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| Coronavirus (COVID-19) update |
| March 2022 |
| OFFICIAL |
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# FAQs for Victorian local council immunisation services

**This information is to support local council immunisation providers in the delivery of their municipal immunisation service, including the Secondary School Immunisation Program (SSIP) and respond to frequently asked questions surrounding the management and implementation of the immunisation program during the transmission of COVID-19 in the community.**

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| Key messages* COVID-19 vaccines can be co-administered on the same day as other vaccines
* [COVID-19 vaccines](https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/who-can-get-vaccinated) are free and available for everyone aged 5 years and over.
* Local council immunisation services and secondary schools continue to work together to ensure delivery of the secondary school immunisation program in a [COVIDSafe setting](https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/back-school-plan).
* New Social media communications pack for 2022 to support local councils to deliver the Secondary School Immunisation Program including students who have missed school vaccinations due to the COVID-19 pandemic
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## Frequently Asked Questions

**Is there a recommended interval between COVID-19 vaccines and other vaccines?**

No**.** The [ATAGI clinical recommendations for COVID-19 vaccines](https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/advice-for-providers/clinical-guidance/clinical-recommendations) recommend that COVID-19 vaccines can be co-administered on the same day as other vaccines if required. This includes the routine Secondary school immunisation program adolescent vaccines. This simplifies the delivery of the secondary school immunisation program as there is **no longer a requirement for a 7-day interval** between COVID-19 vaccine administration and the administration of other vaccines.

##  What should councils do?

* ensure your secondary school immunisation program resources and communications to schools, students and parents/guardians are up to date with this information
* your service **no longer needs to assess each student’s COVID-19 vaccination status** **on AIR** prior to administering vaccines
* **if students** receive co-administered or closely administered vaccines you will need to provide advice to themof the **potential increased likelihood of mild to moderate adverse events** post vaccination
* check that all immunisation information on **your** **council website is up to date**

#### Can councils provide the COVID-19 vaccine?

No. Currently local councils in Victoria are unable to provide COVID-19 vaccines as the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) does not provide professional indemnity insurance provided under their Liability Mutual Insurance Scheme (LMI Scheme) to Local Government to cover COVID-19 related activity. This means that local councils, currently insured through MAV, cannot administer COVID-19 vaccines.

## Where can our council clients access the COVID-19 vaccine?

Free and safe [COVID-19 vaccines](https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/who-can-get-vaccinated) are currently available for everyone aged 5 years and over.

For information on booking vaccination appointments please visit [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/book-your-vaccine-appointment) or phone the Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398, 7 days a week,8am to 8 pm.

Further COVID-19 vaccination information-

* [ATAGI Clinical recommendations for COVID-19 vaccines](https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/advice-for-providers/clinical-guidance/clinical-recommendations)
* [Proof of COVID-19 Vaccines](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/subjects/getting-help-during-coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-vaccinations/how-get-proof) – Everyone 14 years of age or older, will need to get their own digital certificate or immunisation history statement using either:

• Medicare online account through myGov or

• the Express Plus Medicare mobile app

* [Proof of COVID-19 vaccination resources for community groups](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/proof-covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-community-groups?context=21)

#### What is the current COVID-19 transmission risk rating in the community?

The [Victorian Health Service Guidance and Response to COVID-19 risks (VHSGR)](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-health-service-guidance-and-response-covid-19-risks) ) provides guidance and an interactive map for local council to respond to changing COVID-19 transmission risks in their community. It is important to assess the risk rating for your local government area prior to each immunisation session. This will provide you with guidance relating to PPE requirements and requirements for daily attestations. For further information please refer to [Infection prevention and control](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/worker-health-wellbeing/be-well-be-safe/infection-preventions-and-control) advice.

#### Can councils visit school grounds to deliver the SSIP during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes. Immunisation service providers are an [authorised and permitted health service](https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/authorised-provider-and-authorised-worker-list-0) during the pandemic.

Refer schools to the [Department of Education Schools Operation Guided](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/Pages/coronavirus-advice-schools.aspx) if further clarification is required.

#### Do students need to physically distance when receiving vaccines at school?

Yes. [COVIDSafe principles](https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/health-and-safety-advice-all-victorian-schools?Redirect=1) apply to all Victorian schools. Immunisation staff should observe physical distancing from school staff, team members and students when not in the process of being administered a vaccine or receiving post vaccination care.

#### Do councils need to offer extra immunisation sessions for students who missed vaccines in 2021?

Some councils may need to schedule additional sessions to ensure all eligible students in Year 7 and Year 10 as well as students who missed their adolescent vaccines in previous years and are now considered overdue for vaccines; receive vaccines in a timely manner.

#### Is consent provided the year before still valid the following year?

Yes. Written consent provided by parents/guardians the year before for the SSIP remains valid the following year.

#### Should immunisation staff always check the AIR?

Yes. To avoid a vaccine administration error, it is recommended to check the [AIR](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register) to see if a student has received vaccines from another immunisation provider prior to administering any vaccine.

## Reporting vaccinations to the AIR. is a mandatory requirement for immunisation providers. Please do so in a timely manner.

## When will a student be considered ‘overdue’ for adolescent vaccinations on the AIR?

The AIR will mail an overdue letter to adolescents. The overdue rules vary according to vaccine. Refer to [National due and overdue rules for immunisation](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/organisations/health-professionals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register-health-professionals/resources/national-due-and-overdue-rules-immunisation).

Year 7 students eligible for Gardasil®9 are considered overdue for dose 2 on the AIR 13 months after dose 1.

Year 7 students eligible for Boostrix® are considered overdue at 14.5 years of age

Year 10 students eligible for Nimenrix® are considered overdue at 17 years of age.

## What resources are available to councils and schools to support the Secondary school immunisation program?

A new [social media communications pack](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/information-for-local-councils) for 2022 has been developed by the Department of Health to support Victorian secondary schools to communicate to parents and guardians as well as secondary school students on the importance of receiving their immunisations, as part of the Secondary School Immunisations Program (SSIP).

Updated [communication resources](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school#lp-h-4) are available to support the SSIP including:

* Secondary School Immunisation Program – A guide for schools
* Secondary School Immunisation Program Annual agreement – agreement between the local council and the secondary school
* Collection statement
* [Health translations](https://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/) - immunisation information and SSIP consent forms

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| This resource is available at - https://www.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/information-local-councilsAuthorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.© State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Health, March 2022 |