

## MEDIA RELEASE

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# Communities@Work Implements COVID-19 Policy to Protect Staff and Canberra's Most Vulnerable

Communities@Work is proud to play a leading role in supporting the ACT community throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. As Canberra's largest not-for-profit community organisation, we are trusted in the important role of protecting and supporting Canberra's most vulnerable. This is at the heart of what we do and essential to our community.

As lockdown restrictions are lifted, as vaccination targets are met, we need to help protect the health, safety and wellbeing of our people, children and community. With this in mind, Communities@Work is requiring all our employees, volunteers, and Family Day Care and In Home Care educators to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 by the end of November.

Communities@Work CEO, Lee Maiden, commented that:

"This policy is an essential and proactive step to reducing the risk of serious illness or death for our most vulnerable. We have almost 10,000 young children enrolled in our children's services who haven't yet been vaccinated, along with over 3,000 vulnerable clients. Until a vaccine is available for children birth - 11 years, we must employ all reasonable measures to keep children safe. They are at the highest risk. The best way to keep them safe is to ensure those around them are vaccinated.

"We have been actively supporting vaccination for our employees and encouraging the same for our clients, students, volunteers, educators and the broader community. Most recently, we've partnered with Aspen Medical to set up a vaccination hub onsite. Over 96% of our active employees are already vaccinated or have booked in for their first dose.

"While those high vaccination rates provide a level of assurance, it is important that we do everything we can to protect the health and safety of our people, children and community."

Communities@Work's COVID-19 vaccine requirement will support an integrated approach to managing the risks of COVID-19, which include important measures such as physical distancing, cleaning and hygiene measures, and increased ventilation.

We welcome the ACT Government announcement requiring COVID-19 vaccination for staff working across early childhood settings, ACT primary schools, Out Of School Hours Care and specialist and flexible education settings. Our vaccination policy is consistent with these requirements.

By working together to support and shape a resilient and sustainable community, we can build a better future.

### **ABOUT COMMUNITIES@WORK**

Communities@Work is Canberra's largest not-for-profit community organisation, and is the largest local provider of Early Education and Care and one of Canberra's largest employers, employing

over 600 staff locally. Communities@Work works with the community to support positive educational outcomes, and build resilient, sustainable, and socially inclusive communities in the ACT and capital region. To find out more please visit [www.commsatwork.org](http://www.commsatwork.org)

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