



COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY

Purpose

This policy sets out the Nelson Hockey Association (NHA) COVID-19 vaccination requirements as they apply to employees, contractors, and to all members (including coaches, officials, managers, athletes and volunteers) and visitors.

It is designed to keep our people safe and is aligned to the Government's objective of minimising the impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic and protecting the communities of New Zealand.

Rationale:

The Delta variant of COVID-19 has proved to be a game changer and carries significantly higher risks of transmission than previous strains of the virus. The Government has repeatedly emphasised the importance of vaccinations – to protect individuals and to give the country more possibilities in managing the virus. Vaccination is widely considered critical to protecting people's health and safety, by reducing the risk of transmission and minimising the clinical impacts of COVID-19 infection.

Under current legislative settings, all organisations can require visitors to their facilities, and/or participants in activities that they run, to be vaccinated as a condition of entry, subject to having undertaken a risk assessment to inform a final policy decision. Under the COVID-19 Protection Framework, vaccination status will be a key feature in determining what is possible under different settings (green, orange, red).

Statement

At NHA we encourage and support our members being vaccinated against COVID-19, so that we can reduce the risk of exposure and transmission of COVID-19. It is important that we provide a safe environment, in which our community can participate and enjoy hockey safely. A safe community is a COVID-19 free community, and currently the best protection against spreading COVID-19 is vaccination. We recognise that COVID-19 poses a very real and serious risk to the safety of our staff, members, and volunteers, and in accordance with our health and safety obligations, we are required to take reasonably practicable steps to put in place control measures to manage and minimise (or eliminate) any such risk.

Nelson Hockey's Requirements

From 6th December 2021 only those people who are fully vaccinated (i.e. have completed a NZ Government recognised course of COVID-19 vaccination) will be able to access NHA facilities / activities.

As a result of the risk assessment undertaken by NHA, all employees, and contractors who perform certain roles, will be required to have completed a NZ Government recognised course of COVID-19 vaccination, as those roles have been assessed as putting the person performing it at an increased risk of contracting or transmitting COVID-19, and that risk cannot be safely managed with other control measures.

NHA will require proof of vaccination prior to entry to NHA's facility and activities. This will include digital COVID-19 Vaccination Certificates when these are available.

Vaccination Status

Where vaccinations are required, NHA may ask individuals to disclose, and/or provide proof of, their vaccination status. Information regarding vaccination status is collected for the purposes of our health and safety management planning, implementing this policy, and to identify any relevant support measures (related to Covid-19). NHA will hold this information in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020.

You are not required to give this information and if you choose not to provide proof of having received the vaccine, or do not wish to disclose your vaccination status then we will respect your personal choice and right to that privacy. In the interests of health and safety, those unable or unwilling to provide proof of vaccination when requested, will be treated as though they have not been vaccinated.

Exemptions

NHA respects the rights of individuals to choose whether to be vaccinated and acknowledges that there may be medical or other reasons or circumstances, for not being vaccinated, for which you may seek an exemption. Where an employee or contractor seeks an exemption from the requirement to be vaccinated, NHA may require them to provide confirmation of this, which may include a letter from their medical practitioner or religious leader.

If, in future, a role within NHA is required to be performed by a vaccinated person under the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccinations) Order 2021 ("Order"), exemptions to the COVID-19 vaccine will be subject to that Order. Currently, exemptions under the Order require a suitably qualified medical practitioner or nurse practitioner to apply to the Ministry of Health on an employee's behalf, on the grounds that the employee meets the specified exemption criteria.

Even where an exemption from being vaccinated is obtained by an individual, NHA may have to determine whether it still safely manage the relevant risks posed by that individual not being vaccinated, and whether any accommodations can be made.

NHA will work with those people who are not vaccinated on a case-by-case basis, respectfully and in good faith to explore options and try and find a way forward.

- For NHA employees this may involve steps such as working from home, providing alternative duties, or redeployment where practical, but depending on the role, this may not always be possible. Termination of employment is also an option, but this will be used as a last resort, and only after NHA has explored and considered other alternative options first.
- For NHA members (including coaches, officials, athletes, volunteers, and other visitors), this is likely to be more challenging given the nature of our settings and operations. As a result, unvaccinated members should expect to be denied entry or participation rights because of their non-vaccinated status.

Additional Measures

In addition to this policy, NHA will maintain a range of appropriate and complementary measures in its facilities / activities to further minimise the risks associated with COVID-19, as well as following all guidance set out in the legislation and public health guidance.

The conditions of entry before coming to the facility or taking part in activities include:

- Stay home if unwell.
- You must have produced evidence that you are fully vaccinated to gain access to our facility / activities.
- You are encouraged to always wear a mask except when being active.
- Wash or sanitise hands before entering the facility / activities and when moving through different areas.
- Scan your QR code every time you enter the facility or at activities.
- You must abide by any distancing requirements that apply e.g. 1m at Red level.

The COVID-19 health questions that will need to be answered include:

- You do not have any symptoms associated with COVID-19 (e.g. fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, sneezing/runny nose or loss of sense of smell).
- You are fully vaccinated against COVID-19.
- You do not have COVID-19 nor are you awaiting the results from being tested for COVID-19.
- You have not been in contact with any known or suspected cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- You have not returned or been in contact with anyone else who has returned, from overseas in the past 14 days.

NHA acknowledges that best practice in the minimisation and mitigation of the impacts of COVID-19 is evolving rapidly (e.g., the potential introduction of rapid antigen testing). Given this, NHA confirms to its members its intention to work in good faith, as new information and recommendations come to hand, and to do its utmost to introduce the latest and complementary measures to further minimise risks.

NHA notes that this policy is based upon the information currently available from Government and is subject to change as we learn and understand more about how New Zealand manages the fight against COVID-19 in our communities and workplaces. In addition, the Government may mandate that NHA take certain steps. This policy may be revoked, amended or replaced at NHA's sole discretion on reasonable notice in the circumstances at that time.

Related NHA Policies:

1. Code of Conduct
2. Health, Safety and Environmental Policy