

# Immunisation and Vaccination Guidelines



## PURPOSE

These guidelines support the *Health and Safety Policy* and provide assistance for the use of vaccinations to reduce the risk of acquired infections resulting from Curtin approved activities on or off campus.

## DEFINITIONS

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| <b>Blood Borne Virus (BBV)</b>              | A blood-borne virus (BBV) is a virus that is transmitted by blood or body fluids that contain blood.   |
| <b>Exposure Prone Procedures (EPP's)</b>    | Invasive procedures where there is potential for direct contact between the skin, usually finger or thumb of the healthcare worker, and sharp surgical instruments, needles, or sharp tissues (e.g. fractured bones), spicules of bone or teeth in body cavities or in poorly visualised or confined body sites, including the mouth of the patient. |
| <b>Fieldwork</b>                            | As described in the <a href="#">Fieldwork Policy</a> .   |
| <b>Hazard</b>                               | Anything that has the potential to cause ill health or injury.   |
| <b>Immunisation</b>                         | The process of inducing immunity to an infectious agent by administering a vaccine.  |
| <b>Inherent Requirement of the Position</b> | As described on the <a href="#">People and Culture website</a> .   |
| <b>Pathogen</b>                             | Anything that can produce disease.   |
| <b>Prophylaxis</b>                          | Treatment given or action taken to prevent disease.  |
| <b>Residual Costs</b>                       | Any gap payment between the cost of vaccination, boosters or serological testing that remain following Medicare and/or private health insurer payments.  |
| <b>Serological Testing</b>                  | Laboratory tests done on blood serum to measure antibodies against antigens of the microorganism thought to be causing the infection.  |
| <b>Sharps</b>                               | Devices with sharp points or edges that can puncture or cut skin e.g. needles used to inject drugs (medication) under the skin, broken glassware, cannulas, medical butterflies or syringes used to inject into or withdraw fluids from the body etc.  |
| <b>Vaccination</b>                          | The administration of a vaccine; if vaccination is successful, it results in immunity.   |
| <b>Vaccine Preventable Diseases (VPD's)</b> | Diseases preventable through the application of a vaccine.   |

## 1. General Information

The University recognises that workers, contractors, students, and visitors undertaking Curtin approved activities may, as part of their work or study, be at potential risk of exposure to blood borne viruses (BBV's) and specifically to vaccine preventable diseases (VPD's). There is also a potential risk of these VPD's being transmitted to others.

It is essential that you are aware of the VPDs that may be present in your workplace and that you are fully vaccinated against these, especially if you are within one of the identified risk groups. For more detail on the types of VPDs and other relevant information, see the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#).

## 2. Legislative Requirements

It is a requirement of the Work Health and Safety Act 2020 that the University will take all actions (as is practicable) to ensure that workers (Curtin workers and contractors), students, and visitors are not exposed to hazards including the protection of these groups from BBV's that they may be exposed to in the course of their work or study.

## 3. Privacy of Information

Where a worker or student has disclosed sensitive personal health information to their Manager/ Supervisor/ Lecturer it is required that this information is used and maintained appropriately, in line with the Curtin [Privacy Statement](#) and the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth). This includes any vaccination or serological records.

## 4. University Requirements

It is expected that the known hazards associated with VPDs within Curtin-approved activities, on or off campus, are suitably controlled. Once a VPD has been identified as a potential hazard within an area or activity the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#) is to be reviewed and based on that information a [risk assessment](#) is to be completed and vaccination is to occur as required.

Where a vaccine is available to immunise against a VPD, areas are to ensure that the vaccination is given in accordance with the advice in the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#). The vaccinations and booster doses listed in the current edition of the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#) are those that the University recognises as being available and effective. Individual workers and students are required to ensure that their vaccinations are kept up to date and that they provide evidence of compliance to their Manager/supervisor as required.

Curtin workers situated globally, are required to follow the immunisation guidelines as prescribed by the country in which they are based.

For specific requirements related to travel, fieldwork or clinical placements, refer to section 8.

## 5. Proof of Immunity

Where there is a high risk of contracting a VPD due to the inherent requirements of a vocational role, or through courses of study or research workers, students, contractors or visitors must provide proof of their immunity to their Manager/Supervisor upon request and in line with Curtin Policy. This evidence must indicate the type of vaccination and the date administered or where no records can be located, serological results must be provided.

Where serological testing results indicate that an existing Curtin worker or student has not developed the antibodies for a specific VPD following vaccination, the manager/supervisor is to review the safety of that worker/student to work within the area and alternative employment/study arrangements offered if necessary. For more information or assistance to review the suitability of a person to work within a specific work/study area, please contact the Biological Safety Advisor on ext. 1383, the Medical Director at [Health Services](#) ext. 7345 or the staff or student [Disability Advisors](#) at Curtin.

Documented evidence of previous immunisations for domestic workers or students (such as childhood immunisation records) can be provided as evidence of vaccination. Individual Australian vaccination records can be accessed and requested from your medical practitioner, or the Australian Immunisation Record from [Healthy WA](#).

Vaccination records for Curtin workers or students from overseas are required to be supplied upon request. Please be aware that some additional vaccinations may be required as the Australian immunisation schedule may differ from your country of origin.

## 6. Curtin's Workers Programs

Curtin workers are required to comply with the vaccination requirements that exist for work within their schools or departments. Those workers completing work at Department of Health WA facilities are required to comply with relevant [policy frameworks](#) in relation to immunisation and vaccination, blood borne viruses, exposure to blood and body fluids and tuberculosis. Curtin workers should ensure that they are aware of the detail of these documents prior to accepting work within these facilities.

Additionally, Curtin offers annual influenza vaccinations and COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters for all Curtin workers each year through the Curtin Health Service, in line with the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#) recommendations. Workers are encouraged to take advantage of this service to protect themselves against the more common forms of influenza and COVID-19.

### 6.1 Workers Vaccine Costs – Pre-Employment

All costs associated with pre-employment vaccinations, boosters or serological testing are the responsibility of the potential worker.

### 6.2 Workers Vaccine Costs – Ongoing Position Requirement

Where there is an identified biological hazard in the work area, it is a requirement that workers maintain relevant vaccinations, boosters or provide results of serological testing to their Manager/Supervisor as per the recommendations in the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#). Workers are encouraged to use the Curtin Health Service for all vaccinations, booster doses or serological testing and are required to supply evidence of any residual costs to their Manager/Supervisor as these become the responsibility of the department or area.

Where a new kind of work is planned in a department or area and there is an identified risk of exposure to VPD's, it is the responsibility of the area to pay for any residual costs for ongoing workers vaccinations, boosters or serological testing and for the records of this testing or vaccination to be stored in the workers personnel files.

### 6.3 Workers' Refusal to Vaccinate

Where potential exposure to VPDs is an inherent requirement of the position and is expected within a specific role, the University has the choice to not employ an individual who is not vaccinated or may direct the person to be vaccinated.

Where a worker is required to be vaccinated against a specific VPD and they refuse to do so, or cannot be vaccinated for medical/religious reasons, or do not become immune after vaccination, then the steps as per sections 5 are to be taken. It is the responsibility of the worker to lodge their objection to vaccination in writing with their Manager/Supervisor.

Based on the area risk assessment, workers identified as requiring vaccinations and who refuse to do so must take responsibility for their decision including the increased risk to those that they work with. This decision should be documented within their personnel file. These workers must accept that their actions may restrict the work that they will be approved to undertake.

## **7. Student Programs**

Certain courses at Curtin require students to be screened for and/or immunised against VPD's due to the nature of the study program. Schools/departments expect all domestic and international students requiring immunisation as a course requirement to have completed all screening and immunisations as soon as practicable or as directed by the individual course immunisation schedule including records kept for all vaccinations.

Additionally, those students completing fieldwork or clinical practicums at Department of Health WA facilities are required to comply with relevant policy frameworks in relation to immunisation and vaccination, blood borne viruses exposure to blood and body fluids and tuberculosis. Students should ensure that they are aware of the detail of these documents prior to accepting placements.

Those not up to date or unable to provide proof of appropriate immunity will not be permitted to undertake related units of study, practical placements, research associated with their study or to progress through individual programs. This may have unsatisfactory professional behaviour and academic progress implications. Please refer to your faculty and individual course webpages, course handbooks and section 3.3.7 of the Australian Immunisation Handbook for more information.

### **7.1 Exposure Prone Procedures (EPP'S)**

All costs associated with pre-employment vaccinations, boosters or serological testing are the responsibility of the potential worker.

### **7.2 Student Vaccine Costs**

All costs associated with pre-employment vaccinations, boosters or serological testing are the responsibility of the potential worker.

### **7.3 Student Refusal to Vaccinate**

All costs associated with pre-employment vaccinations, boosters or serological testing are the responsibility of the potential workers.

## 7.4 Student Records

All costs associated with pre-employment vaccinations, boosters or serological testing are the responsibility of the potential worker.

## 8. Travel, Fieldwork and Clinical Requirements (Workers and Students)

When travelling on Curtin business, vaccinations are important to ensure you are immunised against infectious diseases prevalent in the destination. Failure to vaccinate may also result in potential quarantine when you return to Australia, or other potential consequences such as the inability to practice in certain fields of study, including health sciences.

All students and workers undertaking travel and/or fieldwork activities associated with a Curtin course, business or research activity, whether in Australia or at an overseas location, are required to comply with health and immunisation legislative and travel requirements in accordance with the University's [Fieldwork Procedures](#) and [Travel Procedures](#), and as advised by [International SOS](#).

All workers and students must ensure they follow vaccination recommendations as advised by International SOS. To find this information:

- Download the International SOS App from the App store or google play
- Log-in using the International SOS Membership number
- Click on the custom location reports tab and insert your travel destination
- You may need to consider other vaccinations on the site, based on your personal circumstances and your doctor's advice.

Vaccinations need to be considered at least five to six weeks ahead of travel, as you need to allow adequate time to receive the vaccinations and develop immunity, prior to confirming any fieldwork placement or booking travel.

If you are unable to comply with these guideline requirements due to medical or other reasons, please speak with your Fieldwork Coordinator prior to commencement of your fieldwork or travel. All fieldwork activities need to be risk assessed as per Curtin's [Fieldwork Policy](#) and [Fieldwork Procedures](#).

## 9. Vaccination and Serological Testing Services

The Curtin Health Service and other medical centres provide vaccination and serological testing services for Curtin workers and students. The costs associated with these services vary, so workers and students should request these costs prior to presenting for vaccination or serological testing.

## 10. Contractor and Visitor Programs

Where specific vaccinations are required for contractors or visitors prior to entry into specific buildings, the requirements will be clearly outlined to contractors or visitors in contract documentation. It is the responsibility of individual contractors or visitors to ensure that they are vaccinated against the VPD's that they may encounter while working at or visiting Curtin University locations.

Where required for licensing purposes evidence of vaccination must be provided to the Building Manager prior to entry into specific buildings. Refer to your Curtin Responsible Officer for more information.

## 11. Post Exposure Protocols

If a non-immune person is exposed to a VPD, the person should refer to their Manager/Supervisor and seek a medical opinion urgently, as a post-exposure prophylaxis may be able to be administered.

## EXEMPTIONS

Nil

## RELEVANT DOCUMENTS/LINKS

[Australian Immunisation Handbook](#)

[Australian national guidelines for the management of health care workers known to be infected with blood borne viruses](#)

[Border Protection – Passenger Card](#)

[Centre for Disease Control](#)

[Disability Services](#)

[Fieldwork Policy](#)

[Healthy WA](#)

[International SOS](#)

[National Blood Authority PBM Guidelines](#)

[National Code of Practice – control of work related exposure to hepatitis and HIV viruses](#)

[Work Health and Safety Act 2020](#)

[People and Culture](#)

[Privacy Statement](#)

[Risk Assessment](#)

[Smart Traveller](#)

[World Health Organisation](#)

## CONTACT DETAILS

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|--------------------|---|
| Contact            | Health and Safety<br>Ph: (08) 9266 4900<br><a href="mailto:healthandsafety@curtin.edu.au">healthandsafety@curtin.edu.au</a> |
| Approval Authority | Director, Health and Safety   |