



24 January 2025

Ref: DOIA-REQ-0007503

Privacy of natural persons

Tēnā koe Privacy of na

Thank you for your email of 5 December 2024 to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

*Would you please share all the advice including legal advice, memos, correspondence, emails, policy documents etc that brought about the decision to remove this page from the MBIE website under the OIA.*

Please find attached the documentation relevant to your request.

In relation to the decision to remove the Vaccination Assessment Tool page, we review all the content on [business.govt.nz](https://business.govt.nz) annually. We use Google Analytics data and feedback and ratings from site users to assess the usage and performance of a page. We also use user feedback and ratings of the content to assess the helpfulness and relevance of the page to our audience. On top of these metrics, we take direction from the Minister and relevant government agencies on changes to our content. This is often necessitated by changes in legislation, priority focus and policy.

Following direction from the Minister's Office to update the page following the revocation of the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccination Assessment Tool) Regulations 2021 (the Regulations), the Vaccine Assessment Tool page was amended to include a banner explaining the removal. In our review of the page in December 2023, traffic to the page was very low (26 views from 23 users over 19 months). Given the low traffic to the page and the revocation of the Regulations, the Vaccination Assessment Tool page was removed.

For reference, please note that the views metric is the total number of times the page is viewed, and this can be by the same person. The user metric is the total number of unique individuals who have visited the page. The user metric is the data we use to measure the performance of the page and how popular it is, as this represents individual page views, not potentially one user viewing the page multiple times.

Please note some information has been withheld under the following section of the Act:

- 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons

I do not consider that the withholding of this information is outweighed by public interest considerations in making the information available.

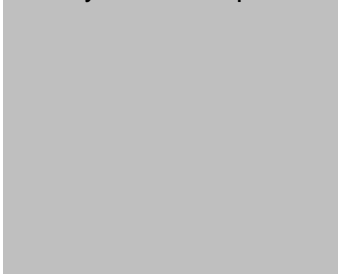
If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, or if you require any further assistance, please contact [OIA@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:OIA@mbie.govt.nz).

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the MBIE website: [www.mbie.govt.nz/about/open-government-and-official-information/published-official-information-act-requests](http://www.mbie.govt.nz/about/open-government-and-official-information/published-official-information-act-requests)

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

Privacy of natural persons



**From:** Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Monday, 1 May 2023 12:46 pm  
**To:** Privacy of natural persons

Hi Privacy of na It's probably safe to archive the COVID pages that refer to the Vaccination Assessment Tool and the wage subsidies/calculator all of which are no long operational. What do you think?

**From:** Privacy of natural persons  
**To:** Privacy of natural persons  
**Subject:** RE: Comms re: revocation of VAT [IF CONFIRMED] [IN-CONFIDENCE]  
**Date:** Tuesday, 5 April 2022 9:59:05 am  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Hi Privacy of natu

Had a quick chat with Privacy of n and we are happy with the news story approach and we should be all good to get this live on Wednesday.

No dramas on minor changes to the VAT content. Privacy of natural persons this will be something easy for Privacy of natural pe who is our new starter and yourself can work through after he settles in this morning. In regards to displaying once redundant, we will have a think about how that could happen and come back to you.

Thanks



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**From:** Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Monday, 4 April 2022 4:55 pm  
**To:** Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz>; Privacy of natural persons @business.govt.nz>  
**Cc:** Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** FW: Comms re: revocation of VAT [IF CONFIRMED] [IN-CONFIDENCE]

Kia ora Privacy of natural persons

Cabinet have agreed today to revoke the regulations for the Vaccination Assessment Tool.

Given the tool lives on bus.govt we wondered if it would be ok to do the following on the site:

- News story on Business.govt to say it officially being revoked (mid-April) and to encourage businesses to follow the risk assessment process. Privacy of nat. is drafting and we'll send it across for you to have a look at in draft form and again once it's been through the signoff.
- The Minister's Office have asked for this news item to be live on Wednesday – can you please let me know if this is ok?
- We will need to make some small tweaks to the copy on the Vaccination Assessment Tool page – Privacy of na will draft tomorrow and send through once Privacy of natural and co. have approved.
- Once the regulations have been revoked (mid-April) we wanted to discuss where the Tool might live (for people that may need to reference it in future noting that is will no longer be valid but say an Employer has a PG raised against them they may need to refer to it. So we would want it to be searchable but not something we'd actively promote.

Happy to jump on a call in morning to discuss if easier

Ngā mihi nui

Privacy of natural persons

[Redacted]

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**From:** Privacy of natural persons [Redacted] <[\[Redacted\]@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:[Redacted]@parliament.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Monday, 4 April 2022 4:06 pm  
**To:** Privacy of natural persons <[\[Redacted\]@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:[Redacted]@mbie.govt.nz)>; Anna Clark (GM WRSP) <[Anna.Clark2@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:Anna.Clark2@mbie.govt.nz)>; Privacy of natural persons <[\[Redacted\]@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:[Redacted]@mbie.govt.nz)>  
**Cc:** Privacy of natural persons <[\[Redacted\]@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:[Redacted]@mbie.govt.nz)>; Privacy of natural persons <[\[Redacted\]@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:[Redacted]@mbie.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** RE: Comms re: revocation of VAT [IF CONFIRMED] [IN-CONFIDENCE]

Hi all

Cabinet has agreed to revoke the VAT. Please start the revocation process with announcements on the MBIE website on Wednesday.

Ngā mihi,

Privacy of natu

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**From:** Privacy of natural persons <[\[Redacted\]@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:[Redacted]@mbie.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Monday, 4 April 2022 3:29 PM  
**To:** Privacy of natural persons <[\[Redacted\]@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:[Redacted]@parliament.govt.nz)>; Privacy of natural persons <[\[Redacted\]@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:[Redacted]@mbie.govt.nz)>  
**Cc:** Privacy of natural persons <[\[Redacted\]@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:[Redacted]@mbie.govt.nz)>; Anna Clark (GM WRSP) <[Anna.Clark2@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:Anna.Clark2@mbie.govt.nz)>; Privacy of natural persons <[\[Redacted\]@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:[Redacted]@mbie.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** RE: Comms re: revocation of VAT [IF CONFIRMED] [IN-CONFIDENCE]

Thanks [Redacted] that's good to know.

We'll be in touch once we've drafted it and had it approved this end.

Ngā mihi nui

Privacy of natural persons

[Redacted]

Wellington 6011, New Zealand.

*Please note, I work Monday - Thursday.*

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**From:** Privacy of natural persons [@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:@parliament.govt.nz)  
**Sent:** Monday, 4 April 2022 3:01 pm  
**To:** Privacy of natural persons [@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:@mbie.govt.nz); Privacy of natural persons [@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:@mbie.govt.nz)  
**Cc:** Privacy of natural persons [@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:@mbie.govt.nz); Anna Clark (GM WRSP)  
<[Anna.Clark2@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:Anna.Clark2@mbie.govt.nz)>; Privacy of natural persons [@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:@mbie.govt.nz)  
**Subject:** Comms re: revocation of VAT [IF CONFIRMED]

Hi, I don't have a read-out from Cabinet yet but **if** the revocation of the VAT is confirmed at Cabinet today, the office are happy for an announcement to go up on the MBIE website on Wednesday. There's no need for a separate PR from the Minister.

Could you please run the announcement by me and <sup>Privacy of natural persons</sup> before it goes live?

Thanks,

Privacy of natural persons

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[www.govt.nz](http://www.govt.nz) - your guide to finding and using New Zealand government services

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**From:** [redacted] Privacy of natural perso  
**To:** [Service Centre QAA Team](#); [Service Centre Account Managers](#)  
**Cc:** Privacy of natural persons  
**Subject:** RE: Vaccination Assessment Tool - being removed  
**Date:** Wednesday, 6 April 2022 9:48:06 am  
**Attachments:** [Vaccination Assessment Tool being removed Service Centre Q+A \(1\).docx](#)

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Kia ora again

Confirming no changes to the document supplied yesterday as draft – here’s a clean copy for you.

Ngā mihi nui

Privacy of natural persons  
[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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**From:** [redacted] Privacy of natural persons  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 5 April 2022 4:52 pm  
**To:** Service Centre QAA Team <[Privacy of natural persons@mbie.govt.nz](#)>; Service Centre Account Managers <[Privacy of natural persons@mbie.govt.nz](#)>  
**Cc:** [Privacy of natural persons@business.govt.nz](#); [redacted] Privacy of natural persons  
[redacted]@mbie.govt.nz; [Privacy of natural persons@mbie.govt.nz](#); [Privacy of natural persons@mbie.govt.nz](#)  
**Subject:** Vaccination Assessment Tool - being removed

Kia ora team

Cabinet decided yesterday to not revise the Vaccination Assessment tool but revoke it in the regulations. This will happen on 19<sup>th</sup> April but the Minister has asked that we publish a news story on bus.govt tomorrow and update the web content. This change has already been signalled to business so won’t be a major hopefully.

This is being approved now so I can share the draft brief I am working on for you.

Sorry for the delay – we’re trying to get Q+As approved

I’ll send the final soon as soon as I can – may be in the morning but will be before the story is published.

Ngā mihi nui

Privacy of nat  
[redacted]

Privacy of natural persons

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**From:** Privacy of natural persons

**Sent:** Wednesday, 30 March 2022 1:46 pm

**To:** Service Centre QAA Team <Privacy of natural persons@mbie.govt.nz>; Service Centre Account Managers <Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz>

**Cc:** Privacy of natural persons @business.govt.nz; Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz; Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz; Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz; Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz; Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz; Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz

**Subject:** RE: New guidance for employers - vaccination requirements [UNCLASSIFIED]

Kia ora team

Updated links are here:

Employment NZ: [Vaccines and the workplace » Employment New Zealand](#)

Worksafe: [COVID-19 controls at work - employer vaccination requirements and other measures | WorkSafe](#)

Business.govt: [Vaccination assessment tool — business.govt.nz](#) and <https://www.business.govt.nz/covid-19/requiring-my-vaccine-passes-for-entry/>

Ngā mihi nui

Privacy of natural persons

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**From:** Privacy of natural persons

**Sent:** Tuesday, 29 March 2022 4:57 pm

**To:** Service Centre QAA Team <Privacy of natural persons@mbie.govt.nz>; Service Centre Account Managers <Privacy of natural persons@mbie.govt.nz>

**Cc:** Privacy of natural persons @business.govt.nz; Privacy of natural persons



Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz>; Privacy of natural persons  
@mbie.govt.nz>; Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz>; Privacy of natural persons  
@mbie.govt.nz>; Privacy of natural persons @mbie.govt.nz>; Privacy of natural persons  
@mbie.govt.nz>

**Subject:** New guidance for employers - vaccination requirements [UNCLASSIFIED]

Kia ora team

Firstly congrats on your awards last week – so well-deserved!

I wanted to let you know that we have some new guidance hoping to go live tomorrow afternoon on the biz.govt and Employment NZ sites. This is currently being approved.

This is to support businesses in deciding if they want to add a vaccination requirement into their workplaces and the steps they need to follow.

Minister Wood is also looking to promote this tomorrow afternoon through a PR so there may be interest and we know businesses have been waiting for this guidance from government.

Attached is the PR and key messages and reactive Q+A. Once you've had a read let me know if there's anything additional that you need.

Ngā mihi nui

Privacy of natural persons

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

## **Information for the Service Centre: Changes to the Vaccination Assessment Tool (VAT) 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

Following changes to public health advice, the Vaccination Assessment Tool will now be removed. Formally this involves revoking the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccination Assessment Tool) Regulations 2021.

We will be publishing a news story on [business.govt](https://www.business.govt.nz/covid-19/vaccination-assessment-tool/) and making some copy changes to <https://www.business.govt.nz/covid-19/vaccination-assessment-tool/>

### **Key messages**

- The Government has agreed to remove the Vaccination Assessment Tool (by revoking the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccination Assessment Tool) Regulations 2021).
- The regulations are intended to be revoked on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April which means businesses are recommended to no longer use it for health and safety risk assessments. The decision to revoke the tool is based on updated health advice.
- The Government introduced the Vaccination Assessment Tool as a simple and effective way for businesses to determine with certainty whether it was reasonable to require a vaccination in their workplace.
- Since then, the risks associated with COVID-19 have changed and updated public health advice is that vaccination requirements are now likely to be appropriate only where there is a greater risk of contracting and transmitting COVID-19 in the workplace than there is in the community.
- Employers may still be able to maintain vaccination requirements, however these requirements would need to be supported by a full work health and safety risk assessment. The circumstances where vaccination could be required are likely to be more limited than they have in the past.
- For businesses that have validly undertaken a health and safety risk assessment using the vaccination assessment tool, any employment decisions (such as terminating the employment of unvaccinated workers) that have already been made based on this assessment stands.
- Any employer currently involved in an employment process based on a vaccination requirement that was put in place using the vaccination assessment tool is recommended to pause that process. The employer should then undertake a full work health and safety risk assessment to take in to account the current public health advice before proceeding with any further employment processes.

### **Reactive Q+As**

### **Is this an admission the Vaccination Assessment tool didn't work?**

Workplaces wanted a simple and effective tool that gave them certainty around whether they could require a vaccination, and the tool delivered that. Since then, the risks associated with COVID-19 have changed and updated public health advice is that vaccination requirements are now likely to be appropriate only where there is a greater risk of contracting and transmitting COVID-19 in the workplace than there is in the community.

### **Does this mean decisions made previously to require vaccinations were done illegally?**

Any decisions that were made using this tool still stand if they were made when the Vaccination Assessment Tool was valid. Business who used the tool will need to update their health and safety risk assessment reflecting the change in status to the tool.

Employees will still be able to bring a personal grievance if they feel they have been unjustifiably dismissed or disadvantaged as a result of a decision their employer has made about vaccination.

### **Why did it take so long to make a decision around the Vaccination Assessment Tool?**

MBIE kept business up to date with the fact the Vaccination Assessment Tool was being reviewed following updated public health advice. It was made clear there would be some change and businesses were strongly encouraged to wait for the Tool to be updated before introducing a vaccination requirement in reliance on it.

### **Scrapping of the tool is sending a strong message that essentially there's very few grounds for vaccination mandates in the workplace?**

The latest public health advice is that the public health justification for requiring vaccination is stronger when the risks of contracting and transmitting COVID-19 in the workplace is higher than it is in the community. Employers may still be able to maintain vaccination requirements, where these continue to be supported by a work health and safety risk assessment, but these circumstances are likely to be more limited than they have in the past.

Find more information here:

[Vaccination assessment tool — business.govt.nz](https://www.business.govt.nz/vaccination-assessment-tool)

[COVID-19 and the workplace » Employment New Zealand](#)

[Vaccines and the workplace » Employment New Zealand](#)

**From:** Privacy of natural persons  
**To:** Privacy of natural persons  
**Cc:** Privacy of natural persons  
**Subject:** RE: Vaccination Assessment Tool [UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Date:** Wednesday, 6 April 2022 9:19:43 am  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Thanks Privacy of na sounds like a plan to me.

Regards



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**From:** Privacy of natural persons [@business.govt.nz](mailto:Privacy of natural persons@business.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 6 April 2022 9:08 am  
**To:** Privacy of natural persons [@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:Privacy of natural persons@mbie.govt.nz)>  
**Cc:** Privacy of natural persons [@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:Privacy of natural persons@mbie.govt.nz)>; Privacy of natural persons [@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:Privacy of natural persons@mbie.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** RE: Vaccination Assessment Tool [UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Privacy of natural pe

Happy for us to put something on the website (in the news section) to the effect that the vaccination tool will be revoked. I believe Privacy of natu is working on copy for that.

I also think we need to add a message on the vaccination assessment tool page, and then once the tool is revoked, remove the vaccination assessment tool page from the site. Having the news article will also be good if someone searches for the tool when we've removed the page.

Privacy of natural pe how does this all sound to you?

Cheers,

Privacy of

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**From:** Privacy of natural persons [@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:Privacy of natural persons@mbie.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 6 April 2022 9:04 AM  
**To:** Privacy of natural persons [@business.govt.nz](mailto:Privacy of natural persons@business.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** Vaccination Assessment Tool [UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Privacy of

Privacy of natural suggested I clear with you Privacy of natural p request for a news story about government's plan to revoke the vaccination assessment tool.

As you will probably have seen it is only happening on 19 April.

What are your thoughts?

Regards

Privacy of natural p

