

Draft Surf Life Saving NSW COVID-19 Vaccination Policy – Members

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Purpose

This document provides answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) related to COVID-19 vaccinations in a Surf Life Saving NSW and lifesaving club context.

Note: Information in these FAQs is current as of Wednesday 15 December 2021. These FAQs are subject to change and will be updated based on the latest information available from the NSW Government.

1. **What is SLSNSW's current position on COVID-19 vaccinations?**

To comply with our Work Health and Safety (WH&S) obligations, and ensure we provide the maximum safety protection for our members, staff and community, members aged 13 years and above undertaking Frontline Volunteer Activities need to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 before:

- delivering an SLSNSW, Branch or club service in person; or
- participating in a SLSNSW, Branch or club activity in person.

2. **Why do our members need to be vaccinated against COVID-19?**

The Delta variant of COVID-19 is now known to be more severe and transmissible, resulting in more hospitalisations of patients in a serious condition. We are now dealing with the new variant Omicron, and it is likely that more variants will develop in the future.

Whilst being fully vaccinated provides moderate protection against infection, it provides very strong protection against hospitalisation or death.

To comply with our NSW Work Health and Safety (WH&S) obligations, to protect public health and ensure the safety of all members, as well as the broader communities we serve, we have implemented this policy position.

3. **Who is required to be vaccinated against COVID-19?**

All members aged 13 years and older who are undertaking Frontline Volunteer Activities which include all roles on patrols, surf sports competitors, coaches and officials, support services roles, UAV pilots, Age Managers, as well as Trainers/Assessors and Facilitators must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. This is based on the multi-use nature of our facilities and environments and the varied involvement and engagement of our people with lifesaving activities across various settings.

4. **Do Nippers have to be vaccinated against COVID-19?**

No, however all members aged 13 years and older undertaking Frontline Volunteer Activities need to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to participate.

5. Are Nippers' parents/guardians required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 for a child to participate in the Nipper Program?

No, however those involved in frontline roles including coaching, officiating, water safety and Age Managing must be fully vaccinated.

For volunteer-run activities such as Nippers to be possible, we rely on the assistance of parents/guardians being actively involved with programs. We therefore strongly encourage parents/guardians to be fully vaccinated and engage in the programs.

6. Is there a COVID-19 vaccination requirement to participate in a Surf Rescue Certificate (SRC) course, Bronze Medallion course, completing skills maintenance or participate in a lifesaving patrol?

Yes, members aged 13 years and older must be vaccinated prior to enrolling and commencing these activities.

7. Do athletes, officials and parents/guardians have to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to participate in, or attend lifesaving sport competition and training events?

Yes, members aged 13 years and older who are in frontline roles who are attending a facility or are involved with any of our services, programs, and/or activities, must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

8. Why is SLSNSW's position on vaccinations for competitors and Nippers different to some other community sports organisations?

SLSNSW has undertaken a risk assessment of all roles across SLSNSW at state, branch and club level. Our assessment has determined the frontline roles described above have an inherent risk of COVID-19 transmission that cannot be adequately mitigated against by means such as use of PPE and social distancing alone.

9. Are there any exemptions for the requirement to be vaccinated?

Yes. Based on the public health advice, exemptions do apply.

You may receive a medical exemption if you are unable to be vaccinated because you:

- have a medical contraindication to COVID-19 vaccines; or
- have an acute medical illness, including COVID-19 infection for up to 6 months (or earlier if the medical practitioner specifies an earlier date); or
- Religious views

However, members should be aware that due to the inherent nature of the role they undertake in SLS, mitigations such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and social distancing may not be possible, and the exemption may not be approved.

10. When do I need to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by?

As of 1 February 2022, it will be a requirement for any Frontline Volunteer Activity (including those in public areas and those under the direct control of any SLSNSW, Branch, Club or other affiliated entity) that the member must be



fully vaccinated against COVID-19, unless they have been granted an exemption by SLSNSW in accordance with the policy. Vaccination must be undertaken on the advice of an accredited health practitioner (including health practitioners at any authorised COVID-19 vaccination centres).

All those undertaking Frontline Volunteer Activities will be required to provide evidence acceptable to SLSNSW of being fully vaccinated.

We will accept for these purposes:

- I. From 1 February 2022 to 30 March 2022, presentation of a copy of your COVID-19 Digital Certificate, or if you do not have one, your Immunisation History Statement (which must have your IHI number [Individual Healthcare Identifiers] and other vaccinations redacted). These documents should be presented to the supervisor at the SLS activity you are undertaking (eg Patrol Captain/s on patrol, Officials Co-ordinator/s at surf sports events, Lead Trainer or Assessor at training activities etc).
- II. By 30 March 2022, your 12-digit COVID-19 Digital Certificate number, or if you do not have one your Immunisation History Statement must have been entered via your SLS member portal in the SLS members area (update details) page. Or emailed to covid19@surflifesaving.com.au If you require assistance in obtaining this evidence, please contact covid19@surflifesaving.com.au

Note: At a future date, Surf Life Saving NSW may require the lodgement of individual members Vaccination Certificate or IHI.

11. Is it compulsory to tell SLSNSW and my club if I am vaccinated or not?

No. However, to undertake any of the frontline activities described above, members must confirm they are fully vaccinated via the method described in question 10 above. As per the SLSNSW privacy policy, this information is retained confidentially and is only made available to persons required to confirm all frontline volunteers are double vaccinated at the event, program or facility.

12. Can a club member continue their membership if they don't comply with SLSNSW's current position?

Yes. It is expected that clubs will accept membership applications from unvaccinated members, however, these members will be unable to:

- deliver a Frontline SLSNSW, Branch or club service in person; or
- participate in a Frontline SLSNSW, Branch or club activity in person;

until such a time as they are fully vaccinated.

13. Can club members receive refunds for their membership?

Yes, refunds are available for those members that elect not to be fully vaccinated and withdraw their membership.

These refunds will be offered on a pro rata basis.

14. What if I choose not to get vaccinated against COVID- 19 and don't have a valid exemption?

While we hope that all members will comply with this policy to keep themselves, each other and the public safe, we do recognise and respect the fact that some will choose not to be vaccinated.

Unfortunately, this may mean that members aged 13 years of age and above who fail to comply with this policy will be subject to restrictions around what roles and tasks the member can do while involved in SLS activities (eg patrolling, surf sports officiating and participation, training & assessing etc).

If a member is not vaccinated, we reserve the right to refuse access to SLS activities, events, and services.

15. How will vaccination status be recorded and verified?

There will be two processes for recording and verifying a members vaccination status:

- I. Update your vaccination status via the SLSA Members Area directly with your COVID -19 Digital Certificate number (12 digit). This information will be saved in SurfGuard along with your other personal details (we will advise members when this functionality is available); or
- II. Contact SLSNSW via email covid19@surflifesaving.com.au to advise your COVID-19 Digital Certificate number (12 digit), or if you do not have one, your Immunisation History Statement number.

Note: At a future date, Surf Life Saving NSW may require the lodgement of individual members Vaccination Certificate or IHI.

16. What if my COVID -19 Digital Certificate Number Changes

We understand that when a new Immunisation Digital Certificate is sourced, the 12 digit certificate number changes. We would ask members to update this number via the SLS Member's portal as they would other changes to personal details.

17. Which members need to comply with the policy?

All Members 13 years of age and above undertaking frontline activities including all Patrol positions, support services roles, UAV pilots, sports officials & competitors, Age Managers, coaches, trainers/assessors & facilitators.

17. Who do I contact at SLSNSW for any specific questions?

Please email: covid19@surflifesaving.com.au