



## COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY

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Mandatory – Quality Area 4

### PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines to enable Shine Bright EYM (“Shine Bright”) to:

- Adhere to the Victorian Government’s mandate on vaccinations being a requirement of work for our sector to protect children who cannot be vaccinated and to protect our families, team members and the broader community.

### POLICY STATEMENT

#### 1. VALUES

Shine Bright EYM:

- respects the rights of the child and values diversity
- acknowledges the vulnerability of Aboriginal children, children from a culturally and linguistically diverse background and children with a disability and has zero tolerance of discrimination
- maintains a duty of care (refer to *Definitions*) towards all children at the service
- is committed to the safety and wellbeing of each child at the service
- is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all staff at the service
- provides a safe and secure environment for all at the service
- provides an open, welcoming environment in which everyone’s contribution is valued and respected
- is committed to communicating openly and honestly
- is committed to continually learning how to be inclusive and respectful of cultural needs
- encourages volunteers, students, parents/guardians and visitors to support and participate in the educational program and activities of the service.

#### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all education workers including but not limited to broad members, staff members, volunteers, students on placement and contractors/labour hire employees of Shine Bright.

#### 3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

##### Requirement to be vaccinated

In accordance with the COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Directions (No 5) (“the directions”) and subsequent updated Directions, unless an exemption applies, all *education workers* working in *childcare or an early childhood service* are required to:

- receive their first COVID-19 vaccination by 18 October 2021
- provide evidence of a booking to be vaccinated by 25 October 2021

- receive their second COVID-19 vaccination by 29 November 2021

Shine Bright will take all reasonable steps necessary to comply with any future public health orders or directions related to vaccinations in the early childhood education and care sector.

### **Evidence of Vaccination**

To comply with the directions Shine Bright is required to collect, record and hold *vaccination information* about *education workers* who are, or will be, working at a Shine Bright *service*.

Upon request *education workers* are required to provide evidence of their vaccination status in one of the following acceptable forms:

- a COVID-19 digital certificate
- an immunisation history statement derived from the Australian Immunisation Register
- a letter from a person's vaccination provider which includes the provider's full name and address, their Medicare provider number or Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) registration number, and is signed and dated

If you **have not** had a first dose but have a booking to receive your first dose by 25 October 2021 you must be able to provide evidence (e.g. an email confirmation of your booking).

If you **have had** a first dose and have a booking to receive your second dose by 29 November 2021 you must be able to provide evidence (e.g. an email confirmation of your booking).

### **Medical Exemption**

A person is exempted from the requirement to be vaccinated against COVID-19 if they have obtained certification from an eligible *medical practitioner* that they are unable, due to a *medical contraindication*, to receive a dose, or a further dose, of a COVID-19 vaccine.

A person claiming an exemption is required to provide evidence in one of the following acceptable forms:

- an immunisation history statement
- an Australian Immunisation Register immunisation medical exemption (IM011) form

### **Consultation**

Shine Bright will consult with current *staff members*, *volunteers*, *students on placement* and *contractors\** (\*directly engaged by Shine Bright) who for reasons other than a medical exemption, chose not to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

### **Privacy**

Information about a person's vaccination status is sensitive information. In accordance with its privacy obligations Shine Bright will take all reasonable steps to protect this information from misuse, interference and loss, and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

### **Families**

Shine Bright recognises that children's families may come into close proximity with *education workers* including but not limited to *staff members*, *volunteers*, *students on placement* and *contractors employees* of Shine Bright.

Shine Bright does not and is not able to require families to be vaccinated for COVID-19. Shine Bright has risk mitigation practices in place to minimise the risk of transmission of COVID19.

Shine Bright will provide information to families about COVID-19 vaccinations which is consistent with government health advice and the recommendations of the Department of Education and Training.

### **Legislation and standards**

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations* and/or the *Children's Services Act 1996*.

- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)*.
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)*
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/>

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

As per the COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Directions (No 5) & subsequent updated Directions:	
Childcare or early childhood service	Means onsite early childhood education and care services or children’s services provided under the Education and Care Services National Law, Education and Care Services National Regulations and the Children’s Services Act 1996.
Education facility	A <i>childcare or early childhood service</i> and includes outside school hours care services.
Education operator	Means a person who owns, controls or operates an <i>education facility</i> , whether public, private or denominational.
Education worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) any person who is employed by an <i>education operator</i> to work in an <i>education facility</i> (including teachers, early childhood educators and educational support staff);</li> <li>(ii) a person contracted to work at an <i>education facility</i> and who will or may be in close proximity to children, students or staff, whether or not engaged by the <i>education operator</i> (including casual relief teachers, Breakfast Club suppliers, IT personnel, NDIS providers and auditors, <u>but does not include delivery personnel or contractors</u>);</li> <li>(iii) staff of the Department of Education and Training who attend an <i>education facility</i> (such as allied health personnel or Authorised Officers);</li> <li>(iv) staff of any other entity who attends an <i>education facility</i>;</li> <li>(v) volunteers that attend an <i>education facility</i> and that work in close proximity to children, students or staff (including parent helpers); and</li> <li>(vi) students on placements at an <i>education facility</i>.</li> </ul>
Medical Contraindication	A specific situation in which a drug, procedure, or surgery should not be used because it may be harmful to the person.
Medical Practitioner	Only eligible health professionals can certify immunisation medical exemptions. For more information visit <a href="https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/organisations/health-professionals/forms/im011">https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/organisations/health-professionals/forms/im011</a>
Vaccination Information	Information about a person’s vaccination status and includes information that is derived from a record of information that was made under, or in accordance with, the Australian Immunisation Register Act 2015 of the Commonwealth.

## 5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

### Sources

- Department of Health and Human Services <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>
- Department of Education and Training <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/early-childhood-education-and-care>

## AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider Shine Bright EYM in October 2021

**Review date:** October 2022