



DFES General Circular No: 52/2020

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FLU VACCINATION PROGRAM

With the COVID-19 pandemic dominating media headlines it is extremely timely to remind everybody of the approaching influenza (flu) season and strategies to prevent the risk of infection and transmission. Whilst the flu vaccine won't prevent people from contracting COVID-19, it can help to reduce the number of patients needing medical treatment which will relieve pressure on the WA health system and hospitals.

Vaccination is the best form of prevention and it is important to receive the flu vaccine every year as the most common strains that cause flu consistently change. Flu typically occurs in June and peaks around August so vaccinating from mid-April allows recipients to develop immunity prior to the peak period.

The National Immunisation Program provides a free flu shot for those who are most at risk including people 65 years and over, pregnant women, those with chronic conditions and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from 6 months of age. The McGowan Government will also roll out a new free flu immunisation program for all primary school children with vaccines becoming available after Easter.

DFES staff and volunteers who are not eligible for the National Immunisation Program are able to seek reimbursement from DFES towards the vaccination cost.

How to claim your reimbursement

Staff

A flu vaccination reimbursement of \$20 is available for all DFES staff and immediate family members residing at the same household who receive the vaccine before 30 June 2020. Please complete the [reimbursement form](#) and forward an electronic copy with evidence of your receipt to DFES Payroll to receive the reimbursement in your pay.

Volunteers

Volunteers that receive a vaccination before 30 June 2020 will also be able to seek a reimbursement of \$20 through their Brigade, Group or Unit (BGU). A copy of your receipt will need to be sent to your BGU so that a collective [immunisation expense reimbursement form](#) can be submitted to your DFES Manager.

**To maintain the high standards of safety and wellbeing for staff, Business Services requests all reimbursements to be submitted electronically, with a digital signature from an official DFES email address. Where you are unable to digitally sign the*

reimbursement please contact [Lee Baptie](#) on (08) 9395 9487 to discuss. Accounts Payable will continue to accept paper forms, however our preference in the current circumstances is to receive all communication electronically.

Please remember DFES is unable to reimburse for doctor or nurse consultation fees and that submissions for reimbursements will only be accepted up until the 31 August 2020.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for the flu vaccination has increased so there may be a delay in being able to access the vaccine. The vaccine will continue to be made available and staff and volunteers are reminded that you may need to wait for an appointment or contact another immunisation provider. [Click here](#) to find a provider near you.

If you happen to experience flu like symptoms, please make a concerted effort to limit all contact with others (except to seek medical care) as much as possible including staying home until 24 hours after your fever is gone. Additional information about flu and vaccinations can be accessed from the following websites:

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation/immunisation-services/flu-influenza-immunisation-service>

<https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/vaccine-preventable-diseases/influenza-flu>

If you have questions relating to the DFES flu vaccination program, please contact Physical Wellness Coordinator Mitchell Sewell on (08) 9395 9579 or via email at mitchell.sewell@dfes.wa.gov.au.

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