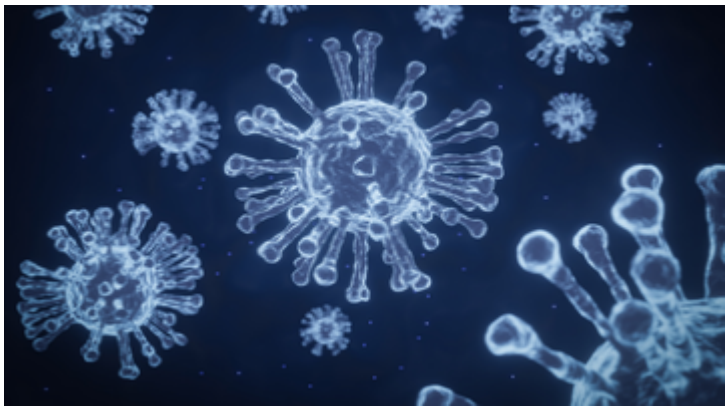
SSTUWA position on COVID-19 vaccinations



The State School Teachers' Union of WA supports the position of the ACTU on vaccinations. Vaccinations are widely supported by the union movement as being the best way to avoid ongoing serious health, economic and social disruption from COVID-19 outbreaks.

The majority of workers and the general public also support vaccine uptake.

As Australia gets closer to a significant proportion of the population being vaccinated, we need to consider the best way to ensure school and college staff are protected from unvaccinated people, including children.

While vaccination does not mean complete protection from transmission/infection, it does significantly reduce the likelihood of this happening. This means, in the event of an outbreak, that the greatest likelihood of transmission or infection will come from unvaccinated students, colleagues or parents.

WHS laws require employers to provide safe, healthy workplaces. We insist that schools and colleges are COVID safe. This means safe from transmission from other staff, students and parents.

Any decision to mandate vaccination for teachers and lecturers should be made on the basis of an assessment of the risks to staff, students and their families and should be the subject of a public health order rather than left to the employer.

Should a public health order be issued covering schools, colleges and other educational institutions, the SSTUWA will support such an order and will advise members to follow such an order.

In the meantime, the SSTUWA will continue to

- Encourage members to get vaccinated.
- Ensure members have access to vaccination opportunities.
- Encourage members to access government paid leave if they experience side effects following vaccination.
- Work with the department to ensure provisions are in place for members who have medical conditions which constitute an exemption under any applicable public health order.

The SSTUWA is aware of a number of legal cases which are being heard in other states, challenging the authority of public health orders which mandate vaccination. We will keep members informed of the outcomes of these cases.

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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