

# PROMOTING COVID-19 VACCINE ACCESS FOR STUDENTS AGED 16+

Communications pack

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# Introduction

The Victorian Government is pleased to announce that all students aged 16 years and above in Victoria are eligible to book and receive their COVID-19 vaccine. From 30 August, everyone aged 16 and above can also book through their participating GP or pharmacy.

The Victorian Government is encouraging everyone aged 16 and above to book their vaccine appointment. We want to especially encourage those students in their final year to book their vaccination appointment as soon as possible. Appointments can be made through the Victorian Government's [COVID-19 vaccine online booking system](#).

The Premier has recently announced a call to action for Victoria to achieve one million vaccine doses by September 19. To support this goal, capacity has been significantly scaled up across the state-run system.

To help stakeholders understand and share important information about COVID-19 vaccine eligibility and safety, we have put together this communications toolkit.

This pack provides a range of materials such as social media content, a poster, web banners, newsletter copy and FAQs and other informational resources to help students and parents make informed decisions about their vaccination. It also provides handy links to various Commonwealth and State Government information resources about the vaccination program.

I encourage you to share and distribute these materials among your stakeholder communities to help encourage greater vaccine uptake.

Thank you for your support and efforts.



**The Hon James Merlino MP**  
Deputy Premier  
Minister for Education  
Minister for Mental Health



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# Helpful online resources

The below resources will always include the most accurate and up-to-date information about COVID-19 vaccine eligibility and safety. Reference and use these resources in your communications to school staff about the vaccine.

## Resources

### Information on the vaccine and booking an appointment

Students and parents can book and/or change a vaccination appointment at a vaccination centre through the [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) website or contact the Coronavirus hotline by phoning 1800 675 398. To find a vaccination centre and opening times, visit the [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) website.

From 30 August, people aged 16-39 can get their COVID-19 vaccine at a doctor's clinic, pharmacy or community health service through the [Australian Government Eligibility Checker](#). You can book your appointment online or by calling the vaccine provider nearest to you.

For information about the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, visit [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au)

The logo consists of a blue speech bubble with the text "VOICES FOR VACCINE" inside. The speech bubble is set against a light blue rounded square background.

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# Suggested social media content

Here are some sample social media posts and tiles that can be used across your own social channels to help encourage awareness of COVID-19 vaccine eligibility and uptake. Feel free to edit and personalise these posts to suit your own style.

Please tag @DETVic and use #COVIDVaccine so we can like and share.

## Copy options

All Victorians aged over 16 are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Final year students are encouraged to book their appointments now to support the safe conduct of the examinations. Visit [coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccine](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccine) or [covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au/eligibility](https://covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au/eligibility) to book an appointment.

## Download social media tiles

Option 1

Option 2

The logo consists of a blue speech bubble with a white outline, containing the text "VOICES FOR VACCINE" in white, bold, uppercase letters. The speech bubble is set against a light blue rounded square background.

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# Other downloadable communications products

## Web banner

## Poster

Download and print these posters for display in settings where students and parents have visibility.

The logo consists of a dark orange rounded square containing a white speech bubble. Inside the speech bubble, the words "VOICES FOR VACCINE" are written in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font, stacked in three lines.

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# Suggested newsletter content

Please consider using the draft content below in your organisation's newsletter or preferred communication channel. You can customise the content as required for your style and audiences.

## Message for students

Dear students

As part of the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out, all students aged 16 years and above are now eligible to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

The Victorian Government aims to fully vaccinate all final year students by the time they sit their end-of-year exams and provide at least one dose for children aged 12 and older by the end of the school year. Final year students are therefore urged to immediately make an appointment to receive a vaccine by following the instructions under the heading 'How to book an appointment' below.

All eligible students are encouraged to make an appointment to receive the vaccine at a state vaccination centre as soon as possible.

We are particularly encouraging final year students to make an early appointment as this will support the safe conduct of the VCE examinations late this year. You will be supported in every way possible to be vaccinated before the examinations begin.

All GAT students are encouraged to book in for your first dose before the GAT on 9 September. With limited vaccine supply, there are limited appointments available, you're encouraged to check for appointments in state-run vaccination sites, and at General Practices. However, it is recommended you don't get your first vaccine on the day of an exam, or the day before an exam - to avoid feeling common but mild side effects such as tiredness, headache, muscle pain, fever and chills and/or joint pain during your exam.

Please discuss your vaccination with your parent/guardian or carer and with your teachers to plan your absence and minimise disruption to your learning if your absence is during school hours.

## Consent

Students can book their own appointment and consent to vaccination themselves if the health professional assesses them to be a mature minor.

## How to book an appointment

To book an appointment, visit the [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) website or contact the Coronavirus hotline by phoning 1800 675 398.

To find a vaccination centre and opening times, visit the [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) website.

From 30 August, people aged 16-39 can get their COVID-19 vaccine at a doctor's clinic, pharmacy or community health service through the [Australian Government Eligibility Checker](#). You can book your appointment online or by calling the vaccine provider nearest to you.

## What to bring

Bring these things, if you have them:

- a face mask
- any emails about your vaccination appointment (on your phone or printed)
- photo identification, if you have one, such as a passport or driver's licence
- a Medicare card or [Individual Healthcare Identifier](#) number

Please refer to Department Health information on [what to bring to your vaccine appointment](#) for more information.

More information

For more information about eligibility, visit [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) or use the Australian Government's [COVID-19 vaccine eligibility checker](#).

For further assistance, contact:

- the Department of Health Coronavirus hotline: 1800 675 398
- the National coronavirus and COVID-19 vaccine helpline: 1800 020 080.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have questions.

[Your name] [organisation name]



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# Suggested newsletter content continued

## Template letter for parents

Dear parents/guardians and carers

As part of the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out, more Victorian school students are now eligible to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

All students aged 16 and older can now book a Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at state vaccination centres.

The Victorian Government aims to vaccinate all final year students by the time they sit their end-of-year exams. Final year students are therefore urged to immediately make an appointment to receive a vaccine by following the instructions under the heading 'How to book an appointment' below.

The state vaccination centres have recently had their capacity increased to support Victoria's drive to administer 1 million doses of the vaccine by 19 September.

Students will be supported in every way possible to be vaccinated before the examinations begin.

Students completing their final year are particularly asked to book an appointment as soon as possible to support the safe conduct of examinations. As their parent/guardian, I encourage you to help them to book and if needed, support them to attend their appointment.

Final year students are asked to consider getting their first vaccine before the GAT on 9 September. In addition, it's recommended not to get the vaccine on the day of an exam, or the day before an exam - to avoid feeling common but mild side effects such as tiredness, headache, muscle pain, fever and chills and/or joint pain during your exam.

## Consent

Students can book their own appointment and consent to vaccination themselves if the health professional assesses them to be a mature minor.

## How to book an appointment

To book an appointment, visit the [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) website or contact the Coronavirus hotline by phoning 1800 675 398.

To find a vaccination centre and opening times, visit the [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) website.

From 30 August, people aged 16-39 can get their COVID-19 vaccine at a doctor's clinic, pharmacy or community health service through the [Australian Government Eligibility Checker](#). You can book your appointment online or by calling the vaccine provider nearest to you.

## More information

Translated advice about the vaccines is available on the [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) website.

For more information about eligibility, visit [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) or use the Australian Government's [COVID-19 vaccine eligibility checker](#).

For further assistance, contact:

- the Department of Health Coronavirus hotline: 1800 675 398
- the National coronavirus and COVID-19 vaccine helpline: 1800 020 080

Please get in touch with me if you wish to discuss this.

[Your name] [organisation name]

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# Vaccination centres

Below is a list of the state vaccination centres. To find the nearest vaccination centre to you, visit the [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) website.

- Alfred Hospital
- Ararat - East Grampians Health Service
- Austin Hospital (Olivia Newton-John Cancer Centre)
- Bairnsdale City Oval
- Ballan COVID-19 Vaccination Hub
- Ballarat Mercure Hotel and Convention Centre
- Beechworth Vaccination Hub
- Bendigo Health COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic
- Box Hill Town Hall
- Bright Vaccination Hub
- Broadmeadows Town Hall
- Campbellfield Ford Complex Drive-Through Vaccination Clinic
- Castlemaine Health
- Cobram NCN Health
- Corryong Vaccination Hub
- Cranbourne Turf Club
- Deer Park - IPC Health Deer Park
- Frankston Community Vaccination Hub – Bayside Centre
- Geelong - former Ford Factory
- Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital
- Horsham Community Clinic
- Kilmore District Health - Outpatients Building
- Kyabram District Health Service
- Leongatha Community Clinic
- Lilydale Community Clinic
- Mansfield District Hospital - Anderson Hall
- Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC)
- Melbourne Showgrounds
- Melton vaccination hub (drive-through)
- Melton vaccination hub (indoors)
- Mildura - Kiarivu Barracks
- Monash Medical Centre
- Mt Beauty Vaccination Hub
- Myrtleford Vaccination Hub
- Northern Hospital Epping
- Omeo Medical Centre
- Orbost Medical Centre
- Pakenham – James Bathe Community and Sports Hub
- Portland District Health
- Ringwood East Community Clinic (Braeside Avenue)
- Rosebud Hospital - Point Nepean Road
- Royal Exhibition Building
- Sale - Gippsland Regional Sports Complex
- Sandown Racecourse
- Sandown Racecourse Drive-Through Vaccination Clinic
- Sandringham Hospital
- Seymour Health
- Shepparton Showgrounds - McIntosh Centre
- South Morang - Plenty Ranges Arts and Convention Centre
- St John of God - Berwick Hospital
- Sunshine Hospital
- Traralgon Racecourse
- Wangaratta Vaccination Hub
- Warragul - The Goods Shed
- Warrnambool - South West Healthcare Vaccination Centre
- Werribee Mercy Hospital
- West Melbourne - CoHealth West Melbourne
- Wodonga Vaccination Hub
- Wonthaggi Town Hall
- Wyndham Drive-Through Vaccination Clinic
- Wyndham Indoor Vaccination Centre - Eagle Stadium
- Yarram Medical Centre

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# FAQs

This information is current at 24 August 2021

## When is the COVID-19 vaccine becoming available to students?

From Wednesday, 25 August onwards, all students 16 years and over are eligible to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine and are encouraged to book as soon as possible.

The Victorian Government aims for all final year students to be vaccinated by the time they sit their end-of-year exams.

Anyone 18-39 years who has already booked their first dose AstraZeneca appointment at Victorian State Centres does not need to change or cancel their appointment. They will be offered the Pfizer vaccine when they attend.

In addition to everyone 16 years and over, young people aged 12 -15 years are currently eligible if they:

- have an underlying medical condition.
- are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

Students, parents/guardians and carers are encouraged to book their vaccine at a vaccination centre using the [online booking system](#) or by calling the Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398.

## What is the Department of Education and Training's role regarding the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out?

The Department of Education and Training (DET) is strongly encouraging final year students to get vaccinated by the time they sit their end-of-year exams.

Schools, parents and students are encouraged to refer to [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au) or the [Australian Government Department of Health](#) for further information about the vaccine rollout.

## What do you need to bring to a vaccination appointment?

Bring these things, if you have them:

- a face mask
- any emails about your vaccination appointment (on your phone or printed)
- photo identification, if you have one, such as a passport or driver's licence
- a Medicare card or Individual Healthcare Identifier number

For information refer to [Before you get vaccinated for COVID-19](#).

## How do I find out where to go to get the vaccine?

Information on how to book a COVID-19 vaccine, and where vaccines are being administered, is available at: <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/book-your-vaccine-appointment>

From 30 August, people aged 16-39 can get their COVID-19 vaccine at a doctor's clinic, pharmacy or community health service.

You can find a participating doctor, pharmacy or community health service through the [Australian Government Eligibility Checker](#). You can book your appointment online or by calling the vaccine provider nearest to you.

## If I want to get vaccinated, when should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

You are encouraged to book your vaccination appointment as soon as possible.

While senior secondary students are encouraged to get their first dose before the GAT on 9 September, it is recommended that students do not schedule their vaccination appointment on the day of the GAT, or any exam or the day before an exam. This is to avoid feeling common side effects such as tiredness, headache, muscle pain, fever and chills and / or joint pain during your exam.

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# FAQs continued

This information is current at 24 August 2021

## Which vaccine will I be receiving?

Students aged 16 and over will be offered the Pfizer vaccination at their state vaccination centre appointment.

Anyone 18-39 years who has already booked their first dose AstraZeneca appointment at a Victorian vaccination centre does not need to change or cancel their appointment. They will be offered the Pfizer vaccine when they attend.

Any secondary student who is 18 or older and who has already received one dose of their AstraZeneca vaccine should continue to proceed with their second dose of AstraZeneca. This is consistent with current health advice.

## I can't find any available appointments nearby, what do I do?

Information on how to book a COVID-19 vaccine, and where vaccines are being administered, is available at: <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/book-your-vaccine-appointment>.

Students and parents may also call the Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398. Please be patient as there may be wait times for appointments.

## How should parents and teachers help support students for vaccination bookings?

Schools are asked to share information about eligibility and access to students, parents, guardians and carers.

Parents, guardians and teachers are encouraged to help support students and especially final year students to make their vaccination appointment for as soon as possible. Once an appointment has been made and if this is to occur during school hours, they should discuss and plan their expected absence and impact on learning requirements.

Schools should exercise maximum flexibility to enable all eligible students to book and then attend their vaccine appointments.

Students can book their own appointment and consent to vaccination themselves if the health professional assesses them to be a mature minor.

## Can I make an appointment to be vaccinated during school hours?

Final year secondary students are asked to make an appointment as soon as possible.

Secondary students aged 16 and above are encouraged to make appointments at times that minimise disruption to their learning where possible. Prior to their appointment students should discuss absence with teachers and parents/guardians and carers.

## Is the vaccine mandatory?

No. Vaccination for COVID-19 is voluntary for students aged 16 and above, however it is strongly encouraged and will assist in giving VCE students more certainty around sitting their end-of-year exams.

## Can my school force me to be vaccinated?

No. The vaccines are voluntary for the general community, which includes students and you can choose if you want to get vaccinated against COVID-19. The more students who are vaccinated, the more protected our community and schools will be.

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# FAQs continued

## Can I take time off after the vaccine if I'm feeling unwell?

Students should discuss their health if they are feeling unwell with parents/guardian and carers and plan absence from school with their teachers where appropriate.

The Victorian Department of Health advises that like all vaccinations, COVID-19 vaccines can have side effects. For more information on the potential side effects of COVID-19 vaccination, visit the [Department of Health](#) website.

## Is the vaccine safe? I am concerned about the vaccine and its possible side effects.

Please refer to the [Department of Health](#) website for information on vaccine safety and possible side effects.

## I have just had my flu vaccine, or am planning to have my flu vaccine, can I still have the COVID-19 vaccine?

It is recommended to leave a period of 7 days between receiving the flu vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccination planning can be discussed with your immunisation provider. For more information please refer to the [Department of Health](#) website.

## My disability/medical condition affects my ability to physically access the vaccine. Are there other options?

Students should speak to their doctor if they have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine and their health.

Information on how to book a COVID-19 vaccine, and where vaccines are being administered, is available at the [Department of Health](#) website. You may also call the Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398 to discuss any additional requirements you may have.

The [Disability Liaison Officer \(DLO\)](#) program aims to help more people with disability access health services, including:

- COVID-19 testing
- COVID-19 vaccination
- advice and prevention through linking people to other health supports.

## Where can I find more information about the COVID-19 vaccine?

Information about COVID-19 vaccines can be found on the [Australian Government Department of Health](#) website and the [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](#) website.

You may also refer to [Information for education staff receiving a COVID-19 vaccine | Coronavirus Victoria](#).

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