



COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out Lambert School requirements in relation to COVID-19 vaccinations for all individuals on site at Lambert School and for all employees of Lambert School. Lambert School will ensure proper consultation occurs as part of the policy development and implementation process. This will include:

The opportunity for face-to-face meetings with staff to facilitate discussion and gather feedback.

A process whereby staff can provide written feedback which is then analysed and properly considered.

Providing to staff the written risk assessment on which the premise to introduce the vaccination requirement is based, and the opportunity to attend a presentation explaining the risk assessment findings.

An open-door policy to allow employees to meet with managers to explain their views and any concerns they may have.

Important Background Information

A suitable vaccine is available for students to the age of 16 years. The school recommends students to be vaccinated as per State Health recommendations.

Secondary and primary school student vaccinations will remain voluntary and, therefore, uptake may be inconsistent.

Most employees in schools are in public facing roles and are therefore at a greater risk of exposure to the disease.

The higher the vaccine coverage within a school community, including staff, the less risk there is of contraction or transmission of the disease within the school. This, of course, would reduce the risk of the school being closed and having to return to on-line learning.

Lambert School recommends that it is reasonable given the nature of our business, that all individuals that have direct contact with students staff parents/carers and the wider school community should be fully vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus, however this is not compulsory.

Our objective is to protect people and the community, associated with Lambert, from acquiring and transmitting COVID-19, a human coronavirus of pandemic potential and an urgently notifiable infectious disease. This includes:

- Employees and their families,

- Volunteers;
- Contractors;
- Participants; and
- The broader community;

Applicability

Where
applies throughout the organisation

Who
applies to all members of staff who work on site in any capacity.

Policy Review: Depending on updates from the Department of Education.

Background

Lambert School acknowledges that generally personal health management, including vaccinations, outside of your employment are your own affair. However, health related matters that impact on or affect the health and safety of yourself and others, or Lambert's business interests or reputation or those of its staff or students are a focus for Lambert School. COVID-19 is highly transmissible and there can be significant health impacts on those afflicted.

In accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (TAS), Lambert School has a duty, so far as practicable, to provide and maintain a working environment in which the employees are not exposed to hazards. An important step in protecting employees, volunteers, contractors, participants, and visitors from acquiring and transmitting COVID-19 is by ensuring employees who enter our facilities and worksites when supporting participants are fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Lambert School is committed to its responsibility to maintain the safety of our workplaces, and to ensure the work environment does not put workers and others including students at risk of contracting COVID-19. This is part of our commitment to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all individuals affiliated with the school.

Benefits of Vaccination

The Australian Government has advised that COVID-19 will be with us for many years into the future.

Getting vaccinated has many benefits, including:

- protecting yourself 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.
- protecting children while research continues to test the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in people under the age of 12;
- slowing the spread of the virus;
- keeping hospitalisation rates at a level our health system can cope with;
- reducing the need for lockdowns in the future, when enough Australians are vaccinated;
- being able to attend events and travel in the future.

Vaccination Education Resources

Employees are encouraged to educate themselves about vaccination by utilising the following resources:

<https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/about-rollout>

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/australias-covid-19-vaccine-and-treatment-strategy>

<https://www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au/vaccination-information/covid-19-vaccination>

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/covid-19-vaccination-patient-resources>

If you have any concerns regarding being vaccinated, we encourage you to speak to your GP.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- Approved vaccine means any COVID-19 vaccination that has been provisionally (or fully) registered for use in Australia by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.
- Evidence of vaccination means a copy of the individual’s Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register, or digital evidence of their Vaccination Certificate.
- Fully vaccinated means having obtained the manufacturer’s recommended dosage of any Approved Vaccine. For example, where a two-dose schedule is recommended by the manufacturer, a person will be considered fully vaccinated when they have received both doses of the vaccine. This includes any booster doses.
- Vaccination means treatment with a vaccine to produce immunity against a disease for the benefit of individuals and the community.
- Vaccination Certificate means an Australian Government approved COVID-19 digital certificate or COVID passport.

Evidence of Vaccination

The school no longer requires evidence of vaccination.

Refusal to Comply

Where an individual refuses to comply with their obligations under this policy, and has not been issued an exemption, they will be required to provide the reason for their refusal. Lambert will consider the reason for refusal and discuss with the individual to try and find an acceptable solution.

Should an individual continue to refuse to comply they may be considered in breach of this policy and may be subject to disciplinary action which may include termination of employment.

Privacy and Record Management

Lambert School acknowledges that information regarding an individual's vaccination status may be considered sensitive personal information when collected, and as such requires handling in accordance with privacy legislation.

Where Lambert School requires collection of the evidence of vaccination, we will ensure that the individual is aware of the following:

- The employer's identity and contact details;
- The fact and circumstances of collection;
- Whether the collection is required or authorised by law;
- The purposes of the collection;
- The consequences if vaccination status information is not collected;
- The employer's usual disclosures of vaccination status information;
- Whether the employer is likely to disclose personal information to overseas recipients, and if practicable, the countries where they are located.

Consent

Where Lambert School requires an individual to provide evidence of vaccination for collection, we will ensure that:

- The individual is adequately informed before giving consent, and understands why we are collecting the information and what we will use it for;
- The individual gives consent voluntarily;
- The consent is current and specific, and
- The individual has the capacity to understand and communicate their consent

Record Storage

Evidence of vaccination collected by Lambert School, with consent from individuals, will be stored on their personnel file (for employees), on a secure data base.

All records will be stored in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles.

Lambert School will ensure proper consultation occurs as part of the policy development and implementation process. This will include:

The opportunity for face-to-face meetings with staff to facilitate discussion and gather feedback.

A process whereby staff can provide written feedback which is then analysed and properly considered.

Providing to staff the written risk assessment on which the premise to introduce the vaccination requirement is based, and the opportunity to attend a presentation explaining the risk assessment findings.

An open-door policy to allow employees to meet with managers to explain their views and any concerns they may have.

The 5 to 11-year age group currently has no access to an approved vaccine and, assuming a suitable vaccine may be available this coming January, the best possible timeline for reasonable coverage of this age group to be achieved is the end of term 1, 2022.

Secondary and primary school student vaccinations will remain voluntary and, therefore, uptake may be patchy.

Students and staff will be circulating in the community and re-entering the school on a daily basis. The Kirby Institute modelling has indicated that Tasmania will have experienced between 43,000 and 77,000 cases of the disease in the community by July, 2022. These numbers will coincide with our Tasmanian winter.

These modelled numbers, and the high reputation of their source, should satisfy the Fair Work Ombudsman's requirement that a certain level of community transmission is necessary before an employer can introduce an evidence of vaccination policy.

Most employees in schools are in public facing roles and are therefore at a greater risk of exposure to the disease.

The higher the vaccine coverage within a school community, including staff, the less risk there is of contraction or transmission of the disease within the school. This, of course, would reduce the risk of the school being closed and having to return to on-line learning.

Endorsed by School Board:

Signature: _____ / /2022

Effective From: 20/03/2023