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# DHS Update



22 October 2021

## COVID-19 vaccination direction - health settings

Dear sector colleague,

I am writing to you today about an important matter regarding mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations.

You may be aware that a new Direction under the Emergency Management Act recently came into place that will impact many staff in our sector who are required to carry out their duties in a health setting.

This Direction brings South Australia in line with the National Cabinet endorsement of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) recommendation that all people working in a health care setting are vaccinated as a condition of work.

Phase 1 of the [Emergency Management \(COVID-19\) \(Healthcare Setting Workers Vaccination No 2\) Direction 2021](#) requires that staff who carry out any of their duties in a health care setting (a public hospital, private hospital, ambulance service or patient transport service, including all services provided by a Local Health Network, not just those physically located in a hospital) **must be vaccinated against COVID-19 with a TGA approved vaccine, with the first dose being complete by 1 November 2021**. The second dose must be complete within one month of the first dose.

Phase 2 of the [Direction](#) requires that staff who carry out their duties in an expanded range of health settings including (amongst others) GP clinics, the Department of Health and Wellbeing, Wellbeing SA, dental clinics, pharmacies, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and

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**complete by 8 November 2021.** The second dose must be complete within one month of the first dose.

This means that any staff in your organisation who carries out their duties at any time in a setting as defined in the Direction, regardless of whether they work in a patient or a non-patient area, how often they attend that setting, or how incidental their duties are, must comply with this Direction.

Staff who are affected by this Direction are required to provide proof of their vaccination status to their line manager/employer. They must also provide proof of their vaccination status to the operator of the health setting on request.

If employees cannot be vaccinated because of a medical reason, [they are required to complete an exemption application form that must be endorsed by the Chief Public Health Officer \(CPHO\)](#). If approved, the CPHO will provide a signed exemption letter that can be provided to the employee's manager. Please note that pregnancy is not a reason for a medical exemption under this Direction.

If staff do not provide evidence of having had one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine by the required date and do not have a medical exemption certificate they will be unable to carry out duties in any of the health settings detailed in the Direction.

I appreciate that some organisations may be seeking additional clarity of the application of this Direction to their staff and to the services they deliver. To that end, DHS is working with SA Health and SAPOL to prepare a set of FAQs relevant to organisations who are contracted to deliver health services, who deliver health services in their premises, and who have staff in their organisation who deliver a wide-range of services and programs that may or may not be captured by this Direction. We will have this information available for you early next week.

[In the meantime, I strongly encourage you to read the FAQs that have been prepared by SA Health that may answer some of your questions.](#)

To get a COVID-19 vaccination, you can either [make an appointment](#) or take advantage of this weekend's ['Walk-in Weekend' vaccination blitz](#) (and grab a free sausage sizzle!) happening across the state, including at DHS's own Highgate Vaccination Clinic at Fullarton.

Together we can ensure that we are doing everything we can to protect each other, and the clients and communities we support, from the impacts of COVID-19.

Ngaityalya  
(Kurna, *thank you*)

**Lois Boswell (she/her)**  
Chief Executive

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