

22 March 2022

s 9(2)(a)

By email: s 9(2)(a)  
Ref: H202203850

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

### Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) on 23 February 2022 for information related to the Government's COVID-19 response. I will respond to each part of your request in turn:

*What is the specific date or specific condition that is required for the use of vaccine passes to cease?*

Cabinet met on 21 March 2022 to discuss New Zealand's COVID-19 response. Once a decision has been made on mandates, vaccine passes and the traffic light system, it will be communicated.

*Why have exemptions for people with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome not been approved in line with the submission by emeritus professor Warren Tate, from Otago University, who is a leading expert in this field.*

*Why are adverse reactions to other vaccines, especially those that have led to post trauma stress in relation to vaccination, not included as a ground for exemption.*

The decisions on the grounds for medical exemptions were determined and carefully considered by health professionals. The Vaccine Temporary Medical Exemption Clinical Criteria, Clinical Guidance and Resources can be found on the Ministry's website at: [www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/vaccine-temporary-medical-exemption-clinical-criteria-clinical-guidance-resources-updated-mar-10-2022.pdf](http://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/vaccine-temporary-medical-exemption-clinical-criteria-clinical-guidance-resources-updated-mar-10-2022.pdf).

*In light of the above how does the use of a vaccine pass prevent the spread of covid-19?*

My Vaccine Pass is an official record of a person's COVID-19 vaccination status which helps people access places within New Zealand that require proof of vaccination under the COVID-19 Protection Framework. My Vaccine Pass ensures that fully vaccinated individuals can access high-risk public settings such as concerts or indoor events. Further information related to the COVID-19 vaccine and the transmissibility can be found on the Ministry's website at: [www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-effectiveness-and-protection](http://www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-effectiveness-and-protection).

*Why does the Prime Minister keep saying the vaccine is “safe” when it is clear from the Medsafe reports that it is not possible to make a definitive statement about the safety of the Comirnaty (Pfizer) vaccine – either way?*

The Ministry is unable to comment on statements made by the Prime Minister. Information related to the safety and effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccine can be found on the Ministry’s website at: [www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-effectiveness-and-protection](http://www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-effectiveness-and-protection) and the Unite Against COVID-19 website at: [www.covid19.govt.nz/covid-19-vaccines/get-the-facts-about-covid-19-vaccination/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-pfizer-vaccine/](http://www.covid19.govt.nz/covid-19-vaccines/get-the-facts-about-covid-19-vaccination/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-pfizer-vaccine/).

*Why are unvaccinated people denied the opportunity to have a hair cut in the red and orange settings and, mostly likely, in the green setting if hairdressers choose to continue to require vaccine passes?*

*Why is the choice to use the pass being put into the hands of businesses, organisations and individual who are likely to choose to require the pass for reasons other than public health reasons?*

*Why are businesses, organisations and individuals given authority to require vaccine passes when using them makes no difference to the restrictions that apply?*

*Why are takeaways and businesses that have a large takeaway component to their business allowed to use vaccine passes since this means people who don’t use the pass face greater restrictions than they would have under level 3 of the alert settings?*

The Government guidelines for businesses are set out in the COVID-19 Protection Framework and are publicly available at [www.business.govt.nz/covid-19/](http://www.business.govt.nz/covid-19/) and [www.mbie.govt.nz/about/open-government-and-official-information/coronavirus-covid-19/](http://www.mbie.govt.nz/about/open-government-and-official-information/coronavirus-covid-19/). Businesses are able to operate and make decisions within this COVID-19 Protection Framework. Please note that the Act does not require the Ministry to comment on the decisions of individual businesses. For further information related to Government guidelines, you may wish to contact the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

*Why is New Zealand's response to covid -19 based on modelling about what might happen, but in fact doesn't happen, rather than responding to what is actually happening?*

*Why isn't a rapid antigen test being used as an alternative to a vaccine pass for people who do not have or use a vaccine pass?*

In response to these parts of your request it is important to note that the Act allows people to ask for official information. It does not require the Ministry to create new information, compile information it does not hold, or in the case of these parts of your request, to provide an opinion. The Act does not support requests where a comment or a hypothetical statement is put to it and the Ministry is asked to comment on it. These parts of your request are therefore refused under section 18(g) of the Act as the information is not held by the Ministry and there are no grounds for believing it is held by another agency subject to the Act.

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry of Health website at: [www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases](http://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases).

Nāku noa, nā



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