



Office of
Industrial Relations

Department of Education

Our reference:

Mr Alex Scott
Secretary
Together Queensland
Email: alex.scott@together.org.au

Dear Mr Scott

Thank you for your letter dated 13 December 2021 in relation to the workforce impacts of the COVID-19 health pandemic and the opening of Queensland's borders and I welcome your consideration for positive workplace interactions based upon proactivity, respectful conversations and the safety and fairness of public sector workplaces. I assure you that the Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) has, and will continue to, consult with your Union in accordance with its obligations under Work, Health and Safety legislation and the industrial instruments.

OIR is working through its response to the changing COVID-19 circumstances in an appropriate, consultative and measured way, informed by Chief Health Officer (CHO) direction and whole of Government policy. Operationally, OIR has re-established its Pandemic Committee to consider and coordinate its COVID-19 response. OIR's current controls have been reassessed to ensure personal hygiene supplies remain on-hand, and appropriate steps have been taken to remind and to encourage staff to maintain social distancing, to stay at home if unwell, and to wear a mask in the workplace if the staff member chooses to do so.

Additionally, on 9 December 2021 the Acting Deputy Director-General requested OIR staff to voluntarily declare their vaccination status using the Aurion-ESS system for recording their declaration. I understand that this was discussed with Ms Remi Armstrong of your union prior to the request being made. On 17 December 2021, I advised all OIR staff that, following the directives from the CHO, unless there is imminent risk, unvaccinated OIR staff will not enter a high-risk or vaccine mandated workplaces, and double vaccinated staff must show evidence of their vaccination status before entering. I further advised OIR staff to respect and abide by a business's advertised COVID-19 safe policy if it requires vaccination (and evidence of vaccination) at entry, even at non-mandated workplaces. The only exception to this is where there is imminent risk to safety, and a fully vaccinated officer is not available. In the exceptional circumstance of entry by an unvaccinated officer, that officer must wear appropriate PPE and advise their supervisor of the occurrence and circumstances as soon as possible.

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OIR is working with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and the Public Service Commission (PSC) in regard to assessment of Covid-related risks and appropriate mitigation strategies, including consideration of vaccination status, in shared tenancies including 1 William Street. OIR will continue to work with the PSC to ensure the consistent and fair treatment of staff. In addition to consultation by DPC and PSC with your union on 1 William Street, I undertake to consult with your union in OIR's decision-making as I respond to the COVID-19 health pandemic.

Should you wish to discuss the matters further please contact Mr Tony James, Executive Director, Industrial Relations, OIR at tony.james@oir.qld.gov.au or on 0427 147 323.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Allen', followed by a horizontal line.

Craig Allen
Deputy Director-General
Office of Industrial Relations
22/12/2021