

COVID-19 vaccinations for young people in out-of-home care

18 November 2021

OFFICIAL

Introduction

Vaccination is a critical step in keeping our community safe, including our most vulnerable children, young people, and families. The COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective and free. This guidance provides information about eligibility, access, and consent for the COVID-19 vaccination for children and young people in out of home care.

COVID-19 Vaccine eligibility for children and young people

Currently, anyone aged 12 years and over (whether they are in out-of-home care or not) are eligible to receive the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. Anyone who wants to be vaccinated must provide informed consent.

Consent and vaccinations

Please refer to the department's [Guidance for COVID-19 vaccinations for children and young people in out-of-home care](#) for detailed information about the consent process.

Support for young people in out-of-home care to get vaccinated

Vaccine hesitancy training for staff

The [Murdoch Children's Research Institute](#) and [Collaboration on Social Science and Immunisation](#) (COSSI) provide online training sessions to help you **assist individuals to build confidence in COVID-19 vaccines**.

Modules will cover:

- COVID-19 vaccine overview including how vaccines are developed and the approval process for all vaccines in Australia
- Strategies for empowering vaccine champions and building trust for managers or individuals
- Discussing COVID-19 vaccines with people who have questions or who may have concerns about the COVID-19 vaccine
- When and how to respond to vaccine misinformation.

The department arranges these training sessions periodically. Please email Pauline.murtagh@health.vic.gov.au to join the next session or organise one for a larger group.

Where can a young person in out-of-home care access a COVID-19 vaccination?

A young person in care can visit any state-run vaccination clinic to get a vaccination. There is no need to book.

They can also choose to get a COVID-19 vaccination at a drive-through vaccination centre, a vaccination centre with enhanced accessibility. View the [vaccination centres](#) page for more information on these sites.

For young people with a disability, or needing some additional support with their vaccination, a disability liaison officer can also help book your vaccine appointment. View more [vaccine information for people with a disability](#).

Doctors or pharmacists are also offering COVID-19 vaccination. To find your nearest GP or pharmacy administering COVID-19 vaccinations, please visit the [COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Finder](#).

What do I do if a young person wants to get vaccinated, but is anxious about needles?

The department has established a number of [low sensory vaccination centres across the metropolitan region](#) for people requiring extra support during vaccination, due to anxiety about medical procedures, disability, mental illness, autism or neurodiverse conditions. The centres offer quiet, natural and/or well-lit environments, with longer appointment times, separate and private rooms for vaccinations to take place.

Disability Liaison Officers can work with you to find the most suitable vaccination clinic for a young person's needs anywhere in Victoria.

The Melbourne Vaccine Education Centre website has some [useful tips to help people overcome fear/phobia of needles](#). Where these strategies are not effective, vaccination under sedation can be offered.

How can a Disability Liaison Officer support a young person with additional requirements?

Disability Liaison Officers (DLOs) help people with a disability or special requirement access vaccinations. Their roles and responsibilities are to:

- help book a COVID-19 vaccination or facilitate a walk-in experience
- help organise [group bookings for service providers or groups of people with disability](#)
- provide advice to vaccine and testing sites on how to improve access for people with a disability
- help you get a vaccination if you're not able to attend a vaccination centre.

Contact a DLO by either:

- completing this online form [Request for Disability Liaison Officer support](#)
- emailing DLOcoordinator@dhhs.vic.gov.au.

Can a young person in care access an in home vaccination service?

If a young person is not willing to attend any of the above vaccination centres, an in-reach vaccination service can be requested. A mobile van can be requested for in-reach vaccination service at the care facility between now and Friday 17 December 2021.

To request an in-reach vaccination service, please email: Kristy Cope, kristy.cope@dffh.vic.gov.au.

Additional information regarding the COVID-19 vaccines

[Covid-19 Vaccines and Young People – Youth Affairs Council Victoria](https://www.yacvic.org.au/resources/covid-vaccine)

<<https://www.yacvic.org.au/resources/covid-vaccine>>

[YLab – COVID-19 Vaccination toolkit for young people:](https://www.ylab.global/covid-vaccination-toolkit)

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