

Media Release

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GIVING EMPLOYERS OPTIONS TO KEEP WORKERS COVIDSAFE

Changes made under the Occupational Health and Safety Amendment (COVID-19 Vaccination Information) Regulations 2022 will allow employers to collect the vaccination information of workers if they choose to have vaccination requirements to keep their workplaces CovidSafe.

These updated regulations will help employers decide on what measures are most appropriate to keep their workplaces and workforce as safe as possible from COVID-19.

They follow advice from the Chief Health Officer that following the removal of some vaccination requirements under Pandemic Orders, businesses and employers should consider their own policies based on their own assessment of risk.

These regulations do not require workers to be vaccinated, but ensure employers have the information they need to make decisions on necessary control measures at their workplace, which may include vaccination.

In line with other jurisdictions around Australia, COVID-19 vaccination policies will be the responsibility of individual workplaces to consider as part of their workplace conditions.

In line with the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Pandemic (Workplace) Order 2022 (No. 9)* workers who work in high risk settings are still required to be vaccinated.

Vaccination of workers remains strongly recommended, and employers are encouraged to actively promote and encourage staff to maintain an 'up-to-date' vaccination status.

COVID-19 vaccinations have proven to be effective at preventing serious illness and hospitalisation and although workplace vaccination policies will transition to being at the discretion of individual workplaces, vaccination of workers remains an important control measure.

Under the OHS Act employers must identify whether there is a risk to the health of their workers from exposure to COVID-19 at their workplace. If identified, employers are required to eliminate risks as far as reasonably practicable and when elimination is not possible, employers are required to implement measures to reduce risks.

The regulations will be in place for 12 months from 12 July 2022.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Workplace Safety Ingrid Stitt

"These regulations will mean individual employers can choose to implement their own vaccination policies, to collect and hold Covid-19 vaccination information of their workers."

"It's important workplaces continue to mitigate against the risks associated with Covid-19 to keep their workers safe - especially as we move through the winter months."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

“The pandemic is not over and vaccinations remain our best defence for preventing serious illness and hospitalisation.”

“We’re ensuring employers can continue to take steps to keep their employees and workplaces COVIDsafe.”