

## Surf Life Saving NSW COVID-19 Exemption Procedure - Members

<b>Title:</b>	Surf Life Saving NSW COVID-19 Exemption Procedure
<b>Date:</b>	11 March 2022
<b>Responsible Portfolio:</b>	Governance
<b>Authority:</b>	President

### Medical Exemption

Most people with a medical or health condition can be safely vaccinated, and all members are encouraged to speak with their treating practitioner about their personal circumstances. An exemption may be available to members if they are unable to be vaccinated due to medical contraindication(s) to the COVID-19 vaccine.

From 25 February members seeking a medical exemption must provide an Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) - [immunisation medical exemption form](#) (IM011) completed by a registered medical practitioner and which:

- certifies that the employee is unable to receive the COVID-19 vaccination because they have a recognised medical contraindication;
- indicates whether the medical contraindication will permanently or temporarily prevent COVID-19 vaccination; and
- if the medical contraindication only temporarily prevents a COVID-19 vaccination, specifying when the person may be able to receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

A member diagnosed with COVID-19 and who has been issued a medical clearance notice under the NSW Public Health Orders, is taken to be fully vaccinated for up to 3 months from the date the medical clearance notice is issued. During this time, the member is considered compliant with the SLSNSW COVID-19 Vaccination Policy and can continue normal duties associated with their role.

Members seeking a medical exemption must submit a completed immunisation medical exemption form and receive a clearance from SLSNSW before undertaking frontline volunteering duties as defined in the SLSNSW COVID-19 Vaccination Policy.

Members are to submit their immunisation medical exemption form and medical clearance notice (where relevant) to SLSNSW via [covid19@surflifesaving.com.au](mailto:covid19@surflifesaving.com.au). Advice and decision making will be provided by the SLSNSW COVID-19 Exemption Review Panel.

Where a temporary medical contraindication is confirmed, any exemption based on this only applies for the period specified. If the medical reason continues beyond that period, a new medical contraindication form must be submitted.

Any member with an approved temporary medical exemption must obtain their vaccination as a matter of urgency, and as soon as practicable, after the contraindication no longer applies. The member will need to demonstrate compliance within a reasonable timeframe agreed between them and SLSNSW.

### Exceptional Circumstances

All members are required to comply with reasonable directions to be vaccinated and report their vaccination status in line with the SLSNSW COVID-19 Vaccination Policy.

In rare situations, a member may contend that there are exceptional circumstances, other than medical contraindication(s), that justify non-compliance.

Exceptional circumstances shall mean one or more circumstances which are out of the ordinary, unavoidable or unexpected.

Personal reluctance to undertake vaccination or a general objection or opposition to vaccination will not be considered an exceptional circumstance.

Where a member seeks to establish that exceptional circumstances justify non-compliance, they must provide evidence and reasons.

The process to claim exceptional circumstances is:

- member must complete an [Exceptional Circumstances Form](#) and it will be provided to SLSNSW
- submission will be reviewed by the SLSNSW COVID-19 Exemption Review Panel

Acceptance of non-compliance based on exceptional circumstances will only occur in rare individual cases after consideration of the offered justification and evidence.

If exceptional circumstances are accepted, an individual risk assessment must be performed to determine if the member can continue in their role. Where exceptional circumstances are not accepted, the member will not be able to continue in a frontline volunteering activity as defined in the SLSNSW COVID-19 Vaccination Policy.

#### **Process for consideration requests for Exemptions**

Upon receipt of a request to be declared an Exempt person (via the Exceptional Circumstances Form), the SLSNSW COVID-19 Exemption Review Panel will examine all relevant information provided.

Exemption requests will be reviewed fortnightly. The applicant will be informed in writing of the outcome of their request, and where applicable, the grounds for the declination.

#### **Appeals**

Where a member is dissatisfied with the outcome of the SLSNSW COVID-19 Exemption Review Panels decision to grant an exemption, the member may apply in writing to the President of Surf Life Saving NSW.

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#### **Summary of Content Changes**

Date	Change	Notes
02.03.2022	Removal of link to Covid-19 Vaccine medical contraindication form. Replace with Immunisation Medical Exemption Form (IM011)	Covid-19 Vaccine medical contraindication form removed as it is no longer valid (as of 25 Feb 2022).
11.03.2022	Removal of reference to medical contraindication form and replaced with Immunisation Medical Exemption Form.	Text throughout document needed updating to reflect change on 02.03.2022.