 <p>HARNESS RACING VICTORIA</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">FAQs for Participants</h2> <h2 style="text-align: center;">COVID-19 Vaccinations</h2>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ORG-PU-103</b> <b>(15 OCT 2021)</b></p>
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### Why has the wording changed from Directions to Orders?

In line with the introduction of new legislation in Victoria, the state now has a Pandemic Management Framework which has replaced the State of Emergency Framework. Orders are issued by the Health Minister under the Pandemic Framework, whereas Directions were issued by the Chief Health Officer under the State of Emergency Framework.

### What is the vaccination requirement to enter harness racing tracks?

In line with the Health Minister's [Mandatory Vaccination \(Specified Workers\) Orders](#) all licensed persons must fully vaccinated or have a medical exemption.

Under the Open Premises [Open Premises Orders](#) in order to enter harness racing venues, licensed persons must provide evidence of their fully vaccinated status upon entry.

More information on the vaccination requirement is available at: [Information - workers required to be vaccinated](#)

### What proof of vaccination do I need to show to be able to enter a track to race, or trial?

Evidence can include:

- [COVID-19 digital certificate](#)
- Immunisation statement from the [Australian Immunisation Register](#)

Please refer to [Participant Instructions for accessing COVID-19 vaccination status](#).

### Who must provide evidence of vaccination?

As per the [Open Premises Orders](#) all persons over the age of 18 years must be fully vaccinated and evidence must be shown.

### Can I bring my children to the races?


Children are permitted to attend provided they are supervised by an adult at all times.

### Does the vaccination requirement apply to volunteers?

This change applies to volunteers.

### Do the vaccination requirements apply if I live and race in regional Victoria?

Yes. All of Victoria is included in the Orders, so for racing and the activities that you can't perform, or conduct from home, you must comply.

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### Do I have to disclose my vaccination status when I enter a Club to race or trial?

You are free to decline to disclose your vaccination status. In this circumstance, you will be considered unvaccinated and non-compliant with the Orders and would not be permitted to enter a Club facility for the purpose of trialling or racing.

### Can HRV keep a copy of my vaccination certificate rather than me having to show it at each track every time I race?

No. You will need to carry proof of your compliance with the Orders and present it as required. Upon entry, proof of compliance will be **sighted**, but **not** retained by Stewards or Club Officials.

### When am I considered to be fully vaccinated?

To be considered fully vaccinated, you must have been administered with two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine registered by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). This includes the Moderna (Spikevax), Pfizer (Comirnaty), and Vaxzevria (AstraZeneca) vaccines.

Under the current vaccination orders, there is no requirement to receive booster shots, but this may be considered in the future.

For more information about COVID-19 vaccines, visit [About COVID-19 vaccines](#)

### What happens if I fail to comply with the vaccination information requirements? Will I be able to attend harness racing meetings and other worksites?

If you cannot provide evidence that you meet the requirement to be fully vaccinated as per the Orders, you will be unable to attend harness racing meetings or other worksites.


Your employer may also face criminal sanctions for non-compliance with the Orders.

### How do I get vaccinated or get a booster if required?

You can book a vaccine appointment at [portal.cvms.vic.gov.au](https://portal.cvms.vic.gov.au), by phoning the COVID-19 hotline on 1800 675 398, or through a GP or pharmacist.

- [GPs](#)
- [Fed Gov](#)
- [Health Direct](#)
- [Pharmacy](#)

For information about the centres where you can get vaccinated, visit [www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccine](https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccine)

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More information on COVID-19 vaccines and bookings is available on the Victorian Government's [COVID-19](#) website.

### What is the requirement for my employer?

Under the *COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination (Workers) Orders*, the Minister for Health requires that employees must be fully vaccinated by 26 November 2021 and employers must:

- collect, record and hold vaccination information about workers who are, or may be, scheduled to work outside a worker's ordinary place of residence, and
- ensure unvaccinated workers do not work outside the worker's ordinary place of residence, unless an exception applies under the orders.

### What proof of vaccination do I need to provide to my employer?

You will need to provide a [COVID-19 digital certificate](#) or an Immunisation Statement from the [Australian Immunisation Register](#).

Your employer should hold your vaccine information in accordance with their employer obligations under the Health Records Act 2001.

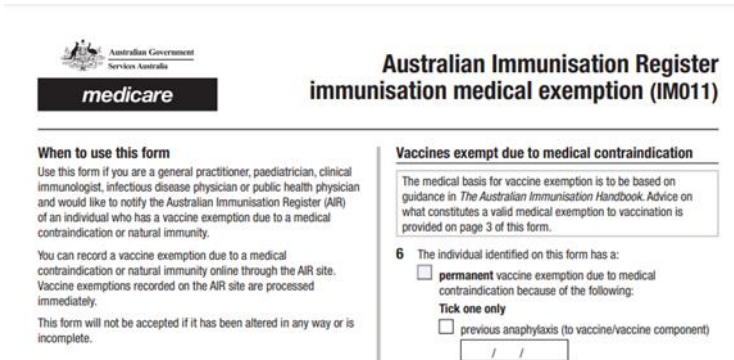
### What medical conditions could result in an exemption from being vaccinated?

There may be circumstances where a person may be defined as an excepted person due to a medical contraindication. It is recommended you discuss your medical condition with your medical practitioner to determine if you may be considered an excepted person.

More information on [exemptions is available here](#).


### What evidence do I need to provide for a medical exemption?

If you have a medical exemption, you must provide an **Australian Immunisation Register immunisation medical exemption form** that is completed and signed by your medical practitioner and states that you are unable to receive a dose, or a further dose of a COVID-19 vaccination due to a medical contraindication or acute medical illness.



The form is titled 'Australian Immunisation Register immunisation medical exemption (IM011)'. It includes the Australian Government Services Australia logo and the Medicare logo. The form is divided into two main sections: 'When to use this form' and 'Vaccines exempt due to medical contraindication'. The 'When to use this form' section explains that the form is for general practitioners, paediatricians, clinical immunologists, infectious disease physicians, or public health physicians to use when notifying the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) of a vaccine exemption due to a medical contraindication or natural immunity. It also states that vaccine exemptions recorded on the AIR site are processed immediately. The 'Vaccines exempt due to medical contraindication' section provides guidance on the medical basis for vaccine exemption and includes a section for recording the exemption. It asks for the individual identified on the form and provides checkboxes for 'permanent vaccine exemption due to medical contraindication because of the following:' and 'previous anaphylaxis (to vaccine/vaccine component)'. There is a 'Tick one only' instruction and a date field for the exemption.

### [Medical Exemptions Guidance](#)

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### **I have questions or concerns about the COVID-19 vaccines – who should I talk to?**

You should talk to your medical practitioner if you have questions or concerns with regards to receiving a vaccine.

### **Is this vaccination requirement legal?**

Under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, the Minister for Health has emergency powers that can be exercised where a public health emergency has been declared - which is currently the case in Victoria. These powers include the ability to issue required health orders.

### **What if I don't want to get vaccinated?**

If you are not fully vaccinated, then you will not be permitted to attend harness racing meetings or other work premises.

### **Is this vaccination requirement discriminatory towards those who choose not to get vaccinated for personal reasons?**

Vaccination status is not in itself a protected attribute under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic) (EO Act).

If a person's reason for not wanting the vaccine is not linked to a protected attribute under the Act, it is not deemed as discrimination.

Further information is available from the [Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission](#).

### **My faith precludes me from being vaccinated. Can I get an exception based on my religion?**

No. This is not an authorised exemption under the Orders.

### **Do I still need a worker permit?**


No, worker's permits are no longer required.

### **Harness racing is my hobby, not my work. Do I need to comply?**

Yes. Anyone participating in harness racing, including being physically engaged in racing, training, or trialing activities, is included in the Orders.

### **I am a fulltime trainer and I work for myself. Am I a worker, or an employer?**

You are both (i.e. self-employed). You will need to be aware of, and comply with, the Orders as both an employer and worker.

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### **What happens if I don't comply with the Orders and go to the track to race, or trial?**

If you are unable to show proof of compliance, you won't be permitted to enter any Victorian Club premises to trial or race.

If you intended to trial, you will need to arrange for another registered person who is compliant with the Orders to trial your horses.

If your horse is engaged to race, you will need to arrange for another appropriately registered person who is compliant with the Orders to handle the horse on your behalf and ensure any Stewards permission or authority is in place. If you can't find a trainer or attendant to do this for you, your horse will be scratched, and Steward penalties may apply.

You will also be at risk of penalties, with Victoria Police able to issue on-the-spot fines of up to \$1,817 to individuals and up to \$10,904 to businesses for non-compliance with the Orders.

### **I'm a trainer. Will I still be able to nominate for a meeting if I am not vaccinated and don't hold a medical exception?**

Yes. However, if you do not comply with the Orders, and your horse is engaged to race, you will not be permitted to enter Club premises. You will need to make alternate arrangements for the handling of your horse, including any Stewards permission or authority, to avoid your horse being scratched and any Steward penalties that may apply.

### **I'm not vaccinated and don't have a medical exception. Can I still trial at a Club track?**

No. You will not be able to trial at a Club track if you are not fully vaccinated.


### **I am a trainer and get help with my horse from friends and family. Am I supposed to check their vaccination information?**

Yes. Anyone who helps you is considered your worker, paid or unpaid, and if they don't live with you, they are working for you, away from *their* home.

The Orders require that, as their employer, you

- must collect, record and hold vaccination information for any worker coming on-site for work or working at another work premises, and
- must not permit a worker who doesn't meet the Direction requirements to work outside their home.

Failure to comply with the Orders will put you at risk of court-imposed penalties of up to \$21,808 for individuals and \$109,044 for businesses.

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**Do the Orders apply to me if I am a family member, or friend of a trainer and I help with the horses at their home? I don't live with them.**

Yes. The Orders will apply to you if you are doing any harness racing related work away from your home, whether you are paid (employee) or unpaid (volunteer).

**I'm a breeder and I need to transfer horses between my own and other's properties. Do I need to be vaccinated to do this?**

Yes. Both are considered work sites for you, away from your home, in your participation in harness racing.

**I am fully vaccinated, but my wife/husband/partner/friend is not. Can they still travel with me to the track when I am taking my horse to trial or race?**

No. If you are both travelling to the track for the purpose of trialling or racing, you will both be participating in harness racing and be required to comply with the Orders.

**Can I ask a HRV authorised officer who attends my property to show me their proof of vaccination before they come on to my property? Can I refuse them if they don't?**

No. HRV, as employer of HRV authorised officers, will ensure that only individuals compliant with the Orders are permitted to attend participant properties. HRV authorised officers will not be required to show proof of vaccination, nor will a participant be entitled to refuse them entry.

**I'm not vaccinated or eligible for a medical exception, but I want to train my horses at a Club track. Will I need to be vaccinated?**

Yes. You will need to comply with the Orders to use Club tracks.

**What should I do if I am training my horses at a country club or training venue?**

Ensure that you are fully vaccinated. You should check-in using the QR code in accordance with displayed signage. You can also access club and training centre [QR codes](https://www.thetrots.com.au) on [www.thetrots.com.au](https://www.thetrots.com.au)

**Do penalties apply if these rules aren't followed?**

Significant penalties apply to organisations for failing to comply with the requirements. There are also **large** penalties that apply to individuals who provide false or misleading information.