

# MY VACCINE PASS

## A GUIDE FOR CHURCHES

### MY VACCINE PASS – GENERAL

#### WHAT IS 'MY VACCINE PASS'?

My Vaccine Pass is an official record of your COVID-19 vaccination, or exemption, status for use within Aotearoa New Zealand.

- A purple vaccination card or vaccination confirmation letter cannot be used as proof of vaccination status.
- A negative test result is not a substitute for My Vaccine Pass.

#### WHAT ABOUT PEOPLE WITH AN EXEMPTION?

If a person has an official vaccine exemption, they will be issued with a My Vaccine Pass. This pass is no different from any other My Vaccine Pass and allows the person to be admitted to a gathering where My Vaccine Passes are being required.

#### WHEN DO WE NEED TO USE THEM?

When holding gatherings or events the restrictions in place are different depending on whether or not My Vaccine Pass is used. If the pass is used, all people (*except children under the age of 12 years and 3 months – see below*) attending will have to show their pass in order to be admitted.

### GETTING MY VACCINE PASS

#### HOW DO PEOPLE GET A PASS?

Information on getting a My Vaccine Pass can be found on the official COVID website:

[COVID-19 WEBSITE - MY VACCINE PASS](https://mycovidrecord.health.nz/)

There are three ways to get a My Vaccine Pass:

- 1) ONLINE by visiting <https://mycovidrecord.health.nz/>
- 2) OVER THE PHONE by calling **0800 222 478**
- 3) IN PERSON by going to a pharmacy that offers vaccinations.

#### WHAT IF PEOPLE NEED HELP?

Anyone who has a query about My Vaccine Pass, or who is having trouble accessing one, can call **0800 222 478** between 8am and 8pm, 7 days a week.

#### WHAT FORM CAN THE PASS TAKE?

People can print the pass off or keep it on a digital device, such as a smart phone or even a smart watch. Different devices store the passes differently, though most store them in a digital 'wallet' for easy access when needed.

## CHECKING PASSES

### WHEN DO WE NEED TO CHECK PASSES?

If a gathering or event is designated as using My Vaccine Pass (this will be the majority of services, especially at Red), every person entering the church or venue will need to have their My Vaccine Pass checked.

This will need to be done every time someone comes to a gathering or event as the pass does expire. People should avoid thinking 'I know this person, I know they are vaccinated, I won't worry about asking them.' People will quickly get used to providing these passes in a variety of locations.

### DO WE NEED TO SCAN THE PASS USING THE APP?

Churches operating with My Vaccine Passes are required to check people's My Vaccine Pass at or shortly after entry. This can be done by;

- sighting the person's Vaccine Pass, or
- scanning the NZ Vaccine Pass QR code with a verifier app.

The only way to confirm the authenticity of a My Vaccine Pass, however, is by using the Verifier app. This will give greater assurance that only vaccinated people (or those who are exempt) are gathering.

### HOW DOES THE VERIFIER APP WORK?

The Ministry of Health has a free Verifier app that can be used to scan the official QR code that is embedded into a person's My Vaccine Pass. It is called **NZ Pass Verifier** and is available on the App Store and Google Play. Click the images below from your device, or search 'NZ Pass Verifier' in your app or play store.



The Verifier app can be downloaded onto a smart phone or tablet. There is no cost and no registration process. Anyone can download it.

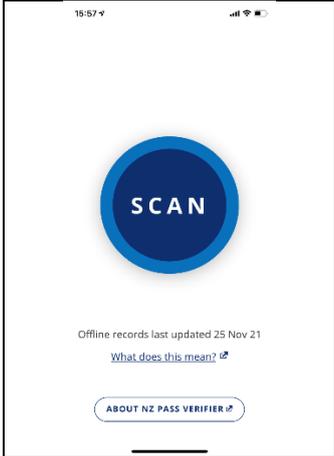
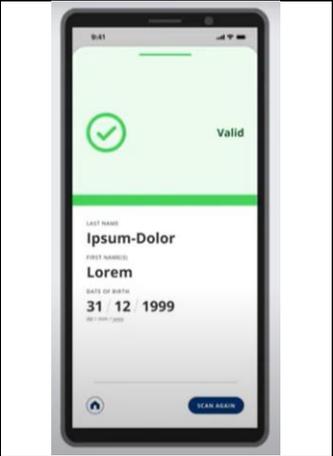
The Verifier app will not store personal data or show any information other than the person's name and date of birth. This information disappears (and cannot be retrieved) once you move on to the next person. No attempt should be made to store/record this information via any other means.

### WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN?

People under the age of 12 years and 3 months can be admitted without a My Vaccine Pass, even if the place of worship is operating under My Vaccine Pass rules.

Places of worship are expected to exercise judgement in identifying those under 12 years and 3 months, who are not required to have a Vaccine Pass. This might include asking the child their age, year at school, or student ID if they have it, for example.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

<p><b>Step 1. Open the app and press the ‘SCAN’ button.</b> <i>The first time you do this you will need to give permission to access your camera.</i></p>	<p><b>Step 2. Hold the device over the QR code on the person’s My Vaccine Pass.</b></p>	<p><b>Step 3. The app will recognise the QR code and bring up a screen with a green tick.</b></p>	<p><b>Step 4. Click ‘Scan Again’ at the bottom of the page to repeat with the next person.</b></p>
			

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

More information is available on the Ministry of Health website:

[MINISTRY OF HEALTH WEBSITE - VERIFIER APP](#)

## WHAT ABOUT ID?

Attendees are responsible for presenting their own My Vaccine Pass. Places of worship are not required to check ID, but they may request it. This would happen in cases where the pass presented may clearly not belong to the person presenting the Pass.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DON’T GET A GREEN TICK?

At the time of writing, the Ministry of Health hasn’t said anything about this. It could be assumed, however, that eventually a person’s My Vaccine Pass will expire – and so when you scan it, the Verifier app is likely to tell you. In this event, the person does not have a valid My Vaccine Pass and cannot enter the premises.

## MANAGING CONFLICT

We know that the tensions emerging around vaccine mandates and the My Vaccine Pass are creating lines of division within families, faith communities, friendship circles and places of work. These tensions call for restraint and discipline. While we can disagree with those who have a different view to our own, the Gospel dictates we continue to show care, love and respect even while we experience the real-world consequences of the different decisions people make around getting vaccinated.

Our publicity and signage should be very clear what the conditions of entry for any particular service or area are, and we expect people to have made their attendance choices on this basis. However, there may be some circumstances where it will be important for people on the door to have considered how they might respond.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF SOMEONE REFUSES TO SHOW THEIR PASS?**

These requirements are set out by government and must be followed. If a church has decided to have a gathering or event where the My Vaccine Pass is required, then the rules associated with that must be followed. If a person does not have a valid My Vaccine Pass they should not enter the premises.

### **HOW MIGHT WE MANAGE THIS?**

It may be that, alongside other duties and responsibilities, the role of checking My Vaccine Passes is too much for the regular sidespeople. Especially in the early days, we advise that a Warden or member of the Governing Body be present to manage the viewing or scanning of My Vaccine Passes.

Places of worship are encouraged to talk with workers and volunteers about how they will handle difficult questions situations. This includes making it clear to workers/volunteers when not to continue to request the pass, how to turn someone away and when to seek help from other workers/volunteers or call the Police. *See below for some suggested phrases.*

### **HOW FAR DO WE PUSH THIS?**

It is important to note that workers/volunteers should never touch, restrain or physically prevent a person from entering. If a person, having refused to provide a My Vaccine Pass, makes their way in, the appropriate course of action is to let them pass and to call the Police.

### **OK – WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS WE MIGHT SAY?**

Here are some scenarios and words, with thanks to our mates in the Diocese of Waiapu who shared some of the work they did:

*As someone approaches...*

It's good to see you today. Please scan in with the Covid Tracer app (or sign in).

I also need to see/scan your "My Vaccine Pass". Thanks!

*If someone is concerned about their details being stored...*

It's OK. The verifier app doesn't store personal details or show any information other than your name and date of birth. We can't keep a record of these.

*If someone tries to show a vaccine exemption...*

Please show or scan in your "My Vaccine Pass". If you have an exemption, that will show up as OK on the scanner.

*If someone tries to show a purple vaccination card or vaccine confirmation letter...*

We need you to show your My Vaccine Pass – that's the way we can be sure that only vaccinated or exempt people are gathering here.

*If people are unsure how to get a My Vaccine Pass...*

You can get your My Vaccine Pass online, by phone or by visiting any pharmacy that is offering the COVID-19 vaccination. *[you can also provide the details on page 1 of this guide]*

*If someone is young...*

If you're under 12 years and 3 months, you can come in without a My Vaccine Pass.

*If necessary, or if you are unsure of their age...*

How old are you? / what year are you in at school?

*If someone doesn't want to / refuses to show or allow you to scan their My Vaccine Pass...*

We need this so we can be sure that only vaccinated or exempt people are gathering here. That's so that we can keep people safe and minimise the risk of anyone getting infected with Covid. For this service, we are required by law to see your My Vaccine Pass.

We are committed to caring for everyone, and especially for those who are most vulnerable. Requiring vaccine passes is so that we can keep people safe. This isn't just this church: it applies to all places of gathering and follows the best health advice.

*If someone is clear they are not vaccinated and not exempt and insists it's their right to worship...*

We want everyone to be able to worship safely. You can join this gathering by showing or scanning your My Vaccine Pass. If you can't do that, there are some other ways to worship. *[then offer options that are applicable]*

- You can join our online worship. Here are the details.
- We are running another, smaller, service which people can enter without showing a Vaccine Pass. Here are the details.
- There is another, smaller, service in \_\_\_\_\_ [adjoining ministry unit or separate worship centre] which people can enter without showing a Vaccine Pass. Here are the details.

*If someone gets angry...*

I can see you're angry/upset. Please understand we are doing this because we care about people being able to worship safely, especially those who are most vulnerable.

And it's because we care that we are providing other ways for you to worship. Here are ways to do that. *[repeat details]*

*If someone continues to be angry – don't take up time continuing the conversation*

If you would like to talk to someone about this, I'd happy to get them [Minister in Charge / Warden / Priest etc] to do this later. Would you like to leave me your details to pass on? *[Clear this with that person first.]*

*If someone is still angry*

I can see you are still angry / upset. I can't change our rules, and you aren't able to come to this service without showing your My Vaccine Pass. Here are details of our other ways to worship. Please take them home now and decide which one of those you will use instead.

*And, ultimately...*

I need to ask you to leave now.

*When to seek help from other workers/volunteers...*

Do this if you feel out of your depth, or that the situation is getting out of control. Work as a team and support one another. Sometimes another team member repeating the same message can help. As mentioned above, it may be helpful to have a Warden or member of the Governing Body there to specifically support this work.

*When to call police...*

If you feel in danger, are at risk of imminent physical attack, or if a person forces their way in. Ideally, seek help from a colleague before things escalate to that stage.

**WHAT OTHER RESOURCES ARE THERE TO SUPPORT US?**

The Ministry of Health have put together some resources to support people who find themselves in these difficult situations. These are attached to this guide.

Besides that, cluster and regional meetings will be discussing these issues and Archdeacons are a good first point of contact for support in setting up the right processes.

## Ministry of Health resources – ‘Keeping Calm and Safe’

### Tips for de-escalation

People may become agitated or upset for a wide range of reasons.

When people feel uncertain, confused or unheard they can become distressed, anxious or angry and can present challenging behaviours.

Planning ahead for how to respond when this occurs, can help us to stay calm and able to cope with challenges when they arise.

#### Check your safety space

- Respect personal space: 2-3 metres away. If someone becomes agitated, aim for 3-4 metres
- Know where your exits are and/or retreat options
- Know what the escalation plan is for your team

#### Use your eyes and ears

- Sometimes even before a person speaks, their facial expression or the way they are walking or standing will give you a hint as to how a person is feeling
- When a person is agitated, they will often speak more quickly or with a louder voice. This can be a clue that a person is upset
- If you see someone becoming agitated, check whether it might reflect a communication challenge or indicate a support need (e.g. vision, hearing, neuro-diversity)
- For some, agitation may reflect a negative experience with the health system in the past

#### Be calm and welcoming

- Introduce yourself, smile and make eye contact to establish rapport, take your time, the person may be very nervous and your compassion will help
- Be respectful: give the person your full attention and listen carefully to what they say
- Use please and thank you when making requests (rather than issuing commands or demands)

#### Communicate your desire to help

- Aim to understand their concerns: ask open questions and check with them to ensure you have understood
- Listen for the underlying needs in their message: tone of voice, emphasis and body language can be clues as to what is important to them
- Speak slowly and allow time for the person to think about options and responses
- Be empathic and non-judgemental in your words and your actions

#### Set boundaries

If a person raises their voice, makes threats, or is uncivil in words or behaviours:

- Be calm
- State the unwanted behaviour
- State the behaviour you want to see, in order to be able to help them
- If the behaviour persists, end the communication
- IF YOU FEEL UNSAFE REMOVE YOURSELF AND SEEK HELP

#### Talk to someone

- Find time to talk with someone (a colleague or your leader) afterwards

You can expect to feel the effects of adrenalin in the period after the event.

## Talking with people who are angry or upset about a vaccination order

You are likely to experience colleagues and members of the public venting their frustrations over the vaccination mandate.

This can be difficult and exhausting, and unfortunately is likely to be something we all experience over the coming weeks.

The first thing to reinforce is that it is reasonable and important that you keep yourself safe and well.

The tips below are designed to help you feel a little more confident and able to maintain your own safety and sense of calm when you are on the receiving end of strong emotions.

You may also be interested in *Keeping calm and safe – tips for de-escalation*, which outlines some strategies for setting boundaries around what is acceptable behaviour and self-care if behaviour becomes threatening or aggressive.

### Why are emotions so strong?

People may be feeling a wide range of very strong emotions from angry, upset, anxious to grieving, outraged and fearful. Understanding some of the beliefs that are driving those emotions can be helpful in understanding what will help a distressed person.

The person may have previously decided not to get the vaccination, truly believing that that is the best way to keep themselves their whānau and friends safe.

The vaccination order is therefore in direct opposition to their belief about what is safe and provokes a full scale fear reaction – which is both psychological and a physiological (often described as the flight or fight response).

One of the ways we all try to reduce our fears and anxieties is to increase our sense of control. For those with low trust in authority or ‘the system’, the mandate equates to control being taken from them and given to an actor they do not trust. Again this triggers that strong fear reaction.

Mis-information can play a role for some, in terms of decreasing the perceived threat of COVID and increasing fears around the vaccination safety and/or state intervention.

You won't know the exact reasons for the person to have such strong emotions.

The person may also be isolated by the vaccination stance they have taken. They are likely to have experienced negativity from people around them who are pro-vaccination and are frustrated with their decision not to get vaccinated.

Alternatively, the community they are in, may be strongly sceptical and so getting vaccinated will potentially feel like they are risking those close relationships.

### Respond with respect and empathy:

Even when we disagree with someone's beliefs we can empathise with their distress and with their struggle. By showing that we care and that we empathise, we are likely to diffuse the intense emotion and enable them to be calm enough to move forward with vaccination.

Showing you care and recognise that this has been a difficult decision for them to come to get vaccinated, will support the person to manage their conflicted thoughts and emotions.

Acknowledging the strength of emotion can be helpful “I can see you feel really strongly about this.” Resist the urge to tell someone to “calm down”, as usually the opposite happens.

Notice your own emotions and keep calm. If you start to get wound up, take some slow breaths and maintain a steady voice tone and rate.

Strong emotions can be overwhelming. If the person continues to be highly emotional, focus on de-escalation of the emotions (see *Keeping calm and safe – tips for de-escalation* or *Supporting someone who is anxious* resources).

If the person is able to calm their emotions sufficiently, you can use open questions and active listening to encourage them to share and explore their concerns:

**Ask:** Open questions can help you learn about their beliefs and fears – “Tell me about..” “Help me understand...”

**Listen:** Override the temptation to jump in as soon as they say something you disagree with or think is wrong. Be curious, with a goal to understand what matters to them.

**Reflect:** Active listening helps build trust – reflect back what the person has said and check you have understood “It sounds like you are thinking/wondering/worrying about... have I understood that correctly?”

**Explore:** Often the first response gives you limited insight, ask further exploratory questions to understand the underlying beliefs and assumptions and to start to build a picture of how they have developed these beliefs. “You’ve talked about... I am keen to understand more about that.” “Help me understand, how did you come to the view that.....is true?”

**Feelings Check:** Pause and check-in on how you and they are feeling. Ask them “Is anything I can do that would be helpful for you at this moment?”

### **Talking about the vaccination mandate**

Your role is not to argue the rights or wrongs of the mandate. The mandate is part of your work context in the same way that policies, protocols and regulations determine many aspects of our working lives.

Getting into an argument is unlikely to shift thinking and is likely to raise frustrations for all.

Expressing empathy for the fact that the mandate has created a challenging situation for the person can help to show that you care about them and their concerns.

Your goal is to support them with the distress they are experiencing.

Having a good understanding of the reasons for the mandate can also make you feel more confident in conversation.

The notes below might be helpful for this:

- Vaccinations are part of a wide range of public health actions that we are all taking to help reduce the risk of spread and illness from COVID-19 along with masks, physical distancing, handwashing, and scanning.
- The evidence shows that vaccination is a vital and safe measure for significantly reducing infection and transmission.
- Many of our government laws and regulations are designed to create safety for our community as a whole and to protect the vulnerable in society. Other examples include road safety and water safety laws.
- We have many health and safety regulations determined by Worksafe and our organisations, which we comply with every day, for example fire safety.
- Some people are at higher risk of contracting the virus due to their work place/role AND/OR are more likely to come into contact with vulnerable people or people who cannot be vaccinated.
- As health professionals we take many actions to keep our patients safe, including germ and infection control procedures.
- We need as many workers as possible to be vaccinated to reduce infection across the workforce, to allow our health services to respond to the pandemic and deliver everyday health services with as little disruption as possible.
- The mandate is designed to protect our valued workforce and vulnerable patients/students/members of the community.

For further resources check out: [How to talk to your friends and whānau about the COVID-19 vaccine | Unite against COVID-19 \(covid19.govt.nz\)](#)