



**Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA
Minister for Health; Mental Health**

Our Ref: 76-13465

Mr Michael Archer
CEO City of Busselton
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Dear Mr Archer

Thank you for your letter of 11 March 2022 regarding concerns raised at the special electors meeting of 21 February 2022 held by the City of Busselton.

The impact of mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations on affected businesses and employees is acknowledged. The State Government has had to make some difficult decisions during these challenging times. They are certainly not made to be punitive, but to protect the lives, health and well-being of all Western Australians. Policy measures regarding COVID-19 vaccination are underpinned by a commitment to protect those who are most vulnerable, including the elderly and those who are most at-risk.

It should be noted, all Directions issued by the Western Australian Government are consistent with existing State and Commonwealth legislation and are therefore legally binding. The Chief Health Officer is authorised to exercise any of the emergency powers listed in the Directions while Western Australia is in a public health state of emergency. Anyone requiring information for their specific circumstances may need to seek independent legal advice.

Should the requirements for vaccination be required to continue beyond the public health state of emergency, they will be replicated in regulations to sit under the *Public Health Act 2016*. It is not yet known if or when this would occur.

There are no plans to assess the impact of mandates via a survey. I recognise it is important to balance the health of the general population and our hospital systems against the economic and social impacts of lockdowns and restrictions. It is always difficult to determine the measures that should be implemented as case numbers of COVID-19 rise and spread throughout the community. All public health measures are only implemented in light of evidence that endeavours to reasonably balance public health requirements without crippling operators who have already faced such uncertainty because of the pandemic.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours, sincerely

Stacey Hearn
CHIEF OF STAFF

20 APR 2022