

### COVID-19 Vaccinations Frequently Asked Questions – General

#### Do I have to be vaccinated?

Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 is a personal choice. Vaccination provides an extra layer of protection. Our existing Fire and Emergency procedures, policies and protocols will continue to protect our people and communities from individuals spreading COVID-19.

We have worked with Unions and Associations, and the Public Service Commission, and determined there are no roles domestically within Fire and Emergency that require a vaccination. There may be some international deployment roles that require vaccination and the individuals this applies to will be contacted and notified.

### Why should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Getting vaccinated is the best thing you can do to keep yourself, your whānau and the wider community safe from COVID-19. By getting vaccinated you'll be playing your part to protect Aotearoa.

### Is the vaccine safe and effective?

Yes. Medsafe, New Zealand's medicines safety authority, has approved the COVID-19 Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for use in New Zealand. Medsafe ensures new medicines, including vaccines, meet strict standards of safety, quality, and effectiveness.

The vaccine was approved following a thorough approval process that includes the same types of safety checks and review of clinical information that is applicable to all other licensed medicines. The Ministry of Health's <u>COVID-19 vaccines page</u> on the website health.govt.nz has further information about the vaccine.

#### When will I get my vaccine?

Some stations have already taken up the opportunity of short-notice surplus vaccines. MedPro will be rolling out vaccinations to the majority of first and co responders from May 24<sup>th</sup>. Some brigades in more remote communities may be vaccinated by their local District Health Board.

If you are not a first or co responder you can use the <u>Ministry of Health vaccination tool</u> at covid19.govt.nz to determine when you can get vaccinated.

### Do I have to wait for the Fire and Emergency vaccine roll out if I am eligible through an earlier opportunity?

No. If you are eligible to get vaccinated earlier than you would through your role at Fire and Emergency, we encourage you to do so.

# Why are some groups getting earlier doses than others?

The Ministry of Health are rolling the vaccination in stages to various groups, prioritising people who are most at risk. The rollout to different groups is not linear, so some groups may begin before others have finished.

## What if my station is a considerable distance from a vaccination hub?

MedPro Healthcare is working with the Ministry of Health and District Health Boards to vaccinate first and co responders who are in brigades in more remote locations. District Health Boards will soon contact these brigades with information on how to get vaccinated. You will still have the option to book a vaccination at one of the MedPro hubs if that is more convenient for you.



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### I want my flu vaccination and my COVID-19 vaccination, what do I do?

First and co responders are eligible to receive their COVID-19 vaccination now as part of the Government's priority Group 2. It is recommended first and co responders get their COVID-19 vaccination first and wait 14 days after their second COVID-19 vaccination before getting their flu vaccination.

For anyone who has had their COVID-19 vaccination first it is recommended you wait 14 days after your second COVID-19 vaccination dose before getting your flu vaccination.

## Will Fire and Emergency be collecting information about my vaccine status?

No, the Ministry of Health will be collecting this information and will not share it with Fire and Emergency without your consent.

We recommend leaders have a system in place to notify personnel about vaccine opportunities that takes privacy and confidentiality into account.

# Will my time and travel to get the vaccine be reimbursed?

It is not mandatory to get vaccinated. Fire and Emergency will not be reimbursing personnel for time, travel, or dependent expenses to get vaccinated.

The latest information on the COVID-19 vaccination rollout can be found on the Portal

