

COVID-19 Special Scouts@Info Edition 25

Hello Members,

The WA Government released new emergency orders, the Proof of Vaccination Directions, which come into effect today, 31st of January 2022. These apply to people aged 16 and over and require them to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to enter certain places. They apply to the whole state.

Although we are urgently seeking clarification on a number of points from the WA Government, the COVID-19 Action Group have reviewed the published directions and believe they DO NOT generally require proof of vaccination for Scouting activities. Any written clarification received will be forwarded as soon as possible.

Scout Groups and Leaders are therefore not required to check proof of vaccination from members before they enter most Scout halls.

However, exceptions may apply:

- Scout meetings which occur in a venue listed in the Directions (such as an indoor sporting centre, museum or the Zoo) will require members 16 and over to present proof of vaccination to the staff of the centre. Groups which regularly meet in one of these venues should contact the venue staff to discuss their obligations and arrangements.
- Scout halls which are used for purposes listed in the directions (such as a Scout hall rented out for a dance or fitness class) would be considered places where proof of vaccination is required. Group Leaders in charge of a facility should contact any other hall users to advise of this.
- Large events with over 500 people.

A number of members have asked about imposing a requirement for proof of vaccination at a Group level. This is not consistent with the Scouts Australia Vaccination Policy. Although we understand the desire to reduce the likelihood of transmission of the COVID-19 virus during Scout events, vaccination is only one aspect.

To reduce the spread of COVID-19 viruses, we encourage all groups to:

- Instruct members **not** to attend when they are sick, regardless of whether or not they have tested positive to COVID-19, or if they are a close contact of someone who has COVID-19
- Hold activities in well-ventilated areas, especially outside, wherever possible
- Encourage hand hygiene through the use of hand sanitiser or handwashing on arrival
- Maintain physical distancing between members of at least 1.5 metres, including during opening/closing, activities and lining up
- Encourage vaccination for all members
- Clean high-touch areas on a regular basis

Mask wearing requirements are in effect across Perth and Peel (including Rottnest Island), the South West, Wheatbelt and Great Southern regions. **This means that mask must be work indoors, and outdoors where social distancing is not possible. This is currently for high school aged students and above unless they carry evidence of their approved medical exemption.**

The display of COVID-19 action plans, SafeWA and ServiceWA contact registration requirements remain important as well.

I and the Scouts WA COVID-19 Action Group strongly encourage vaccination to prevent severe disease and death, we acknowledge that it does not prevent the virus that causes COVID-19 from spreading. For this reason, we continue to encourage all members to speak to their GP or a health professional about their individual circumstances and managing risks associated with continued participation in work and recreation activities - including Scouting activities.

Any changes to restrictions will be reviewed by the Scouts WA COVID-19 Action Group and updates provided as indicated.

Group Leaders and Sections Leaders should contact their District Commissioner or Regional Chief Commissioner with any questions.

Ayden Mackenzie
Chief Commissioner
Scouts WA