

# COVID-19 Vaccination in the Workplace Policy

## Policy Statement

We are committed to protecting our partners, employees, contractors, consultants, clients, and any visitors to our workplace from the harmful effects of COVID-19, as well as minimising the risk of COVID-19 transmission within our workplace and the wider community. We acknowledge that the risks associated with COVID-19, and that the measures and controls that can be taken to mitigate or eliminate those risks, may change (including be added to or removed), and that further measures or controls may become available or appropriate over time (such as the use of Rapid Antigen Tests).

The Board will regularly review this Policy, including at every Board meeting. As such, we reserve the right to vary, amend, or terminate this Policy at any time, following consultation with you.

We intend to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission within our workplace by:

1. Strongly encouraging all partners, employees, consultants and contractors to be vaccinated against COVID-19 as part of our support to New Zealand's national COVID-19 vaccination programme;
2. Understanding the COVID-19 vaccination status of all partners, employees, consultants and contractors, as well as clients, tradespeople and service providers who wish to visit our premises; and
3. Only vaccinated people, regardless of age, entering our offices from 1 December 2021, subject to regular and ongoing review of this Policy. This includes:
  - a. partners, employees, consultants and contractors; and
  - b. all clients, tradespeople, service providers and other visitors; and
4. Taking all other reasonably practicable steps to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission for partners, employees, consultants, and contractors.

## Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to set out our stance on COVID-19 vaccinations and the rights, obligations and responsibilities of all people covered by this Policy.

For the purposes of this Policy, "vaccinated" means someone who is fully vaccinated against COVID-19. A person will be regarded as fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine (delivered at least 21 days after the first dose) or such other vaccination that is endorsed by the Ministry of Health (or equivalent from OECD jurisdictions), as well as any booster vaccination in the time recommended by the Ministry of Health.

## Scope

This policy applies to all partners, employees, consultants, and contractors of MERW and includes any unpaid internships or work experience persons who will work in our offices (**Personnel** or **you**).

Please familiarise yourself and comply with this Policy, and with official government health advice in relation to the vaccine for COVID-19.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with our Health and Safety Manual, COVID-19 Policy and Health and Safety Management Plans (aligned with the current Alert levels and any subsequent framework) collectively, our **COVID-19 Response Policies**. This includes guidance on matters such as our Personnel attending client workplaces.

## Getting the COVID-19 Vaccine

We strongly encourage everyone who can to be vaccinated in an effort to minimise the risk of transmission within the workplace and wider community. We may also require (based on a roles-based risk assessment) that certain roles at our firm are performed by vaccinated people only.

We are committed to supporting everyone to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine by:

1. Providing timely and accurate information about COVID-19 vaccinations to help you make informed decisions;
2. Actively promoting the vaccines that are recommended by the Ministry of Health;
3. Requiring everyone to comply with this Policy; and
4. Allowing you to attend vaccination appointments during work hours without loss of pay.

We also encourage you to seek your own independent medical advice about the COVID-19 vaccine before receiving it.

### **Access to our offices**

Only vaccinated Personnel, clients, tradespeople, service providers and other visitors, regardless of age, may enter our Auckland and Wellington offices from 1 December 2021.

We will continue to comply with NZ Law Society Rules about providing legal services to the public; however, Personnel inviting visitors to our workplace should ensure that visitors are aware of this Policy.

If you are unvaccinated from 1 December 2021 you will need to work from home, and this will be reviewed regularly as part of our ongoing review of this Policy.

### **Electing not to be vaccinated**

You are entitled to choose not to be vaccinated. We acknowledge that there may be circumstances where you have received medical advice not to receive the vaccine or choose not to be vaccinated due to religious, cultural or other beliefs or circumstances.

Ultimately, the final decision on vaccination rests with the individual. We will support you in considering your options while also respecting your individual choice.

### **Specific requirements for the role or duties of our Personnel**

There may be specific roles, and conditions on our Personnel attending specific external sites, where being vaccinated is a requirement in order to safely commence or continue performing work. If you perform work at one of these sites or hold a role that needs to be performed by a vaccinated person, you will be notified about this and asked to provide evidence that you are vaccinated.

### **Disclosure of vaccination status**

We have asked all Personnel to disclose their vaccination status, in order to monitor the vaccination status of our workforce. This is strongly encouraged as it will enable us to assess and mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace.

We acknowledge that your vaccination status is personal information and you do not need to disclose this information to us. If you choose not to disclose your vaccination status, we will assume that you are not vaccinated. If this is the case, from 1 December 2021 you will need to work from home, and this will be reviewed regularly as part of our ongoing review of this Policy.

We will ensure that all information provided by you as part of this Policy is handled in accordance with our obligations under the Privacy Act 2020.

### **Providing proof of vaccination**

Where you have advised us that you are vaccinated, we may also request evidence. This may be in the form of an official Ministry of Health COVID-19 Vaccine Record, or a letter administered through a medical practitioner or other health professional that records your vaccination status. This evidence of vaccination will be recorded in our COVID-19 Vaccination Register (please see the section below).

## **Vaccination Register**

We will keep and maintain a confidential COVID-19 Vaccination Register of our Personnel to manage our health and safety risk across the business. Access to the Register will be restricted to HR and the Chief Executive. You may also request to access and change your own personal vaccination information at any time.

Your vaccination status and vaccination records are personal information. This information will be collected, stored/secured, used and disclosed in accordance with our obligations under the Privacy Act 2020.

**Dated: 22 October 2021**