

<b>BANKSIA VILLAGES LIMITED</b>	
<b>Document Title:</b>	Vaccination Position Statement
<b>Department:</b>	Corporate
<b>Delegated Manager:</b>	Chief Executive Officer
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## **1. Introduction**

During the COVID-19 pandemic governments around the world took steps to protect their citizens, particularly vulnerable people, from COVID-19. This included the development and circulation of COVID-19 vaccinations through the population. With the rollout of the vaccination program, government mandated COVID-19 vaccination across a number of professions and sectors, including aged care, in recognition of the communal responsibility to protect vulnerable persons and to ensure safe workplaces. As the world emerges from the pandemic, controls are being eased, including rescinding public health orders that provided the mechanism for mandating COVID-19 vaccination. In recognition of this changing landscape, Banksia Villages (Banksia) has removed the requirement for mandatory vaccination across its workforce, visitor and supplier stakeholders. Whilst this changed policy position enables greater choice for stakeholders, Banksia supports the National Immunisation Program and maintains a strong pro-vaccination position. Banksia encourages all residents, clients, employees, visitors and suppliers to embrace vaccinations as part of a general commitment to protect their own health and the health of others.

## **2. Vaccination Efficacy**

Immunisation is a safe and practical public health program which protects the population against the spread and extreme consequences of a range of diseases. Banksia has confidence in the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) who are charged with ensuring safety, quality and guidance in the provision of vaccinations to the population. Banksia recognises the vulnerable nature of its clients and residents and therefore supports vaccination programs across all of its operations and services. Banksia recognises that some stakeholders may be concerned by potential reaction and adverse outcomes to vaccinations and/or may object for religious or conscientious objector reasons. Banksia encourages stakeholders that have concerns or objections to vaccinations to speak with their trusted health professional to objectively explore the risks and benefits of vaccination.

## **3. Work Health and Safety**

Banksia recognises that employers must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of employees and others (residents, clients, visitors and suppliers) and take steps to minimise or eliminate risks in the workplace. Additionally, Banksia employees have a responsibility to ensure that they take reasonable steps to protect their own health and safety and the health and safety of others. Accordingly, Banksia and its employees have a mutual obligation to take reasonable steps to protect all stakeholders. Vaccination is endorsed by

Banksia as a practicable and effective program for minimising risk in the workplace, including resident's and client's homes and Banksia's onsite facilities.

#### **4. Professional Practice**

The New South Wales Nurses and Midwives Association (NMBA) observe that registered nurses, enrolled nurses and midwives that promote anti-vaccination statements which contradicts the best available scientific evidence are in breach of their professional obligations. Banksia recognises this requirement and extends this obligation to all employees, directors and office holders. In this regard, no Banksia employee, director or office holder may promote an anti-vaccination position and may be subject to disciplinary action under Banksia's policies and/or professional breach of practice proceedings where such breach occurs.

#### **5. Disclosure**

Banksia does not require residents, clients, employees, prospective employees, visitors or suppliers to disclose their vaccination status unless required by law or where Banksia has an obligation to report to government or other authorised agencies.

#### **6. Further Information**

Further information in relation to Banksia's position is available by contacting:

Chief Executive Officer

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Further reading and resources:

1. WH & S legislation: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2018C00293>
2. World Health Organisation (2019). Immunization coverage fact sheet. See <https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/immunization-coverage>
3. World Health Organisation (2013). Global vaccine action plan 2011-2020. See [https://www.who.int/immunization/global\\_vaccine\\_action\\_plan/GVAP\\_doc\\_2011\\_2020/en/](https://www.who.int/immunization/global_vaccine_action_plan/GVAP_doc_2011_2020/en/)
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2016). CDC's strategic framework for global immunization 2016-2020. See <https://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/immunization/docs/global-immunization-framework-508.pdf>
5. Australia. Department of Health (2019). Immunisation. See <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation>
6. Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (2016). Position statement on nurses, midwives and vaccination. See <https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines-Statements/Position-Statements/vaccination.aspx>
7. Australia. Department of Health (2018). Immunisation handbook. See <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/>