

# Has UCT's Mandatory Vaccine Policy been shelved?

By  Katja Hamilton

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Staff and students at UCT will not be forced to have a Covid-19 vaccine so that they can work or study at the university. Instead the UCT Council has chosen to make vaccination voluntary, rather than mandate it.



Source: [Rxabay](#)

This is the message of the Children's Health Defense (CHD) Africa regarding UCT's Mandatory Vaccine Policy (MVP). In a [press release](#) headlined *CHD Africa Victory Over UCT Vaccine Mandate*, the organisation said: "Lawyers working for CHD Africa have facilitated this victory."

"A campaign of legal letters sent to UCT's management, and a warning that any vaccine mandate would be challenged in court, provided a powerful motivation for the retraction."

Explaining the background to this outcome, CHD Africa went on to say: "Between December 2021 and March 2022, the University of Cape Town (UCT) ran a public consultation for their draft vaccine mandate policy, which they planned to implement on 1 April."

"On 18 March, the UCT Council issued a statement admitting that the Covid-19 vaccines are "less effective" at reducing transmission of the Omicron variant. The Council also accepted that there are multiple opinions on the grave matter of mandatory vaccines, and that these are respected by Council members."

"Should mandatory vaccination policies be considered by UCT in the future, a special meeting of the Council would be required."

## **"UCT has not withdrawn its decision on the MVP"**

In a media statement, however, UCT stated: "The University of Cape Town (UCT) has not withdrawn or overturned the decision on the MVP. At its meeting on 12 March, the UCT Council confirmed its support for a MVP in principle. It therefore emphasised its view that a MVP is important for the university.

"It recognised that the context has shifted and therefore that the MVP implementation was not appropriate for now. It emphasised that it supports the MVP to be implemented should the context shift and it be needed.

"Council will obviously consider all the new facts and details in the moment should we face a time where UCT considers implementing the MVP."

CHD Africa added: "Neither the mandates nor the science on which they [mandated vaccines] would be based would have withstood a constitutional challenge. UCT's withdrawal sets a precedent for all vaccine mandates in South Africa."

CHD Africa extended its gratitude to UCT and its vaccine mandate panel for its "brave decision despite obvious pressure from its sponsors".

"Thanks to CHD Africa and other advocacy groups, this battle against oppression and medical tyranny has been won," CHD Africa said.

## **ABOUT KATJA HAMILTON**

Katja is the Finance, Property and Healthcare Editor at Bizcommunity.

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