

# Media Release

**The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP**  
Minister for Health  
Minister for Ambulance Services



Tuesday, 28 June 2022

## FREE FLU SHOTS EXTENDED FOR VICTORIAN FAMILIES

The Andrews Labor Government is extending its free influenza vaccination program over the school holidays, giving Victorian families more time to protect themselves against the flu this winter.

Following overwhelmingly positive feedback from participating GPs and pharmacies and to further boost vaccination as much as possible, the program will continue to 10 July.

Throughout June all Victorians aged six months and over have been eligible for a free flu shot from more than 2,000 GP clinics and community pharmacies across the state.

The extension of the program will provide families with additional time to access this free service, when it best suits them.

Victoria's collective immunity against viruses like the flu is relatively low following two years of physical distancing and reduced international travel.

As we get out and about more and enjoy everything the state has to offer, Victorians need to protect themselves against the increased risk of passing on colds, coughs and other respiratory illness.

That's why there is no better time for Victorians to roll up their sleeves to protect themselves and their loved ones from infection and avoidable hospitalisation.

It is both safe and effective, providing a high level of protection and greatly reducing symptoms in those who do get sick.

If you have not yet received your free flu shot, now is the time to contact your local GP or community pharmacy to book in and protect yourself this winter.

The flu vaccination is already free for children under five years, people over 65 years, pregnant women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people with increased risk medical conditions.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

*"As many Victorians have experienced firsthand already, this is shaping up to be the most aggressive flu season we've seen since the start of the pandemic, with thousands of cases being recorded across the state each week."*

*"We've been heartened by the huge turnout from Victorians so far for the flu shot, but we can do even better – that's why we're extending this program so more people can access this free service."*

*"Getting vaccinated against both COVID-19 and the flu not only keeps the pressure off our hospitals, but also gives you and your loved ones the best protection possible over the winter period."*