

Vaccination policy

Purpose

Ahpra is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all workers, and for the health practitioners and members of the public with whom we interact. This includes taking all steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the spread of diseases such as COVID-19, influenza and other potentially preventable illnesses in our offices.

Ahpra recognises that vaccination is a personal choice. However, in the future, governments in various states and territories may release public health orders or directions requiring vaccination of some categories of workers, and some professions. Where public health orders or directions apply, Ahpra will ensure the implementation of this policy aligns with these directions.

The most effective way to address our health and safety obligations arising from communicable disease is to obtain the appropriate vaccination in accordance with any public health orders or directions, or as encouraged by Australian health authorities. Ahpra strongly encourages all workers to be up to date with vaccinations as approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Scope

This policy applies to all Ahpra workers. A worker is defined as a person who carries out work with Ahpra, including: Ahpra Board, National Executive, employees, contractors and agency staff, volunteers, interns, work experience staff and statutory appointees (board, committee and panel members).

Policy

In order to minimise the risk of harm to the health, safety and wellbeing of all workers and maintain a safe working environment, Ahpra strongly encourages all workers to be up to date with vaccinations unless medically contraindicated. In adopting this approach, Ahpra acknowledges:

- the ongoing potential transmission of COVID-19, future variants and influenza;
- the possibility of other serious contagious illness emerging in the community in the future that may be effectively controlled through existing or new vaccinations
- the important role vaccines play in preventing and controlling infectious disease outbreaks particularly among vulnerable members of the community
- the benefits of preventing infection or serious disease to protect short-term and long-term health
- the fact that workers may be required to attend healthcare settings from time to time, or meet with health practitioners, which increases the risk of a virus spreading either to or from the workforce;
- the fact that workers are required to attend the office on an agreed basis to fully perform the inherent requirements of their duties;
- the fact that even with social distancing and other measures, there is a risk of transmission within the workplace.

Key principles

- Where public health orders or directions apply, Ahpra will undertake activities to ensure compliance with these requirements for the protection of worker health and safety.

- Ahpra strongly encourages all workers to be up to date with vaccinations approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration unless a valid medical exemption applies.
- Ahpra asks all workers to be responsible with any signs of illness and not attend the office to avoid contributing to the spread of diseases which can have a serious impact on others with underlying health conditions.
- This policy will be reviewed in accordance with significant changes in public health advice (or every 3 years whichever occurs first).

Employees - getting vaccinated and being reimbursed

In accordance with clause 46.5 of Ahpra's Enterprise Agreement, Ahpra will allow an employee up to four hours of paid time for the purpose of the employee obtaining an annual COVID-19 or influenza vaccination.

Paid time (up to four hours) to receive vaccinations (other than for COVID-19 or influenza) may be approved by Ahpra's National Executive in the event of the outbreak of other serious, contagious illness that represents a significant risk to employee health and safety.

Employees can get their vaccination during the workday and don't need to enter this time in Unit4. However, employees do need to let their manager know beforehand.

Reasonable costs of other vaccines endorsed for reimbursement can be claimed by the employee and will be reimbursed by Ahpra upon the production of valid receipts and in line with Ahpra's process for reimbursement.

New workers

Workers engaged after the commencement date of this policy will not be required to be vaccinated prior to starting their employment/engagement unless otherwise required by changes in public health order/directions or this policy. However, all new workers are strongly encouraged to vaccinate.

Access to vaccinations

Workers can access vaccinations at various locations including vaccination hubs, roving clinics, general practices, and some pharmacies.

Related documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following legislation

- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (ACT)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)
- Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 (NT)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (QLD)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (TAS)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (VIC)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WA)
- Each State and Territory also has a set of regulations and codes of practice to support the legislation which must be complied with by Ahpra.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Employee	A worker directly engaged by Ahpra and whose conditions of employment are captured by the Enterprise Agreement or an individual employment contract.
Public health order (or direction)	An enforceable government direction which sets out requirements and restrictions for businesses in each state and territory.
Reasonably practicable	That which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done to ensure health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the likelihood of the hazard or risk concerned occurring, • the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk, • what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know about the hazard or risk, and about the ways to eliminate or minimise the risk, • the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk, and • after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the cost associated with the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.
Vaccination	Treatment with vaccine to stimulate the body's immune response to produce immunity to a particular infectious disease/pathogen that has been approved and is recognised by the Therapeutic Goods Administration for use in Australia.
Visitor	A person who is not a worker who is attending an Ahpra workplace for any purpose.
Worker	A person who carries out work for Ahpra, including: National Executive, employees, contractors and agency staff, volunteers, interns, work experience staff and statutory appointees (board, committee and panel members)
Workplace	For the purposes of this policy, any place or location where a worker conducts work on behalf of Ahpra including an Ahpra controlled office, field- work or off-site locations but excluding the work-from-home environment.

Document control	
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Policy Owner (administrative)	Executive Director People and Culture
Responsible Officer	National Director Employee Services
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Next review due date	31 August 2026 (or whenever there is a change in public health orders/directions)