



**Mining and
Automotive**
Skills Alliance

Covid-19 Vaccination Policy

Version 1.1

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1. Purpose

The Mining and Automotive Skills Alliance (AUSMASA) is committed to the health, safety, and wellbeing of our people. The outbreak of the COVID-19 global pandemic has created a public health emergency which has had a significant impact on all our lives and on how we work together.

We have a responsibility under work health and safety (WHS) legislation to ensure the health and safety of all workers as far as reasonably practicable. The health and safety of our employees is at the forefront of our decision-making.

2. Overview

Workforce screening and vaccination is a fundamental infection prevention strategy that assists in protecting staff, industry stakeholders and the wider community from the transmission and acquisition of vaccine-preventable diseases. AUSMASA considers vaccination against COVID-19 is a reasonably practicable control measure under WHS legislation to mitigate the risks associated with COVID-19 in our workplaces.

3. Audience

This policy applies to AUSMASA's:

- Board
- Committees and sub-committees
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Employees

4. Policy

This Policy is based on a WHS risk assessment conducted by AUSMASA which had regard to factors such as:

- the highly transmissible nature of COVID-19 (being an upper respiratory disease) and the level of COVID-19 currently circulating in the community
- the risks arising from COVID-19 to employees if exposed to COVID-19 while attending the workplace which includes risk of serious illness or death
- the physical layout and workspaces in our offices
- that vaccination is a higher order control measure
- information from Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) and the public health departments about the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines in reducing the spread of COVID-19 and preventing serious illness or death
- that while other measures, such as mask-wearing, and social distancing, are demonstrated to reduce the transmission of COVID-19, the effectiveness of these measures depends on people applying them consistently or correctly. They do not provide a substitute for the protection offered by vaccines, nor do they reduce the risk of developing serious illness once somebody acquires an infection
- that rapid antigen testing, used on a repeated basis as screening tool, may assist with reducing (but not eliminating) the risk of an unvaccinated worker attending the workplace with COVID-19 but does not reduce the risk of an unvaccinated worker being exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace

- vaccination is the most effective and efficient control available to combat the risks posed by COVID-19; and
- even with high vaccine rates in the community, COVID-19 will remain a significant hazard in any workplace in which there is a possibility that people will interact or use the same common spaces (even at separate times).

We consider that requiring workers to be vaccinated to undertake work at its offices, in these circumstances, is a reasonable and lawful direction and that being vaccinated is necessary to meet the requirements of all roles at AUSMASA.

To reflect the evolving nature of COVID-19, we will continue to review its approach and make updates to this policy as circumstances change. These circumstances may include changes to public health orders, rates of community transmission and relevant medical evidence.

4.1. Breaches of this Policy

From 1 July 2022, all current employees and directors are required to have received at least two doses of a TGA-approved COVID-19 vaccine prior to participating in any work-related activities and will be required to provide satisfactory evidence of their vaccination status by this date, unless AUSMASA has granted them an Exemption in accordance with this policy.

From 1 July 2022, all new employees and directors are required to have received at least two doses of a TGA-approved COVID-19 vaccine as a condition of being offered employment or engagement with AUSMESA and will be required to provide satisfactory evidence of their vaccination status before they commence, unless AUSMASA has granted them an exemption in accordance with this policy.

The requirement to be vaccinated to undertake work at AUSMASA is ongoing and this policy may subsequently be amended to include booster vaccinations.

4.2. Evidence of Vaccination Status

The purpose of collecting evidence of vaccination status is to manage work health and safety risks relating to COVID-19. This can be done by providing your line manager sight of your COVID-19 digital vaccination certificate. Vaccination information will be handled in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

If AUSMASA is not satisfied with the evidence an employee or director has provided, it may request that the employee or director provide additional evidence or information to confirm that they have received at least two doses of a TGA-approved COVID-19 vaccine.

If an employee or director does not provide proof of their vaccination status or does not wish to disclose their vaccination status by the relevant date, AUSMASA will assume they are not vaccinated.

4.3. Exemption from Vaccination Requirement

There may be medical reasons that prevent an employee or director from being able to be vaccinated. AUSMASA may, at its discretion, grant an exemption from the vaccination requirements in this policy if an employee or director has a medical contraindication for all TGA-approved COVID-19 vaccines in accordance with ATAGI guidelines.

If an employee or director wishes to apply for a medical exemption, they should apply in writing to Sarah Owen, General Manager Operations and Member Services – sarah.owen@ausmasa.org.au - and provide appropriate medical information which meets the relevant ATAGI guidelines, including a medical contraindication certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner certifying:

- a) that the staff member is unable to receive any available COVID-19 vaccine because of a recognised medical contraindication
- b) whether the medical contraindication will permanently or temporarily prevent the vaccination; and
- c) where the medical contraindication only temporarily prevents the vaccination, the earliest time that the staff member may be able to receive the vaccination.

AUSMASA will consider medical exemption applications on a case-by-case basis. AUSMASA may request additional information from an employee or director to support their request for an exemption.

It is possible that there will be circumstances where an employee or director has a valid medical contraindication but an exemption is not granted because of applicable public health orders or AUSMASA has undertaken a risk assessment regarding AUSMASA's ability to accommodate an employee or director of AUSMASA while unvaccinated, and AUSMASA has formed the view that those risks are not able to be adequately managed with other risk mitigation strategies at that time.

4.4. Support

ATAGI recommends that all adults (and children over five years of age) be vaccinated against COVID-19. According to the Australian Government's Department of Health, being vaccinated against COVID-19 has many benefits including:

- protecting against severe illness and death from COVID-19
- preventing complications such as 'long COVID'
- protecting people who can't be vaccinated due to medical conditions
- slowing the spread of COVID-19
- keeping hospitalisation rates at a level our health system can cope with
- minimising the need for lockdowns and school closures; and
- being able to attend events and travel.

We strongly encourage all employees and directors who can receive a COVID-19 vaccination to maintain up-to-date vaccination status, including having booster vaccinations within the time period recommended by ATAGI.

If an employee or director has concerns or questions about vaccine safety, we encourage staff to speak to their medical practitioner or seek more information from official government sources, such as the Australian Department of Health.

5. Document History and Contact Details

Version

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Next Review date	

Revision History

Revision date	Summary of amendments	Prepared by	Version
May 2023	Name and Branding update Audience amendment	Manager, Organisational Development	1.1

Contact details

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