



16/09/2024

Kathryn Pick

fyi-request-28246-6276b550@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Kathryn

OIA: 1335185 - MOE personnel exempted from the vaccine mandate

Thank you for your email of 30 August 2024 to the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) requesting the following information:

I recently requested to know the number of MOE personnel who were exempt from the vaccine mandate in 2021. I received the following information...

Approximately 59% of the approximately 4,352 Ministry employees were covered under the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccinations) Order 2021 when it was in effect. Exemptions could be applied for under clause 9 of the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccinations) Order 2021. Seven Education-related applications were received and processed by the Ministry, with all decisions referred to the Minister for approval. All of these applications were declined.

I now request to know WHO the 41% of exempt MOE personnel were (what their titles and positions in the MOE were), and under what grounds were exemptions granted please.

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

As you note, our previous response [our ref: 1334434] explained that approximately 59% Ministry employees were covered under the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccinations) Order 2021 (the Public Health Order) when it was in effect. This was because those individuals' roles required them to have contact with children or students when carrying out their work, or to be present at an early learning service, registered school or hostel where children or students were also present.

The application of mandatory vaccination requirements by role in the education sector is set out in this document published on our website:

<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.education.govt.nz%2Fpublic%2FCOVID919-files%2FApplication-of-mandatory-vaccination-requirements-by-role-v2.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>.

This was also explained in the Bulletin content provided in our last response [our ref: OIA 1333499]: <https://bulletins.education.govt.nz/bulletin/he-pitopito-korero/issue/covid-19-update-11-october-2021/date/2021-10-11#mandatory-vaccinations->.

The remaining approximately 41% of Ministry employees at the time were carrying out roles that did not meet these criteria (for example, Ministry office-based staff), and who therefore were not covered by the Public Health Order, because they did not fall into one of the “Groups of affected persons” set out in Schedule 2 of the Public Health Order.

In other words, they were not “granted an exemption” from the mandatory vaccination requirements – they were simply not subject to the requirements in the first place.

Thank you again for your email.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "EDrysdale". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'E' and 'D'.

Emma Drysdale
Manager Official and Parliamentary Information
Te Pou Rangatōpū | Corporate