



MINISTRY OF HEALTH
SINGAPORE

MH 34:24/8

MOH Circular No. 52/2022

25 April 2022

Please refer to Distribution List

UPDATED GUIDANCE ON COVID-19 VACCINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF VACCINATION-RELATED INSTRUCTIONS FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS IN THE HEALTHCARE AND COMMUNITY CARE SECTOR

The Multi-Ministry Taskforce announced on 22 April 2022 the transition of our Disease Outbreak Response System Condition (DORSCON) level from the current Orange to Yellow and further adjustments to the Community Safe Management Measures (SMMs). In line with the adjustments to the Community SMMs, the Vaccination-Differentiated SMMs (VDS) will be eased for all settings except for (a) events with more than 500 participants at any one time, (b) nightlife establishments where dancing among patrons is one of the intended activities, and (c) food and beverage (F&B) establishments, including restaurants, coffee shops and hawker centers. As such, VDS will no longer apply at all healthcare and community care settings except where (a) and (c) are relevant.

Lifting Of WVM For Healthcare & Community Care Sector

2. Similarly, the Workforce Vaccination Measures (WVM) which took effect from 1 January 2022 will be lifted with effect from 26 April 2022. The lifting of WVM will apply to all enterprises and/or institutions,¹ including licensees and operators in the

¹ Enterprises and/or institutions include MOH Holdings and all its entities, healthcare clusters and all public healthcare institutions (including public hospitals, community hospitals, national specialty centres and polyclinics), private healthcare institutions (including private hospitals, community hospitals, General Medical Clinics, Specialist Medical Clinics, General Practitioner (GP) Clinics, Dental Clinics, Private Allied Health (AH) Clinics/Private AH providers), Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Clinics, Traditional & Complementary Medicine (T&CM) Service Providers, healthcare professional and related associations, councils and societies, Long Term Care (LTC) and community care/elder care providers including service providers for residential care services (e.g. Nursing Homes, Psychiatric Rehabilitation Homes, Psychiatric Sheltered Homes), centre-based service providers (e.g. Active Ageing Centres, Active Ageing Care Hubs, Senior Care Centres, Active Ageing Hubs, Senior Activity Centres, Psychiatric Day Centres and related services such as CREST/COMIT, Cluster Support and Community Case Management Service), Home-based care service providers (e.g. Home Medical, Home Nursing, Home Palliative Care, Home Personal Care, including Home Personal Care component of Care Close to Home pilot, Home Therapy, home-based components of Integrated Home and Day Care Services and Interim Caregiver Service), renal dialysis centres, community mental health service providers, other LTC service providers such as home delivery service providers, case management service providers. In this regard, all healthcare institutions (HCIs)



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healthcare and community care sector. This circular, which supersedes MOH Circular 190/2021, sets out the key guidelines for the healthcare and community care sector on the implementation of vaccination-related instructions for staff and students in the healthcare and community care sector from 26 April 2022 (inclusive).

Vaccination-Related Instructions for Staff

3. With the lifting of WVM, all Workers² in the healthcare and community care sector, regardless of vaccination status, may return to work onsite. Enterprises and/or institutions should remind Workers who are returning to the workplace onsite that they are encouraged to do a COVID-19 self-test when they feel unwell or have recent contact with an infected person. Enterprises and/or institutions are not obliged to check the results of the self-test. Workers who are unwell should refrain from working onsite.

4. However, given that the COVID-19 pandemic is not over, enterprises and/or institutions in the healthcare and community care sector should continue to take precautionary measures to ensure workplace health and safety for their staff and to balance business continuity needs. Enterprises and/or institutions can exercise flexibility to continue to implement vaccination-related instructions for their employees, in accordance with employment law, if they deem such measures necessary for their business operations. In this connection, enterprises and/or institutions may refer to the Tripartite Advisory issued to guide employers and employees on the issue of COVID-19 vaccination at the workplace [<https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19/requirements-for-safe-management-measures>].

5. In this regard, as it is critical to ensure the continuity of operations of the hospitals and residential care homes and to safeguard the vulnerable patients/residents receiving care in these settings, **we strongly advise all hospitals and residential care homes to deploy only fully-vaccinated³ staff to work onsite in inpatient and residential care settings (including emergency departments)**. The same guidance applies for students who are on attachment, internships, research or clinical training, as well as volunteers and vendors who operate onsite at these settings on a regular basis. This additional precautionary measure is a safeguard for staff protection in view of the assessed higher transmission risks in these settings and helps enable us to preserve our hospital capacity should there be an emergence of a new variant of concern with potentially significant public health risks. Adoption of this precautionary measure would also facilitate a smooth transition at these settings should there be a need to legally re-impose VDS/WVM at short notice in these settings, if and when the situation requires.

licensed under the Private Hospitals and Medical Clinics Act (PHMCA) and the Healthcare Services Act (HCSA) and all registered medical and dental practitioners, nurses, pharmacists and allied health professionals (registered or unregistered) would be included regardless of whether they are employees of a HCI, self-employed or in solo practice.

² This includes staff in non-patient or non-public facing, backroom, and administrative functions, operating from home and persons who work under the direction (e.g., contractors, subcontractors, vendors, locums, students on attachment, internships, research and clinical training and volunteers) of enterprises and/or institutions in the healthcare and community care sector.

³ Enterprises and/or Institutions may refer to the following link <https://go.gov.sg/vdsmminfo> for the prevailing definition of fully vaccinated individuals.

6. For all other healthcare and community care settings, enterprises and/or institutions may also make similar manpower deployment arrangements and give similar vaccination-related instructions to staff if they wish, in accordance with employment law. The decision should be based on an assessment of the transmission risk in workplace settings, assessed business continuity and operational needs and the need to ensure workplace health and safety for staff.

Support For Workers to Get Fully Vaccinated

7. As we transit to a COVID-19 resilient nation, vaccination remains important to keep our community safe. It offers protection to not only vaccinated individuals, but also vulnerable segments of the population served by the healthcare and community care sector such as the elderly, sick and younger children, many of whom might not be able to be vaccinated. We strongly encourage all Workers in the healthcare and community sector (including healthcare students) to be fully vaccinated, especially if they need to work onsite in settings with assessed higher transmission risks.

8. Unvaccinated Workers who are medically ineligible for mRNA vaccines are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated with non-mRNA vaccines under the National Vaccination Programme (NVP) as soon as possible.

9. Enterprises and/or institutions should facilitate vaccination by granting paid time-off to Workers for their vaccination appointments (including vaccination booster shots), and additional paid sick leave (beyond contractual and/or statutory requirements) in the rare event that the Worker experiences a vaccine-related adverse reaction.

Further Enquiries

10. For clarifications or more details on the guidelines outlined in this Circular, enterprises and/or institutions may refer to the Tripartite Advisories/Guidelines on MOM's website, or contact the lead agency for healthcare and community care sector via gobiz_healthcare@moh.gov.sg.

11. This Circular is for guidance to all enterprises and/or institutions, including licensees and operators, in the healthcare and community care sector.



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MINISTRY OF HEALTH

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