

Covid-19 vaccination

Policy

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Version	Active from	Author	Changes made
1.1	10 December 2021	Operational Policy	Eligibility expanded to include children from 5 years of age

Acronyms	Full form
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CYJO	Community Youth Justice Officer
GP	General Practitioner
PHCP	Primary Health Care Provider
SATS	Specialist Assessment and Treatment Services
SBA	Supported Bail Accommodation
YJO	Youth Justice Officer
YOREO	Youth Outreach and Re-Engagement Officer

1. Policy Purpose

Children and young people who are in the care of the CEO, in youth detention, or supported bail accommodation are to be informed of their eligibility to receive a COVID-19 vaccination and supported to attend a vaccination appointment at the earliest opportunity.

2. Policy Statement

All children and young people in the Northern Territory from 5 years of age are eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination. Practitioners, SATS Case Coordinators, YJOs and YOREOs are to provide information about the desirability, safety and efficacy of the vaccination to the children and young people, family and carers they are working with, promote participation in the vaccination program, and obtain consents if needed

Children, young people and their carers may be assisted to make a vaccination appointment online at <https://covid19appointment.nt.gov.au/#/appointment>, or with their Aboriginal Health service, General Practice, Community clinic, or pharmacy. Refer to resources at <https://health.gov.au>.

Very young children may be fearful of an injection. It is important to consult with the health provider when arranging the appointment for advice on how best to support a young child to reduce potential anxiety.

A young person over 12 years of age must be willing to attend the appointment. If initially unwilling to be vaccinated they are to be strongly encouraged and supported to understand the benefits and safety of the vaccination, and to participate in the program.

2.1. Consent

Young people aged 16 years and over can consent to receive the vaccine by signing the consent form when attending the vaccination appointment.

Consent to receive the vaccine may be provided by the child's carer for children aged 5 to 15 years who are subject to order giving parental responsibility to the CEO alone. The carer must attend the vaccination appointment with the child.

Consent for children aged 5 to 15 years who are not in the care of the CEO, or who are subject to a protection order granting parental responsibility to a third party (alone or shared), will require the consent of their parent or guardian, or the person who has been granted parental responsibility.

The consent of a parent or guardian is required for any young person, regardless of age, who does not have the capacity to provide their own consent.

- **Children and young people under a Protection Order giving parental responsibility to the CEO alone**
If the child or young person is under 16 years the carer must sign the consent form provided and, unless the vaccination is part of the School Vaccine Program, attend the appointment.
- **Young people in youth detention.** SATS or YJOs are responsible for obtaining the informed consent of the young person's parent or guardian for young people under 16 if they are not in the care of the CEO. The vaccination will be given by the centre's Primary Health Care Provider.
- **Young people living in Supported Bail Accommodation** – CYJOs are to obtain the informed consent of the young person's parent or guardian for young people under 16 if not in the care of the CEO. The SBA Manager will arrange for young person to book a vaccination and attend the appointment.
- **School vaccination program.** When a child is vaccinated through the school vaccination program no adult is required to attend, however a signed consent will still be needed.

2.2. Recording

Vaccination records are maintained by the Commonwealth Department of Health and are available through the MyGov Medicare portal. The young person may be assisted to download a digital vaccination certificate to their mobile phone. A PDF of the vaccination record may also be stored in their InReach file.