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Hibiscus Coast AFSC

### COVID-19 Vaccination Mandate Policy

Motion passed by the Executive Board as at 14 February 2022

## Club Statement

As a result of the evolving pandemic and its impact on our communities, Hibiscus Coast Association Football & Sports Club (HBCAFSC) has received [guidance from New Zealand Football](#) (NZF) and Northern Regional Football (NRF) over recent weeks regarding COVID-19 and the vaccination mandates for the upcoming football season.

On 3 February 2022, NZF released its COVID-19 Protection Framework Settings Overview document which outlines guidance for football and futsal under the **Red Setting** of our current official protection framework, the "Traffic Light System". These guidelines are based on the information provided by [COVID19.govt.nz](http://COVID19.govt.nz) and [Sport NZ](http://Sport NZ).

NZF's recent guidelines have encouraged clubs to mandate vaccination passes for all participants over the age of 12 years and 3 months – including players, coaches, managers, administrators, referees and supporters – at all levels of football activity including trainings and matches.

The Club supports all public health measures and is committed to ensuring the safety of its members within the current framework. This includes using the NZ COVID Tracer app to scan in wherever possible, wearing masks when inside public venues or facilities, staying home if you're feeling unwell, getting vaccinated, and maintaining good hygiene practices. You can read more on public health measures at [COVID19.govt.nz](http://COVID19.govt.nz).

HBCAFSC acknowledges the impact of the pandemic on our communities over the past few years. It has been felt massively by our membership with two disrupted football seasons since 2020, and we are hoping we can look ahead to brighter days and more football in the near future for all of our members.

HBCAFSC has been able to safely run its summer football programmes over recent months within the guidelines of the current framework. As a Club that values community, inclusivity, unity and equality of opportunities, it has been our priority to ensure everyone has the ability to play the sport we all love in a safe environment, regardless of their circumstances, personal choices or beliefs.

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These are values that we, as a community-focussed club, pride ourselves on and wish to continue to uphold.

On Monday 14 February 2022, the Club's Executive Board has passed the motion to ensure we are doing everything we can, within the guidelines of the protection framework and in consultation with our regional federation, to be as inclusive as possible and keep everyone playing football in a safe environment.

As a result, the Club will **not** be mandating vaccination passes for gatherings of 25 players or less, and will be encouraging all coaches, managers and teams to ensure they meet this criteria where possible in order to uphold our Club's values of inclusivity, equality, equity and respect.

For the winter season and under the **Red Setting** of the current framework, the Club must abide by [official protocols](#) as stipulated by NZF and Sport NZ. This means that matches taking place under the **Red Setting** are classified as gatherings that exceed 25 participants (including all players, staff and referees). Therefore, the use of My Vaccine Pass (MVP) will be required in order for any participant over the age of 12 years and 3 months to be involved in a match under the **Red Setting**. Participant's vaccine passes will be connected to their Comet profile, and will impact their eligibility status to participate in matches during the season under the **Red Setting**.

Clubs are awaiting further guidance from NZF and NRF for how matches might be affected at the **Orange** and **Green** settings. We will update our membership as soon we know more.

To summarise:

- Earlier this month, NZF and NRF released [guidelines](#) regarding the COVID-19 protection framework and the use of My Vaccine Passes for the upcoming football season – this has been communicated to all clubs and affects all participants at every level above the age of 12 years and 3 months under the **Red Setting**.
- HBCAFSC will be upholding our values of inclusivity, equality and respect by ensuring all participants can still train and play sport in a safe environment within the official guidelines.
- As a result, HBCAFSC will be requiring all teams and coaches to ensure their gathering sizes consist of 25 participants or less where possible.
- Under the **Red Setting** and where a participant is to be involved in a gathering that exceeds the limit of 25, all participants must abide by official guidance from Sport NZ, NZF and NRF which currently requires a valid My Vaccine Pass to be used in order to participate.
- Participants who do not have a valid My Vaccine Pass will still be able to train with their teams and play organised in-house small-sided matches depending on numbers and ages.
- All coaches and managers will be briefed over the coming weeks ahead of their respective seasons to ensure all environments can operate safely – just as we have been able to do over recent months already.

HBCAFSC will release further updates and information as soon as we know more. Please see attached Frequently Asked Questions which may also help answer any further queries you may have.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### HBCAFSC Club Policy for COVID-19 Vaccination Mandates

#### **Has the Club completed a health and safety risk assessment to validate its decision?**

Yes. The Club has completed such assessments ahead of announcing its summer football programmes. This was completed at a time where both Delta and Omicron were in the community, and was based on official guidance from the Government, Sport NZ, NZF and NRF.

#### **How has the Club come to this decision?**

The Club's Executive Board met on Monday 14 February 2022 to discuss this matter. After reviewing the guidance circulated by Sport NZ, NZF and NRF, and after considering the health and safety of its membership, a motion was passed to support this decision. The motion was passed unanimously by the quorum in attendance.

#### **I do not have a current My Vaccine Pass, can I still participate in football at HBCAFSC?**

Yes. We want to do everything we can to include all participants. This might mean you may only be able to train or participate in football 'gatherings' that consist of 25 participants or less under the **Red Setting** for now.

#### **I have a current My Vaccine Pass, should I be worried about playing with others who do not have one?**

Gatherings below 25 participants have been operating safely since 2021 when the Traffic Light System came into effect, this includes our summer football programmes which have also taken into consideration all health and safety protocols required at each setting of the current protection framework. If you are vaccinated, you are "far less likely to get really sick and go to hospital too". You can read this and more about being protected at [COVID19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) and [Ministry of Health](https://www.health.govt.nz).

#### **I am a coach or manager of a team, how should I organise my sessions to ensure the health and safety of the players?**

Most of our teams above the ages of 12 years and 3 months typically train within the gathering limits of 25 participants in any case, even before the pandemic began. Coaches and managers will



need to get an idea of who has a valid My Vaccine Pass and who doesn't before their season starts so they are aware of who might be able to play in matches under the **Red Setting**.

Players and parents have the right to refuse to disclose this information, in which case you will need to assume they do not have a valid pass for the sake of your own session planning.

If your team does have players that do not have a pass, we ask that you make an effort to keep these players involved by staying within the gathering limit of 25 participants where possible. We understand this might be tricky, with some players being eligible to play in matches and some who are not under the current **Red Setting**. It is up to each team how they wish to manage this, and the Club will be on standby to support coaches and managers should you need any help or have any questions.

### **Will there be any events or matches where all players can play?**

The Club is currently exploring options for additional training programmes and in-house matches such as 5v5, 7v7 and 9v9 which allow teams to stay within the gathering limits under the **Red Setting**. We will let teams know if and when we are able to do so.

### **Should I still register if I do not have a current My Vaccine Pass but still want to be involved?**

Yes, you can still register. You will not be able to connect your pass to Comet, therefore you won't be eligible to play in matches under the current setting. But at least you're in the system should anything change in the future.

### **If a player can't play matches but can still train, will this impact the fees they pay?**

This is where it can get a little tricky, and the Club is currently exploring this further right now. The Executive Board have acknowledged players who can't play matches should not pay full fees, but if they are still attending trainings this would still incur some cost to cover administration and coaching fees where applicable.

### **What areas of the club must use the My Vaccine Pass system?**

The clubrooms must use the pass when the bar or food/drink facilities are operational. This is because the clubrooms will be considered 'hospitality' when these facilities are open. Members inside the clubrooms must also wear masks when they are not eating or drinking. Please also remember to scan the QR codes for any venue you attend to ensure we can support contact tracing.



### **We are travelling to another club for a match, what protocols do we need to follow?**

Only those who hold a My Vaccine Pass should be with the team for a match under the **Red Setting**. Following usual COVID health protocols, scanning in when you get to the venue, and scanning your pass where needed is important.

### **I am a spectator, do I need to have a My Vaccine Pass to watch a match?**

Spectators travelling with the team are considered part of the participants within that single gathering – this might include parents and caregivers. Therefore, as per NZF and NRF protocols, if you are travelling with the team and going to be intermingling with the team on matchday you will need to have a My Vaccine Pass, just like every other participant within that gathering.

The Club can't logistically and practically monitor all areas and entry points of its public grounds which are accessible and shared by many members of the public, including public playgrounds and beaches used by those who may not necessarily be members of our Club. The Club is also not responsible for policing gatherings in such public areas. Therefore, for those who are not directly included within a gathering but are in the vicinity, we ask that you maintain the distance required from the team/gathering (which is at least 2m) and follow COVID health protocols where possible.

### **When will we know more about protocols for **Orange** and **Green** Settings?**

The Club is waiting on more information and guidance on **Orange** and **Green** settings from NZF and NRF. As soon as we know more, the Executive Board will discuss and communicate any impacts to our membership as soon as possible.

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Updated as at 24 February 2022