



24 November 2021



Ref: OIA-2021/22-0346

Dear 

Official Information Act request relating to vaccine documentation for domestic use

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request that was transferred to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet on 28 September 2021. You requested:

At the lunchtime press conference today (10 September 2021) [The Minister of Finance] was asked about the government's stance on 'vaccine passports' being used domestically, i.e. not for international travel but to access venues within New Zealand.

[The Minister] responded that there is a 'conversation underway' about this issue.

In relation solely to the information you hold, please provide details of:

- (a) who, to your knowledge, within government is involved in this 'conversation';*
- (b) when, to your knowledge, this 'conversation' began;*
- (c) when, to your knowledge, you think Cabinet will be making a decision on this issue; and*
- (d) which, to your knowledge, non-government organisations or people are involved in this 'conversation'.*

The time frame for responding to your request was extended under section 15A of the Act by 20 working days because it necessitated consultations to be undertaken before a decision could be made on the request. Following this extension, I am now in a position to respond.

Question (a)

A number of agencies were involved in drafting policy around the domestic use of COVID-19 vaccination certificates (CVCs). The key agencies involved were the:

- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC);
- Ministry of Health;
- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE); and
- Crown Law Office.

Question (b)

Ministers commissioned DPMC to start drafting policy around CVCs for domestic use in July 2021.

Question (c)

Cabinet has made the following decisions relating to domestic use of CVCs:

- on 5 July 2021, Cabinet agreed the Minister for COVID-19 Response would report back on progress towards development and operationalisation of vaccine certificates;
- on 27 September 2021, Cabinet first considered the use of CVCs as part of the decision to develop a new strategy for a highly vaccinated New Zealand;
- on 4 October 2021, Cabinet agreed to introduce CVCs at specific domestic settings and directed officials to develop further details;
- on 18 October 2021, Cabinet confirmed the new overarching COVID-19 Protection Framework (the Framework), including the use of CVCs; and
- on 26 October 2021, Cabinet confirmed further details on the use of CVCs under the Framework.

The Unite against COVID-19 website has an overview of when vaccine certificates will be required under each step of the Framework. You can find this information at the following link: covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/covid-19-protection.

Question (d)

DPMC and the Ministry of Health (supported by other government departments) undertook consultation with iwi, and community and business stakeholders on the domestic use of CVCs. This consultation was supported by other agencies such as the Ministry of Social Development, Te Arawhiti: Office for Māori Crown Relations, and MBIE.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on DPMC's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



Cheryl Barnes
**Deputy Chief Executive
COVID-19 Group**