

## Update to Vaccine Requirements for Food Freight Workers

New pandemic orders come into place at 11.59pm Wednesday 12 January [as announced by the Minister for Health today](#).

Workers in key sectors who are already required to be fully vaccinated will be required to get their third dose before being permitted to work on site, after the timeframe specified.

### Mandatory third dose for food distribution workers

Key sector workers will be required to have their third dose/booster within two weeks of them becoming eligible. Food distribution workers must have received their third dose by 12 March, with

- those eligible on or before 12 January having until 12 February to get their third dose.
- those not yet eligible required to get their third dose within three months and two weeks of being eligible.

Food distribution workers includes manufacturing, warehousing and transport (freight/port) workers involved in food distribution. Retail supermarket staff are not included in the mandate.

The mandatory vaccination requirement will not apply to workers who have a valid medical exemption. Employers will be required to keep records of vaccination status.

### Close contacts exemptions including for food distribution workers

To ensure Victorians can continue to access essential food supplies, workers in the manufacturing, distribution or packaging of food and beverages including retail supermarket workers may be exempted from close contact isolation requirements in order to attend work from 11.59pm Wednesday 12 January, if it is necessary for continuity of operations and other options have been exhausted.

#### Exempted workers

- must be asymptomatic, and
- undertake daily Rapid Antigen Tests for 5 days, and
- return a negative result prior to attending work.

They can't enter shared break areas and employers are asked to facilitate solo break time.

Face coverings must be worn, using N95/P2 respirators if possible.

Both the worker and workplace must consent to the worker's return.

This new close contact isolation exemption for asymptomatic food distribution workers is similar to the arrangements already in place for critical healthcare workers.

### Further information

Information on updated COVIDSafe settings and third dose vaccination requirements will be published at [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) when the orders come into effect at 11:59pm Wednesday 12 January 2022.

#### Freight Victoria

Department of Transport