



26 May 2025



Ref: OIA-2024/25-0860

Dear

Official Information Act request relating to vaccine mandates

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 2 May 2025. You requested:

Please advise under the OIA

1) How many positions in your organisation (and the former DHBs) were affected by vaccine mandates in 2021?

Of these, a) how many were Ministerial mandates and b) how many were imposed by your organisation

2) How many mandated staff:

a) were hesitant to get vaccinated and/or required more than one request?

b) resigned and

c) were given termination letters

3) How many notices of personal grievance for a) unjustified disadvantage and/or b) unjustified dismissal were received within your organisation (and for each DHB) as a result of vaccine mandates?

4) How many employment claims arising from mandates

a) have been settled with compensation

b) have been settled without compensation

c) are still to be resolved

5) of claims that have been settled how many:

a) resulted in reinstatement?

b) resulted in payment for stress, humiliation etc

c) resulting in compensation

d) resulted in payment of legal fees

For each of a) to d) what was the total sum paid and the maximum paid?

6) if any position in your organisation (or any DHB) were considered for vaccine mandates, please provide copies of all correspondence explaining the reasons for and against vaccine mandates and any relevant decisions as to what if any mandates would be imposed.

Please include information about and assessment undertaken of human rights impacts, effects on workforce numbers and ability to fulfil duties, effects on staff morale, anticipated financial costs of mandates including from personal grievances and new recruitment and staff training

7) please include any review of the effects of vaccine mandates including actual costs and benefits of predicted/budgeted costs and information about the source of funds to pay these costs.

I note you also sent your request directly to the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, WorkSafe, Accident Compensation Corporation and the Department of Internal Affairs. This response covers information that relates to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) only. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is a departmental agency hosted by DPMC therefore, this response includes NEMA.

We have understood your request to be for information as it relates to the COVID-19 vaccination rolled out in New Zealand, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. DPMC was not covered by government imposed occupational mandates during the COVID-19 response. Accordingly, your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information requested does not exist.

As explained in our response to your OIA request reference OIA-2023/24-0233, all DPMC staff were strongly encouraged to receive all recommended COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters. This included all people who worked at DPMC, including permanent, fixed term, seconded, casual and agency temporary staff and self-employed. The staff policy at DPMC, was in line with the COVID-19 mandates in operation in New Zealand at the time which means that our policy changed as the national settings changed. Copies of our policies dated December 2021 and May 2022 were enclosed with our response to your OIA request reference OIA-2023/24-0233. Our policy was formed, based on the nature of the environment that DPMC staff were working in, and in line with the mandate guidance set out by the Government of the day for workplaces. In April 2022, over 99% of people who worked at DPMC in some capacity as identified above, were reported to be vaccinated.

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 the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet'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



Clare Ward
Executive Director
Strategy, Governance and Engagement