

November 2021

Transplant Australia Covid Vaccination Event Policy

COVID-19 is a significant threat to the health of all Australians, especially for people for transplant recipients.

The Australian population has responded positively to vaccination and there are very few medical reasons for seeking exemption to vaccination and we should be able to achieve a vaccination rate well above 90% of those eligible. Vaccination reduces the risk and extent of infection. It saves lives.

The Government advisory body on vaccination (ATAGI) has recommended a third dose for immune-compromised people as well as the general population. Therefore, the preferred way of referring to a particular person's vaccination status is whether they are fully vaccinated with the recommended doses for their particular circumstances.

Transplant Australia is committed to ensuring the highest level of safety for all people who attend events sanctioned by Transplant Australia.

Ensuring safety for all of us is a simple and standard measure we take all the time. It is not designed as an infringement of anyone's civil liberty. If you want to risk COVID infection for yourself, that is your responsibility. However, if you want to risk others getting COVID that, is our responsibility. However, putting others at risk of getting COVID at Transplant Australia's events becomes our responsibility.

The Policy

A General Principle

If you are unwell with any illness, COVID-related or other, do not attend an event sanctioned by Transplant Australia or its state committees. This is common sense and has always applied to our events, including the Australian Transplant Games.

If you have possible COVID infection symptoms, get tested early. This is important for all and especially for transplant recipients. An early diagnosis and treatment improves outcomes. Isolate until a negative test is confirmed and you are feeling better.

Vaccination

Attendees (aged 12 and over) at any Transplant Australia-sanction events must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 for at least two weeks. Proof of vaccination should be shown preferably prior to the event and preferably when registering. Proof of medical exemption for vaccination must also be shown to organiser prior to the event.

Masks

Foremost, organisers of state events should follow the current directives of their state health authorities.

In line with Federal Government advice, where there is low community transmission of COVID-19, wearing a mask in the community when you are well is generally not recommended. The wearing of masks is however a personal choice and those that do should be respected for their choice.

However, where there is significant community transmission (as determined by jurisdictional public health authorities), you may be required to wear a mask. If physical distancing is difficult to maintain, for example on public transport, wearing an appropriately fitted mask will add extra protection.

While a mask can be used as an extra precaution, you must continue to:

- stay at home if unwell
- maintain physical distance (more than 1.5 metres) from other people, when out
- avoid large gatherings and crowded indoor spaces
- practise hand and respiratory hygiene.

The main value of wearing a mask is to protect other people. If the person wearing the mask is unknowingly infected, wearing a mask will reduce the chance of them passing the virus on to others.

For people at increased risk of severe COVID-19 themselves -because of older age or chronic illness, physical distancing is most important. If you cannot maintain physical distance, wearing a mask is an important protective measure.

At Transplant Australia-events we currently recommend caution and therefore the use of masks in indoor events except when seated for eating and drinking.

Personal Hygiene

We also strongly recommend attendees continue to observe safe personal hygiene protection practices.

The Government recommends*:

- wash your hands often with soap and water. This includes before and after eating and after going to the toilet
- use alcohol-based hand sanitisers when you can't use soap and water
- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- clean and disinfect surfaces you use often such as benchtops, desks and doorknobs
- clean and disinfect objects you use often such as mobile phones, keys, wallets and work passes
- increase the amount of fresh air by opening windows or changing air conditioning

There is limited evidence that alcohol-free hand rubs are effective against COVID-19. Experts recommend the use of alcohol-based hand sanitisers.

*<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/how-to-protect-yourself-and-others-from-coronavirus-covid-19/good-hygiene-for-coronavirus-covid-19>

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