

LGOIMA reference – 2022/831

21 February 2022

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Response - Official Information Request

I refer to your request for information received on 16/02/2022. Your request has been considered under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) and I provide the following information.

Request for information relating to HDC's Vaccination Policy where you believe non-vaccinated rate payers are being disadvantaged and discriminated against.

Can you please let me know how you will be calculating the refund to rates payers that are no longer able to access the services they pay for after HDC's decision at the council meeting on 9 February to implement a discriminatory vaccination policy?

Please refer to the Q&A section in the Council's website:

<https://www.horowhenua.govt.nz/CommunityPlaces/Emergency-Management/COVID-19/COVID-19-My-Vaccine-Pass-Frequently-Asked-Questions>

A ratepayer's personal choice about vaccination does not negate their responsibility to pay the full amount of rates levied against their property.

Rates are not a direct charge for services, but a property tax which helps to support a wide range of services and amenities for the entire community as well as activities to further community and economic development and enable participation in democracy.

Our services and amenities include drinking water, roads, emergency management, parks, public toilets, libraries and council-owned venues. The cost of providing our services is still there under restrictions related to the pandemic, including under the government's current COVID-19 Protection Framework (traffic light system).

Please also explain how council assessed its decision to be an exception to the regulations against discrimination as contained in the Human Rights Act 1993 and the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990.

The Council has an obligation to look after the health and safety of those using our facilities by limiting the possibility of community spread as much as we can.

Vaccine mandates comply with the Bill of Rights as the overall benefit to the community of vaccination outweighs people's individual rights.

The New Zealand Human Rights Commission [has a significant number of resources on the topic](#).

Horowhenua District Council publishes responses to Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) requests that we consider to be of wider public interest, or which relate to a subject that has been widely requested. To protect your privacy, we will not generally publish personal information about you, or information that identifies you. We will publish the LGOIMA response along with a summary of the request on our website. Requests and responses may be paraphrased.

If you have any queries regarding this information, please contact the LGOIMA Officer on 06 366 0999 or email - LGOIMAOfficer@horowhenua.govt.nz

Yours sincerely,



Lisa Slade
Executive Sponsor - LGOIMA