

# Covid – 19 High Risk Work risk assessment tool

The COVID-19 vaccine is freely available to all New Zealanders over the age of 12 years. It is strongly recommended that you are vaccinated to help restrict the spread of COVID-19. The University will support you to get your vaccine, either by allowing time during work hours to be vaccinated, or through the attendance at a COVID-19 vaccination clinic held on campus by the Occupational Health Team (contact [vaccine@otago.ac.nz](mailto:vaccine@otago.ac.nz)).

The University, in line with the health and safety legislation, has identified COVID-19 high-risk tasks that may be required to be done by a vaccinated worker. If you work in one of these high-risk areas, the University may ask if you are vaccinated. You only have to disclose your vaccination status if you feel comfortable doing so. Those staff in high-risk areas that are not vaccinated, or assumed to be unvaccinated, may require assessment by the Occupational Health Team to identify what control measures are sufficient to protect you. Where the risk cannot be sufficiently managed, alternative work may have to be found for you to do. This will be arranged in discussion with you, your manager, HR and possibly Occupational Health.

If you do disclose your vaccination status, this information will be held on the Occupational Health patient management system subject to the Privacy Act and health information requirements.

## **People at risk of severe illness from COVID-19**

At risk and vulnerable people are not required to carry out any on-site activities at alert levels 2 and above. However, vulnerable workers may work on site if they wish to and it is safe for them to do so. Discuss your requirements with your line manager. Contact your General Practitioner or Occupational Health ([ohn@otago.ac.nz](mailto:ohn@otago.ac.nz)) if you require assistance or further advice.

The main reason for COVID-19 becoming a severe illness is the presence of underlying medical conditions, especially if these conditions are not well controlled.

Relevant medical conditions include:

- Chronic lung disease such as cystic fibrosis, bronchiectasis, chronic obstructive respiratory disease and emphysema, severe asthma that needs multiple medications and medical care
- Serious heart conditions such as congestive heart failure
- Hypertension that isn't well controlled
- Diabetes that isn't well controlled
- Chronic kidney disease
- Liver disease

Conditions and treatments that weaken the immune system include:

- Having chemotherapy or radiotherapy
- Bone marrow or organ transplantation
- Some blood cancers
- Immune deficiencies including HIV infection
- Immunity weakening medications such as high-dose corticosteroids and disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs that treat inflammatory forms of arthritis.

## Covid – 19 Workplace Risk Assessment tool

### Key

	Vaccination strongly encouraged to protect risk of exposure along with PPE consistent with Interim guidance for the use of P2/N95 particulate respirators by general practice or urgent medical health care providers (+ gloves, long sleeve fluid resistant gown).
	PPE and isolation methods could be considered to reduce the risk (mask, handwashing)
	Risk reduced through normal protection hand washing, sanitising, etc.

	Clinical Staff	Reception Areas and professional staff	Non-clinical Staff	Teaching Staff (non-clinical)	Researchers (required to work in clinical or high-risk settings)	Students
Dental School						
Student Health						
Lab staff working with virus						
Staff required to work in a hospital or clinical setting (refer also to DHB requirements)						
Physio School Clinic staff						
Students and staff visiting/working/placements in high risk locations (aged care, DHBs, Prisons, etc.)						

Figure 1: Covid H&S Risk Matrix