**Covid-19 Vaccination Policy**

***NOTES ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT***

*This template Covid-19 Vaccination Policy is intended for use by companies that wish to encourage their employees to get vaccinated against Covid-19 and/or ask employees about their vaccination status. It does not deal with mandatory vaccination.*

*Companies will need to tailor the wording of the policy to ensure that is appropriate for their organisation and consistent with any other policies/rules that they may have introduced in the context of the pandemic.*

*See our regularly updated* [*Covid-19 FAQs*](https://www.makeuk.org/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-faqs/issues-for-employers-following-the-lifting-of-covid-19-restrictions-on-19-july-2021) *for discussion of employment and data protection law issues relating to Covid-19 vaccinations.*

*(This template policy is based on the law and guidance applicable as at 18 January 2022. It is not intended as legal advice and should not be relied upon as such.)*

In accordance with our duties under health and safety law, the company takes all reasonably practicable steps to ensure a safe working environment. This includes implementing measures to reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19 in the workplace [as described in *insert details of any Covid-19 safety policy/procedures*].This vaccination policy forms part of our overall approach to Covid-safety in the workplace, although it is not intended as a substitute for other health and safety measures.

**Purpose and status of this Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to provide information about the company’s stance on Covid-19 vaccination and to encourage our workforce to get vaccinated.

[This policy has been [agreed / implemented following consultation] with [*name of trade union, works council or staff forum*].]

This policy does not give contractual rights to any individual.

This policy covers all of the company’s employees [*tailor as appropriate:* and officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, interns, casual workers and agency workers].

**Information about Covid-19 vaccinations**

Vaccinations against Covid-19 are provided free of charge by the NHS. They are available at vaccination centres, either by appointment or, in some cases, on a walk-in basis.

We cannot provide medical or scientific advice on the vaccine. Information about the available vaccinations, including their effectiveness and safety, is available on the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/>.

We encourage all employees to find out about Covid-19 vaccinations using official sources such as this and to be wary of misinformation that may be published by unreliable sources, especially online.

**Encouraging vaccination**

Official public health advice confirms that getting vaccinated against Covid-19 is a key way to help prevent infection with and onward transmission of Covid-19. It is also important in reducing the risk of severe disease, hospitalisation and death.

We therefore strongly encourage all staff to get vaccinated against Covid-19. This includes first, second and booster doses of the vaccine where applicable.

However, we understand that it is each individual’s personal choice whether or not to take the vaccine.

We also recognise that vaccination may not be suitable for some individuals for medical reasons, e.g. if they have severe allergies to all currently available vaccines, or if they have had a serious adverse reaction to their first dose (such as myocarditis).

**Time off for vaccination**

We allow employees to take reasonable [paid/unpaid] time off to attend vaccination appointments during their working hours. [Pay will be at employees’ normal rate, up to [*number*] hours [per appointment].]

Employees should seek their line manager’s approval before taking time off to attend a vaccination appointment, giving as much notice as possible. Line managers may, at their discretion, ask employees to produce evidence of their appointment (for example a booking confirmation email or text message).

**Vaccine-related sickness absence**

Any employee who is unable to work due to any side effects from the Covid-19 vaccine should take sickness absence, reporting their illness in the usual way in accordance with the company’s sickness absence policy.

Employees who are absent due to vaccine side effects will be paid [*EITHER:* at their normal rate of payfor up to [*number*] days’ absence, after which they will receive SSP if eligible] [*OR:* at their normal rate of pay for up to [*number*] days’ absence without using up their entitlement to company sick pay. Further absence will be paid at the applicable rate of company sick pay, or SSP if the employee has no remaining company sick pay entitlement].

We will not count vaccine-related sickness absence towards employees’ absence levels for the purposes of triggering a review meeting under the company’s attendance management procedure.

**Rules dependent on vaccination status**

Employees should be aware that current Government rules on self-isolation requirements for contacts of someone who has tested positive and quarantine following overseas travel differ depending on an individual’s vaccination status. For details of the applicable rules, see the gov.uk website. The company requires all employees to comply with the relevant self-isolation and quarantine rules as applicable based on their vaccination status. Attending the workplace in breach of any requirement to self-isolate may lead to disciplinary action (including potential dismissal) under the company’s disciplinary policy.

[***NOTE:*** *If you have any company rules that are dependent on vaccination status, insert details here, e.g. if you have removed company sick pay entitlement where an employee has to self-isolate as a contact, or if you require post-travel quarantine to be covered by annual leave or unpaid leave. (See our* [*Covid-19 FAQs*](https://www.makeuk.org/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-faqs/issues-for-employers-following-the-lifting-of-covid-19-restrictions-on-19-july-2021) *for discussion of these issues. We recommend that you take advice before introducing measures such as these.)*]

**Proof of vaccination**

We ask all employees to notify [HR] of their Covid-19 vaccination status. We need this information as it helps us to ensure employees’ health and safety in the workplace, identify which employees are required to self-isolate as contacts in the event of a Covid-19 outbreak at work or to quarantine on return from international travel, manage sickness absence and provide workplace adjustments if necessary.

We will keep details of employees’ vaccination status confidential and will only share them with those who need to know.

We will process employees’ vaccination status information in accordance with our Employee Privacy Notice, a copy of which is available [on the intranet / from HR].

[[HR] may ask to see a copy of employees’ Covid-19 vaccination records on the NHS App as proof of vaccination. They will not take a copy, but will simply note that they have seen it.]

[If an employee does not share their Covid-19 vaccination status with us, for the purposes of our health and safety risk assessment and compliance with self-isolation and travel quarantine rules, we will have to proceed on the assumption that the employee is unvaccinated.]

**Respect for colleagues**

All employees have a duty to treat their colleagues with respect and sensitivity, even if they hold differing views on the issue of Covid-19 vaccinations.

Employees must not act in a way that could amount to bullying or harassment because of a colleague’s views on vaccination, or their vaccination status. Doing so may lead to disciplinary action (including potential dismissal) under the company’s disciplinary policy.

Employees can raise any concerns either informally with [their line manager / HR] or via the company’s formal grievance procedure.

**Amendments to this policy**

We reserve the right to amend this policy at any time at our sole discretion to adapt to evolving circumstances and business needs and to reflect any changes in Government and public health guidance. We will notify employees in writing of any changes to this policy.