



FAQs: COVIDSafe workplaces direction

Frequently asked questions regarding CSIRO's COVIDSafe workplaces direction.

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[What's the deadline for getting vaccinated to attend a CSIRO site? When do the changes come into effect? ^](#)

From **1 January 2022**, you must be fully vaccinated to attend a CSIRO site.

In some cases, people will be subject to earlier timeframes. This may include jurisdictions that have mandatory vaccination requirements to attend the workplace (for example Victoria), in buildings where we are tenants and the landlord requires vaccination (for example Monash University), and for workers in certain industries where vaccination is mandated (for example healthcare settings).

In these circumstances, to attend site individuals must be vaccinated by the earlier date.

CSIRO is also required to comply with any further State and Territory Public Health Directions as they are implemented, which may impact these dates. If a different date applies to you, you will be informed.

[How long will the vaccination requirements be in place? ^](#)

Our current approach is outlined in our [COVIDSafe workplace direction](#). The Executive Team and our COVID-19 Situation Management Team (SMT) will continue to review our approach to COVIDSafe workplaces over the coming months as we monitor the level of risks associated with COVID at our sites. It is our intention to review this decision on a regular basis as jurisdictional and other arrangements evolve.

[What if I'm not fully vaccinated? ^](#)

Getting vaccinated is an action you can take right now to contribute to a safe workplace. If you have not yet taken this step, you are strongly encouraged to do so to help protect yourself and those around you.

From **1 January 2022**, anybody that chooses not to be vaccinated will be able to work from home where it is reasonable to do so. If this is not practical, CSIRO has a range of leave options that may be accessed including recreation and long service leave.

We understand that working from home and accessing leave may not be sustainable in some situations. As everyone's circumstances will be different, we will work with individuals on a case-by-case basis to determine next steps. If this applies to you, please contact your line manager who will seek guidance from the COVID-19 SMT.

We also understand that for a small number of our people, there may be genuine medical reasons as to why they are unable to be vaccinated. More information on medical exemptions can be found below.

[What information will you be collecting about vaccination status? ^](#)

CSIRO will be recording the minimum amount of personal information required to ensure compliance with public health orders and to maintain a safe working environment. CSIRO is taking a national approach to the recording of information about vaccination status, to ensure we are meeting our work health and safety obligations as well as our obligations under State and Territory laws and ensuring consistency for our people regardless of where they work.

Given we have such high vaccination rates at CSIRO, why is this requirement needed? ^

Our number one priority is the safety of our people and we take seriously any risks to health and safety at our sites. CSIRO has a legal duty to ensure the health and safety of our people and visitors at sites, and where risks to health and safety are identified, eliminate or reduce those risks.

CSIRO has identified that COVID-19 presents a risk to the health and safety of our people and anyone else coming to or working on our sites.

CSIRO recognises that a person who is vaccinated against COVID-19 is much less likely to both transmit the disease and suffer serious health effects if they catch COVID-19 and we are introducing these requirements to uphold our duty of care to provide the safest possible workplace for our people.

How will you collect vaccination information? How will my privacy be protected? ^

CSIRO will handle your personal information in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) and the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). In line with guidance issued by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, CSIRO has also prepared a Privacy Impact Assessment, to address any privacy risks associated with the collection and handling of vaccination status information and has received external advice about those risks.

The COVID-19 SMT is working closely with our Privacy Officer, the Legal team, IM&T and the Workplace Relations team to implement a solution to ensure information about vaccination status is protected.

This solution will involve a self-declaration process in SAP, where line managers will need to sight evidence of your vaccination status. The process will be very similar to applying for leave in SAP. Importantly however, certificates are not to be sent to your line manager – they are only to be sighted which may be via video or face to face if that is an option.

More information on this process will be available in coming weeks.

CSIRO's [COVID-19 vaccination status privacy statement](#) provides further details on how vaccination status information will be handled.

Will visitors to CSIRO sites also have to be vaccinated? ^


Yes. Visitors will also be required to be vaccinated. Arrangements will be put in place to ensure compliance with this requirement, and more detail will be shared soon.

What about children attending site? ^

We will be reviewing our COVIDSafe practices for children attending sites in the New Year, ahead of the commencement of the school term.

In the meantime, our Discovery Centre in Canberra remains closed for school groups. In other circumstances where children under 16 attend site, they are not required to be vaccinated. If a visitor to site is 16+ they must show evidence of vaccination, or a medical exemption.

What if I have a medical exemption? ^

You may receive a medical exemption if you are unable to be vaccinated because you have a medical contraindication to COVID-19 vaccines, or due to certain specified acute medical illnesses. These medical exemptions are determined by [ATAGI Clinical Guidance](#) .

If you have a medical exemption you will need to provide evidence of this from an authorised medical practitioner – such as a medical certificate or a letter. Some states (for example Victoria) require that an Australian Immunisation Register medical exemption form must be used to provide proof of a medical exemption. If you are seeking a medical exemption, you will need to adhere to the requirements of your relevant state or territory.

If you have a medical exemption, you will not be subject to the vaccination requirements to attend site.

What about booster shots?

At this time, you are considered fully vaccinated if you have had two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine. If you are eligible for a booster shot, this is also recommended to maintain your immunity.

More information about booster shots is available on the [Federal Department of Health website](#) .

If I'm not vaccinated, will I be able to attend CSIRO events offsite?

If attending an event offsite, CSIRO employees will need to comply with the vaccine requirements of the relevant State or Territory.

What will the requirements be for interstate travel?

Individuals will need to comply with the vaccine requirements of airlines and the State and Territory that they are travelling to. In addition, you will need to be fully vaccinated to attend any CSIRO site nationally (unless a medical exemption applies).

What will the requirements be for international travel?

Individuals will need to comply with the vaccine requirements of airlines and the country that they are travelling to. In addition, you will need to be fully vaccinated to attend any CSIRO site internationally (unless a medical exemption applies).

CSIRO has previously said vaccinations won't be mandatory for staff. Why has this position changed?



While vaccinations will not be mandatory for all employees, they will be mandatory to attend a CSIRO site. This decision has been made in response to the changing public health situation in Australia, as we transition to the establishment phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, and vaccination requirements have become widespread across the country and an important control measure against COVID-19. An evolving situation requires an evolving response, to ensure we are providing the safest possible workplace for all our people.

How will we know everyone is complying with the new requirements?



We will be implementing a process to audit compliance with our vaccination requirements. This will be consistent with the *Privacy Act 1988* and our [COVID-19 Vaccination Privacy Statement](#).

What are the vaccination requirements and public health directions for workers in my relevant state or territory?



Australian Capital Territory

- [Information for employees that require vaccination](#) 
- [Current restrictions](#) 



New South Wales

- [Vaccination requirements for workers](#) 
- [COVID-19 rules and restrictions](#) 





Victoria

- [Information about workers who are required to be vaccinated](#) 
- [Victoria's COVIDSafe settings](#) 



Queensland

- [Requirements for workers in healthcare settings](#) 
- [Roadmap to easing restrictions](#) 



South Australia

- [Healthcare setting workers vaccination](#) , [In-home, community aged care and disability workers vaccination](#) , [South Australia Police workers vaccination](#) 
- [Restrictions and responsibilities](#) 



Western Australia

- [Mandatory COVID-19 vaccination information](#) 
- [What you can and can't do](#) 

Northern Territory

- [Mandatory Vaccination for certain workers](#) 
- [Freedoms and restrictions](#) 

Tasmania

- [Vaccination requirements for certain workers](#) 
- [Current restrictions](#) 

Contact

COVID-19 Response Team

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