have decided that all persons identified in this policy, who are eligible to be vaccinated against COVID-19 must be vaccinated.

This policy works in conjunction with current measures in our COVID-19 safety plan (such as additional cleaning and hygiene measures, social distancing where appropriate, stringent implementation of illness policy), leave procedures, related Government directives and public health orders in place regarding COVID-19. Should additional safety measures be identified (such as rapid antigen screening) they will be considered for implementation. Should public health impose more stringent requirements in addition to what is outlined in this policy, an immediate review of the policy shall be triggered, and the overarching government directives followed.

This policy applies to *all Adventure Patch employees, family day care educators, educator assistants, contractors, volunteers, students on placement and board members\** [hereinafter referred to as *personnel*]. It also applies to service providers attending any Adventure Patch premises during times there are children within our care. For the avoidance of doubt, it does not apply to the parents and guardians of children in our care unless they are covered by another category listed above.

## 2. Why

Adventure Patch is an essential provider of education and care to children under 12 years of age. The children we care for are currently ineligible for vaccination and research has indicated those who are vaccinated are less likely to pass on COVID-19 if they are a carrier (TGA). We have a duty of care to children within our care, staff and family day care educators to ensure a safe environment to work and play. In the absence of a vaccination for children, considered action is required to mitigate risks within our control. Adventure Patch wish to keep our people and the communities in which they live as safe as we possibly can.

The existing social distancing and hand washing measures have proved to be less effective against the Delta strain. The Delta strain is more likely to be transmitted to children and is at least twice as contagious as Wuhan strain (Royal Australian College of General Practitioners RACGP). Vaccination against COVID-19 is one of the most effective ways to limit the transmission of the virus.

After due consideration of alternatives and to provide protection to the children we care for, team members and the community, together with our social responsibilities we will be

requiring all persons identified in this policy to provide evidence of full vaccination status, progress towards the same or medical certification for temporary exemption as listed below.

It is considered lawful and reasonable to mandate vaccinations, as well as for other reasons outlined in this Policy. This policy direction will come into force in accordance with the timeline below.

This may not sit comfortably with some people and opportunities for consultation are provided in the accompanying letter to this document, together with further measures outlined in this policy.

### 3. When

The Policy will take effect from 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021, to ensure sufficient preparedness for the borders opening on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

By no later than 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021, all personnel must be in one of the following categories and provide evidence accordingly:

- 1) Fully (two dose) vaccinated against COVID-19
- 2) Have received one dose of vaccine for COVID-19 and have a secondary appointment booked within the medically endorsed recommended timeframe.
- 3) Have an initial appointment booked by the 3<sup>rd</sup> to receive your first dose prior to 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021;
- 4) Have a medical exemption<sup>#</sup> in place where an authorised medical/vaccination professional has completed the Tasmanian Government Vaccine Medical Contraindication form (v5 October 2021) (link below).

*# In the event of a temporary exemption, it is expected when that exemption is no longer applicable the individual would progress towards being fully vaccinated with initial appointment occurring within two-weeks of the cessation of exemption. If further exemption assessments apply at this time a new Vaccine Medical Contraindication form must be supplied for personnel records.*

All new personnel joining Adventure Patch from the 19<sup>th</sup> of November 2021 are expected to meet one of the four categories listed above.

It is expected that all individuals that the policy applies to maintain any medically recommended booster vaccinations after full vaccination takes place (currently six months after second dose administration date). The individual is required to obtain recommended booster dose/s and provide vaccine certificate evidence, otherwise impacts on employment may be initiated, in accordance with clause 7 of this policy.

### 4. Data collection

Adventure Patch will require all personnel to provide a vaccination certificate as proof of vaccination, or an exemption certificate to be retained on file in line with requirements of the Privacy Act 1988. For existing personnel, this documentation must be provided to the HR office by 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021. In addition, household members aged over 18 years that reside in the same household as a Family Day Care Educator



must provide evidence of proof of vaccination if they are going to have contact with the children in care.

Adventure Patch use Microsoft Teams for securely storing sensitive information. The data collected will be stored in accordance with the Privacy Act, with the information access being limited to Executive Management team and Human Resources Team.

You can securely provide your vaccination information via Jot Forms link provided (or QR Code option below) including attaching your vaccination certificate which can be generated from the Medicare section of your My Gov account:



Scan the QR code to the left or click the [link here](#) to complete the form and upload your vaccination certificate.

For people requiring entry to premises other than staff, family day care educators, educator assistants and family day care household residents, evidence of vaccination will be required to be shown at time of entry. Sighting evidence from Check In Tas App on mobile devices where vaccination status has been attached is a permissible option or a COVID-19 vaccination certificate generated from Medicare within an individual's MyGov account.

Any individual requiring site access may further elect for the details to be held in a register held by Adventure Patch. This is optional with the purpose of reducing the number of times evidence will need to be sighted. The access approval register would capture name only which all sites can check with evidential certificate being stored in line with sensitive information security controls.

At this stage, an exemption for this requirement exists for the following who have no more than incidental contact with children:

- Families of children within our care as part of collecting or dropping off children to care unless they are on the premises for a longer duration than expected to reasonably complete such tasks.
- Members of a Family Day Care Educators household who may share a Family Day Care environment and do not have direct contact with the children or assist with providing care.
- Contractors or suppliers who do not have contact with children when completely deliveries, maintenance, cleaning or any other relevant contracting duties.

## 5. Support through transition

All personnel will have access to the Employee Assistance Program Ph: **1800 064 039** should they need support through the transition. Our Employee Assistance Program provider, Positive Solutions, have offices state-wide in Hobart, Launceston, Devonport and Burnie for face-to-face appointments. Any persons impacted by this policy who are concerned that they do not meet one of the four categories, have the option to



have a confidential conversation with the Corporate Services Manager about their concerns either face to face or via telephone.

#### **6. Use of leave if unwell after receiving a COVID-19 vaccination (employees only)**

Up to two days in total of additional paid leave will be provided in the event an employee is unwell after receiving a dose of the vaccine and are unable to work due to the adverse reaction within seven days of receiving a vaccination dose. This is also applicable to casual staff who do not normally receive paid leave entitlements.

Should an employee have received the vaccine prior to implementation of this Policy, Adventure Patch will credit up to two days of personal leave back to the employee's leave balance<sup>^</sup> if they meet the following criteria:

- 1) They were unwell preventing them from attending work due to an adverse reaction from receiving the vaccine within the following seven days.
- 2) They utilised paid or unpaid leave to take time off due to the adverse reaction.
- 3) The employee informs HR of their request no later than 30<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

*<sup>^</sup>For casuals looking to retrospectively meet the three criteria above, a determination will be made by relevant Director whether a one-off payment can occur aligning with hourly rate for up to the rostered hours lost as a result of an adverse reaction to vaccine which resulted in cancellation of shifts up to a maximum of 16 hours for each dose.*

It is the responsibility of the employee to notify Adventure Patch of the time when they took paid/unpaid leave due to COVID-19 vaccination causing an adverse reaction resulting in being unable to attend work so it can be assessed against the eligibility criteria above.

In circumstances where ongoing illness has occurred as the result of an adverse reaction to a vaccine dose, additional paid leave may be granted for extenuating circumstances and long-term impacts on a case-by-case basis where appropriate medical evidence has been presented to support the case. Determination will be made by the CEO in relation to approval.

#### **7. Impacts to employment or family day care registration with Adventure Patch**

If you or the personnel outlined in this policy are unable to provide evidence of meeting one of the four criteria highlighted in Section 3 of this policy by 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 2021 your employment or engagement with Adventure Patch will be examined and a determination made if you are eligible to continue employment or family day care registration with Adventure Patch. The determination will be made on the basis of health and safety concerns outlined in this policy.

#### **Sources**

- RACGP - Evidence suggests COVID vaccines are protective against Delta strain <https://www1.racgp.org.au/newsgp/clinical/evidence-suggests-covid-vaccines-are-protective-ag>



- COVID-19 vaccines | Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA)  
<https://www.tga.gov.au/covid-19-vaccines>
- Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP)  
<https://www.racgp.org.au/coronavirus>
- ECA Code of Ethics.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard.
- National Privacy Principles **<https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy-law/privacy-archive/privacy-resources-archive/national-privacy-principles>**
- United Nations Convention of the Rights of a child
- Privacy Act 1988
- Tasmanian Government COVID-19 Vaccine Medical Contraindication form  
[https://www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0024/185433/Tas-Gov-Vaccination-Editable-Exemption-Form-v5.pdf](https://www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0024/185433/Tas-Gov-Vaccination-Editable-Exemption-Form-v5.pdf)

