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THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

20 April 2026

Erika Whittome

Email: fyi-request-34161-3aaada97@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Erika,

Official Information request – Terminated staff due to vaccination status at Waikato Uni in 2022

I refer to your request for official information of 19 March 2026 in which you have requested the following information:

1. *In 2022 how many staff were terminated for failure to comply with the covid-19 vaccination policy?*
2. *How many affected personnel left Waikato University before receiving a termination notice during the introduction of the vaccination policy?*
3. *How many of the affected personnel were working in each operational area or departmental function (e.g. management, registry, IT, finance, HR, etc)? Please provide this disaggregated by job title or function to the extent reasonably practicable.*
4. *How many of the affected personnel were offered alternative positions, roles, or accommodations (e.g. remote work, redeployment, or other adjustments) as an alternative to termination? Please indicate whether such offers were made before or after termination notices were issued.*
5. *What was the total amount paid out by Waikato University to resolve matters with these affected personnel, disaggregated (as far as reasonably practicable) into categories, including:*
 - *back-pay*
 - *redundancy payments*
 - *settlements*
 - *ex gratia payments*
 - *sick leave or annual leave entitlements paid out*
 - *any other categories of compensation or financial redress*

Please also provide any contextual information necessary to interpret the figures (e.g. timeframes of payments, possible overlap between categories, or explanatory notes on classification methods used).

6. *Were any external parties (e.g. Ministers, the Public Service Commission, Tertiary Commission, unions, or legal representatives) involved in the development of the vaccination policy leading to the terminations? If so, please identify them and the nature of their involvement.*
7. *Did Waikato University issue any internal guidance or policy outlining the process for implementing vaccine mandate-related terminations? If so, please provide a copy of that policy.*
8. *Please share the “detailed risk assessment” for workplaces at Waikato University.*

Under the Official Information Act 1982 (**Act**) the University of Waikato (**University**) has considered your request and responds as follows.

1. In 2022, less than 10 staff members were terminated for failure to comply with the Covid-19 vaccination policies. The University withholds specific staff numbers to protect the privacy of individuals pursuant to section 9(2)(a) of the Act.
2. All affected staff members remained employees of the University until their respective termination notice was given.
3. There were less than 5 affected academic staff members and less than 5 affect professional staff members. By way of clarification, the University has aggregated affected staff members into academic and professional categories, and specific and exact areas have been withheld to protect the privacy of individuals pursuant to section 9(2)(a) of the Act.
4. The University did not offer alternate positions, roles or work accommodations as all positions required staff to be physically present on campus.
5. The total amount paid by the University to resolve matters with the affected personnel between 14 March 2022 – 13 May 2022 (dependent on notice periods within respective agreements), is provided in the following categories:

Settlement payment	\$10,517
Ex gratia and annual leave entitlements	\$62,998
Normal wages paid to termination date	\$ 9,183

For completion purposes the University did not pay to any affected personnel back-pay, redundancy or sick leave and accordingly refuses pursuant to section 18(e) of the Act because the information does not exist.

6. The University did not involve any external parties in the development of the University's policies pertaining to the Covid-19 epidemic.
7. The University did not have any internal policy or formal guidance specifically setting out a process for implementing vaccine mandate-related terminations. Accordingly, your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information requested does not exist.
8. **Attached** is the University HSW-101 Hazard and Risk Register COVID 19 template.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Jim Mercer
Chief Operating Officer