



Australian Government

## COVID-19 VACCINATION

**Keep your disability workforce up to date by circulating this alert widely in your organisation**

# Disability provider alert

15 November 2021

## Rights of NDIS Participants to access COVID-19 vaccine

The Acting NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commissioner has released a statement highlighting the right of people with disability to make their own decision about COVID-19 vaccination, and the role of NDIS providers and workers in supporting NDIS participants to have the vaccination.

[Read the Acting Commissioner's message.](#)

## Disability provider information kit on COVID-19 vaccine

The Department of Health has updated resources available for disability service providers to promote and support people with a disability and disability workers to receive COVID-19 vaccination. The kit includes information about booster doses. You can find the updated disability provider kit on the [Department of Health's website](#).

## Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) statement on mandating vaccination for disability workers

On 11 November 2021, the AHPPC recommended mandatory vaccinations for disability workers, including:

- that disability workers have their first COVID-19 vaccine dose by 30 November 2021 and second dose by 31 December 2021;
- that all jurisdictions accept a national definition of disability support worker and intensive supports; and
- that exemptions for disability support workers are limited and consistent with the national framework endorsed by AHPPC for residential aged care workers.

[Read the full statement.](#)

## State and territory directions

Most jurisdictions have now issued public health orders mandating vaccination of disability support workers. Their directions can be viewed on state/territory government websites.

## Third doses for people who are immunocompromised

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recommends a third primary dose of a COVID-19 vaccine for people aged 12 or older, who are severely immunocompromised. ATAGI recommends the third dose be provided at an interval of 2-6 months after the second dose.

Reach out to your GP or specialist to discuss whether you need an extra dose.

To see what immunocompromising conditions and therapies are recommended for third doses, **read the ATAGI statement**. ATAGI has not recommended booster doses for people who are severely immunocompromised and have already had a third primary dose or should be getting a third dose.

## Booster doses

ATAGI recommends a booster dose of a COVID-19 vaccine for people aged 18 and older, who have had their second dose at least six months ago. **Find out more about booster doses here**.

Please read the special edition on the COVID-19 vaccination – Disability provider alert, 2 November 2021, for information on the administration of booster doses for people with disability.

## Queensland Government's information on in-home vaccinations for people with disability

The Queensland Government has announced vaccination pathways for people with disabilities who have not had the COVID-19 vaccine and need help to get vaccinated at home.

There are several ways for you to get the vaccine.

- You can speak to your GP or other health provider and ask for help. They may be able to come to your home to vaccinate you or organise for someone else to do so.
- You can call the **Primary Health Network** in your area and talk to them about your needs and ask for help.
- You can also call 134 COVID (13 42 68) and ask for help.
- If you are deaf or hard of hearing, please contact the National Relay Service on 1800 555 727 and ask to be directed to a health service. They can connect you to 134 COVID (13 42 68).

## Victorian Government's information on in-home vaccinations for people with disability

The Victorian Government have set up a pathway for Victorians unable to get to a vaccination clinic, to access their COVID-19 vaccine at home.

Follow the link to find out more about eligibility and booking processes for the [Vaccine at home for people with special requirements](#) program.

## Current hubs offering vaccination services

There are many vaccination hubs offering services for people with disability, their carers, and disability workers. The list of current hubs is on the webpage for [disability vaccination clinics](#). The list is updated regularly. If you have a vaccination clinic or hub you'd like to promote, please [let us know](#).

The [Vaccine Clinic Finder](#) is still the main method to book an appointment.

## National Coronavirus helpline - expanded support service

The National Coronavirus Helpline (**1800 020 080**) provides information and advice about COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccines. The line operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

On **Monday, 8 November**, an expanded service offering was launched to support people with disability and their family, friends or carers; and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

The dedicated team provides information and support to callers, including help to book a vaccine appointment. Where a caller needs clinical advice, they will be transferred to a trained clinical call handler.

Callers with disability, their family/friends or carers, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people looking for information and advice about **COVID-19 or COVID-19 vaccines** can call the National Coronavirus Helpline on **1800 020 080 - option 5**. For people with disability, this service complements the [Disability Gateway](#) helpline.

This new service adds to the existing support services including for disability and aged care workers (1800 020 080 - option 4). This dedicated worker line can answer questions about vaccination and help book a vaccination appointment.

## Reminder – the Disability Gateway is here to help

Anyone who is worried or concerned about COVID-19, can get some support on the [Disability Gateway website](#) or by calling 1800 643 787 Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST)).

The Disability Gateway is a **free service** that also can help people make a booking to get a COVID-19 vaccine.

## Follow us on Facebook

Don't miss the latest news and updates about COVID-19 and other health matters – follow [the Department of Health on Facebook](#).

### What's new on Facebook?

#### [Down Syndrome Australia - Why you should get the COVID-19 vaccine | Facebook](#)

People with Down syndrome from across Australia told us why they got the COVID-19 vaccine, and why you should too.

[COVID Mythbusters video](#) - take a look at [this video](#) put together by the Council for Intellectual Disability.

See this NSW Government Facebook post about the [Quiet Pathways Clinic](#) which helps kids with mental health, sensory issues, anxiety, intellectual disabilities, or a phobia of needles get vaccinated against COVID-19.