




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 16 November 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Coronavirus Vaccination, Police

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.00 am): Our best defence against COVID-19 is to be vaccinated. Getting vaccinated is the best way to drive Queensland's economic recovery and reunite families for Christmas. As with every decision throughout the pandemic, the Palaszczuk government is taking measured and cautious action to keep Queenslanders safe.

To support community safety, certain venues will be operated on a vaccinated only basis. This includes hospitality, indoor and outdoor entertainment venues and places like coffee shops. All through the pandemic police have exercised good judgement and compassion when dealing with COVID-19, but make no mistake: police say that if someone or a business—for example, a coffee shop business—deliberately tries to breach the new requirements for vaccinated venues, then action will be taken. Any person found in breach of a public health direction could face a penalty of up to 100 penalty units, which is about \$13,800 or six months in prison. The Police Commissioner has stated very clearly that the Queensland Police Service will be strictly enforcing these rules—because these rules are for all Queenslanders, to keep us all safe. Queenslanders, we have done so well, but if you are not yet vaccinated, now is the time to get vaccinated.

On the vaccination front, I am pleased to say that police are leading the way, with more than 99 per cent of officers now fully vaccinated, along with many of our firefighters and custodial officers. There is also a large cohort of people who are out there currently training to be police officers. Our two police academies are flat out. They are flat out because the government is making the biggest investment in policing in this state in more than 30 years. This is part of the Queensland Police Service's investment that will eventually deliver more than 2,000 extra police personnel.

These new recruits are setting a great example to their fellow Queenslanders. Every new recruit must be vaccinated before they begin training. This is entirely sensible. When they graduate from the academies and move into the community, they will be on the front line. We have seen the vital role frontline workers and volunteers have played in supporting community safety during the pandemic. By helping to keep the virus out, they have not only kept the community safe but also protected our economy.

I want to thank every member of Queensland's frontline community safety agencies for their dedicated, passionate and professional commitment to their fellow Queenslanders throughout the pandemic. We must all remember that, when it comes to these great Queenslanders, their jobs save lives, but it will be the jobs of all Queenslanders that will also save lives. Get vaccinated now and keep yourself and your loved ones safe.