

POLICY UPDATE – SEPTEMBER 2022

Title:	Surf Life Saving NSW Members COVID-19 Vaccination Policy
Date:	19 September 2022
Responsible Portfolio:	Governance
Authority:	This Policy is made under clause 43 of the SLSNSW Constitution. It is binding on all Members of SLSNSW and is to be interpreted in accordance with the SLSNSW Constitution.
Version	1.2

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate the protection of the health and safety of members who attend and participate in front line volunteering activities at any of Surf Life Saving NSW's (SLSNSW) facilities, activities and services (including work in public areas) by strongly recommending and encouraging all such persons to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, including booster shots. It also identifies specific mitigation strategies for this cohort of members.

This policy is in addition to other COVID Safe measures to protect public health and ensure the safety of all members, employees, industry and community partners, contractors and visitors, as well as the communities we live in and serve.

Application

This policy applies to SLSNSW members (or Surf Life Saving members visiting from other states) and replaces all previous versions of the policy. It specific relates to members who are:

- 13 years of age and above; and
- who hold a SLSNSW award; and
- are undertaking Frontline Volunteering Activities for a club, branch or SLSNSW in person or are participating in a club, branch or SLSNSW activity in person.

Members who are undertaking tasks related to SLSNSW business activities are included in the Surf Life Saving NSW COVID -19 Vaccination Policy – Employees Policy.

Definitions

In this policy, the following terms have the meaning as set out below:

Approved Vaccine means any COVID-19 vaccination that have been provisionally registered for use in Australia by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Frontline Volunteering Activity means involvement as any of the following:

- I. Members aged 13 years of age and above where the SLS activity being undertaken requires the member to be the holder of a SLS Lifesaving, Emergency Care or Powercraft Award (including

holders of: Bronze Medallion; SRC; ARTC, IRB Driver, IRB Crew, RWC Operator; radio operator, UAV Operator)

- II. Members enrolled in a training course or assessment for any SLS Award (excluding Junior [i.e. Nipper] Awards)
- III. Support Operations Personnel
- IV. Surf Sports Officials
- V. Trainers, Assessors or Facilitators
- VI. Age Managers
- VII. Surf Sports Coaches

Surf Sports Competitors, for the avoidance of any doubt, means all surf sports competitors (including boat sweeps). Surf Sports Competitors must be a holder of an SLS award in order to compete, therefore this policy applies to them. At the point the member is enrolled in an SRC course, the policy applies to them.

Fully Vaccinated means having obtained the manufacturer's recommended dosage of any Approved Vaccine. For example, where a two-dose schedule is recommended by the manufacturer, a person will be considered fully vaccinated when they have received both doses of the vaccine.

Underlying Health Conditions are those treatments and illnesses/conditions as described by NSW Health as per their website link: <https://www.health.gov.au/health-alerts/covid-19/advice-for-groups-at-risk/risk-factors-for-more-serious-illness>.

Recommendation to be vaccinated

As of **19 September 2022** it will be a recommendation and strongly encouraged for any Frontline Volunteer Activity (including those in public areas and those under the direct control of any Surf Life Saving NSW, or any Surf Life Saving NSW Branch, Club or other affiliated entity) that the Member should be Fully Vaccinated against COVID-19, and where appropriate have the recommended dosage of booster shots. Vaccination must be undertaken on the advice of an accredited health practitioner (including health practitioners at any authorised COVID-19 vaccination centres).

Requirement to advise of any pre-existing medical conditions

Members will be required to advise SLSNSW if they have any pre-existing medical condition which may make them more susceptible to serious illness should they contract a COVID 19 infection. Members are not required to identify what that condition is. This advice must include a report by either a medical practitioner which identifies Frontline Volunteering Activities present no greater risk to them due to their underlying health condition OR any recommended additional mitigation strategies which the member should adhere to. (eg face mask wearing, vaccinations etc).

Members will be required to advise of this information as part of the annual membership application/renewal process. Further, if the member is diagnosed subsequently within the membership year of such a condition, they must advise SLSNSW immediately.

A list of medical conditions which are believed to increase the risk of serious illness due to contracting a covid19 infection can be found at:

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-alerts/covid-19/advice-for-groups-at-risk/risk-factors-for-more-serious-illness>.

Conditions for which additional booster shots are recommended can be found at:

Expanded ATAGI recommendations on winter COVID-19 booster doses for people at increased risk of severe COVID-19 | Australian Government Department of Health

Members are to provide this information via the SLSNSW covid19 email: covid19@surflifesaving.com.au.

Consideration Process – Pre-existing Medical Conditions

Upon receipt of the declaration by the member, SLSNSW will consider the mitigation requirements as advised by the medical practitioner in context to the SLS operating environment. They will then liaise with the member's club to ensure their awareness of the additional requirements and determine if those requirements are suitable and able to be applied within the operating environment.

Members should be aware that if their medical report indicates Frontline Volunteering Activities will present a significant risk to their health irrespective of mitigations put in place, SLSNSW reserves the right to restrict these members from those specific activities.

SLSNSW will utilise an expert medical panel to assess documentation received and SLSNSW reserves the right to contact the named medical practitioner to verify the nature and severity of any such medical condition, and the potential impact a COVID 19 infection may present to the member.

The following are additional mitigations which may be required to be put in place to allow the member to undertake Frontline Volunteering activities. These may include but are not limited to:

- Additional PPE requirements
- Vaccination and additional boosters
- Limitation of activities (eg observation on patrol only and no provision of first-aid to the public)
- Not undertaking patrolling in closed environments (eg observation towers when with other persons)
- Demonstration of fully vaccinated and/or boosted status

In some instances it may be considered the most appropriate risk mitigation approach is to restrict the member from Frontline activities.

Information provided to SLSNSW

Any information provided to SLSNSW in accordance with this policy will be treated confidentially and will be used only for determining compliance with this policy.

Any Member who provides information to SLSNSW in accordance with this policy is expected to provide accurate and truthful information.

Where a Fully Vaccinated Status is required

SLSNSW members are from time to time required to operate in facilities and environments with other emergency services organisations (eg Emergency Operation Centres), as well as at other organisations premises such as schools. Where it is a requirement of that organisation for persons entering the site or participating in the organised activity to be Fully Vaccinated, members who are not Fully Vaccinated will not be able to be deployed to those sites or roles where attendance at the site is required as part of the specific deployment.

Obtaining information about vaccination

We advise you in the first instance to consult with your accredited health practitioner about any concerns you may have in relation to receiving an Approved Vaccine, including the process for obtaining an Approved Vaccine.

Information about making a booking to receive an Approved Vaccine can be found:

New South Wales	https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/health-and-wellbeing/covid-19-vaccination-nsw/get-your-covid-19-vaccination-nsw
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Compliance

We hope that all members will comply with this policy to keep themselves, each other and the public safe.

Unfortunately, if a member does not disclose information regarding pre-existing medical conditions, or those which they become aware of during the membership year, SLSNSW will be unable to ensure the required mitigations are implemented to ensure as best as possible the member is protected from contracting COVID 19 during SLS activities.

Operation of this policy

SLSNSW will be continuously monitoring and assessing the operation of this policy in line with the latest information from Government and health authorities. SLSNSW may amend, withdraw or replace this policy from time to time at its sole discretion.