

MEDIA RELEASE

COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY TO PROTECT MID MURRAY STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITY

The Mid Murray Council has made the decision to make COVID-19 vaccinations mandatory for all staff to protect the health and safety of its employees and the local community.

From 5 January 2022, all employees except those with a medical exemption, will be required to have had at least once dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and have received, or have evidence of a booking to receive, a second dose.

The decision follows extensive consultation with Council staff over the past two months, along with input from Council's Health and Safety Committee and union representatives. The mandate will also apply to Council's volunteers and contractors, if they attend a Council facility or worksite.

Mid Murray Council Chief Executive Officer Ben Scales said Council considered it a necessary measure - along with existing control measures already in place such as social distancing, hygiene protocols, use of face masks, sanitising work areas, the use of technology and remote working - to reduce the health and safety risks arising from the current pandemic.

"This decision hasn't been made lightly and we have consulted extensively with our staff across the organisation, as well other stakeholders such as our volunteers and contractors, and considered advice from all relevant Government agencies," Mr Scales says.

"Council has given extensive consideration to our work health and safety obligation to provide a safe workplace for our staff and workers, and our desire to protect our volunteers, especially in light of the low vaccination rates across our district at this time.

"Council provides essential services to our community that are required to be delivered, and if they are disrupted this could have a significant impact and cause serious issues. Our staff also have high levels of interaction with the public across the district. In light of this, we need to take additional steps to ensure our services can still operate and we reduce the risk of transmission in our community."

At this stage, access to Council's public facilities and spaces such as customer service centres, libraries and the Mannum Leisure Centre and Gym will remain open to the community without the requirement for members of the public to be vaccinated. Visitors to Council facilities are still urged to follow appropriate health and safety measures such as socially distancing from others, wearing masks and checking in, and they should not attend in person if they are unwell.

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