Covid!

The Card Game

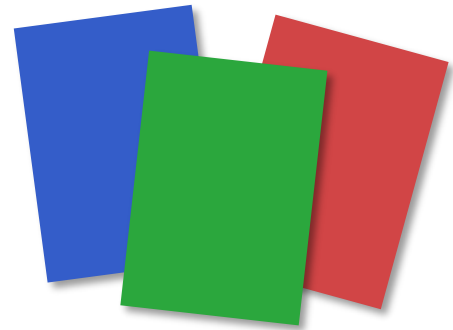## Rules Reference

Contents

Introduction

Covid! is a race between players to win four points, or – in game terms – to **Vaccinate** all '**Concerns**'.

2-4 Players, 10+.

Warning: the game includes sensitive content which younger players may find distressing. Themes of death, illness, poverty, domestic violence and mental illness.

You Will Need

-   The 55 cards that came with your copy of *Covid!*
-   Roughly 7 Trust tokens per player (not included – loose change works well)
-   A coin to decide ties

How to Play

Setup

Covid! comes with 18 green '**Vaccine**' cards, 16 blue '**Concern**' cards, and 21 red '**Event**' cards (see *Card Anatomy).* Split these into three separate decks and shuffle each deck separately.

Deal each player 4 **Concerns** and 4 **Events**. **Concerns** are public while **Events** are secret to each player. Each player places their **Concerns** face-up on the table in portrait, and keeps their **Events** in hand.

The **Vaccine** deck and remaining **Events** are placed face-down in separate piles in the centre of the table.

Each player takes 5 **Trust** tokens from a central pool.

First Time Walkthrough

The game is split into rounds. Each round begins by revealing the top **Vaccine** from the **Vaccine** deck.

Players then assess their base stats. Whoever is furthest from winning the **Vaccine** plays first. (In the case of a tie, whoever has more **Vaccinated Concerns** plays first. In the case of another tie, flip a coin to play first.)

For example, if the Vaccine is INTERNATIONAL AID, the player with the most *Health across their Concerns plays first.*

Players then take it in turns to play **Events** or **Concern Abilities** in such a way that they might win the round. A player may initiate as many **Events** or **Abilities** as they wish before passing the turn to the next player clockwise. Alternatively, a player can fold, forfeiting the round (see *Game Mechanics*).

*Note: unless otherwise stated, **Events** and **Abilities** can act on players who did not initiate them. For example, ECONOMIC DOWNTURN can be used to reduce a* different *player's Economy.*

Play continues around the circle indefinitely until all players except one have folded or been made unable to play. The remaining player wins the round. They place the **Vaccine** card beneath one of their **Concerns** – this **Concern** is now '**Vaccinated**'. If this player has now **Vaccinated** all their **Concerns**, they win the game (see *Game Mechanics – Winning a Round*).

Players then draw 1 **Event** card each (regardless of how many they played). When there are no **Events** remaining, all discarded **Events** are reshuffled and made into a new **Event** deck.

The **Health**, **Economy** and **Links** of all **Concerns** are reset to their base values, and a new round begins.

Game Mechanics

Health, Economy and Links

Health and **Economy** are the two stats given to every **Concern** (see *Card Anatomy – Concerns*). They are used to win **Vaccines** and can be altered by **Abilities** and **Events**. They reset to their base values at the end of every round.

Links are connections between **Concerns** that are formed or broken by **Abilities** and **Events**. Like **Health** and **Economy**, these are used to win **Vaccines** and reset at the end of the round. **Links** are 'two-way': if PERFORMER **Links** to INFLUENCER, then INFLUENCER is also **Linked** to PERFORMER and this only constitutes one **Link**.

Multiple **Concerns** may **Link** to one specific **Concern**. For example, if CEO is **Linked** to BIG PHARMA and CAREHOMES, then CEO is said to have 2 **Links**. However, BIG PHARMA and CAREHOMES only have 1 **Link** each and are not **Linked** to one another.

5

Trust

Certain **Events** or **Abilities** require a sacrifice of **Trust** to be played. These cannot be played unless the player 'spends' the appropriate number of **Trust** tokens from their personal collection into the central pool.

Other **Events** and **Abilities** enable players to gain **Trust**. When these are played, players take the appropriate number of tokens from the central pool and add them to their personal collection.

Kneeling, Standing and Abilities

Certain **Concerns** have **Abilities** which may be triggered by 'kneeling' the **Concern**. When a **Concern** is in portrait orientation it is said to be standing, and may be knelt by rotating it to landscape orientation.

Once a **Concern** is kneeling, it cannot be knelt again until it has 'stood' once more. **Concerns** cannot stand of their own volition, but certain **Events** can be played to stand them.

"May Play" Conditions

Certain **Vaccines** such as FOR THE FRONT LINE carry conditions like "only *Workers* may play". This means that only cards with the *Worker* trait can contribute **Health** or **Economy** to the round or trigger **Abilities**. Additionally, **Links** to non-*Worker* cards do not count. However, other cards may still be knelt or stood by **Events** such as PLANDEMIC – "Stand all **Concerns** controlled by you".
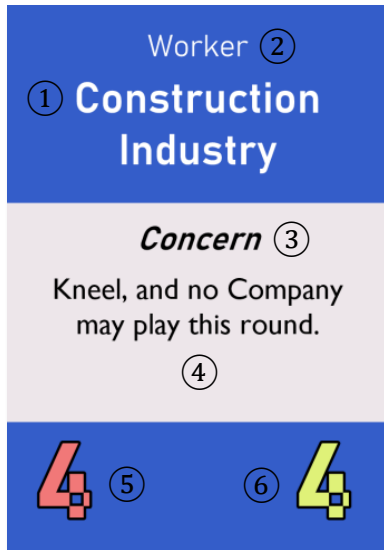
Winning a Round

If a player wins a round, but is unable to **Vaccinate** a **Concern**, the **Vaccine** passes to the player who came in second place and so on until someone is able to **Vaccinate** a **Concern**. If no one can **Vaccinate** a **Concern**, the **Vaccine** is discarded, and a new round begins.

> *For example, if the Vaccine is SUPER-COLD STORAGE and the winning player controls an already-Vaccinated BIG PHARMA (which carries the highest Economy), that player must pass the Vaccine to the player in 2nd place.*

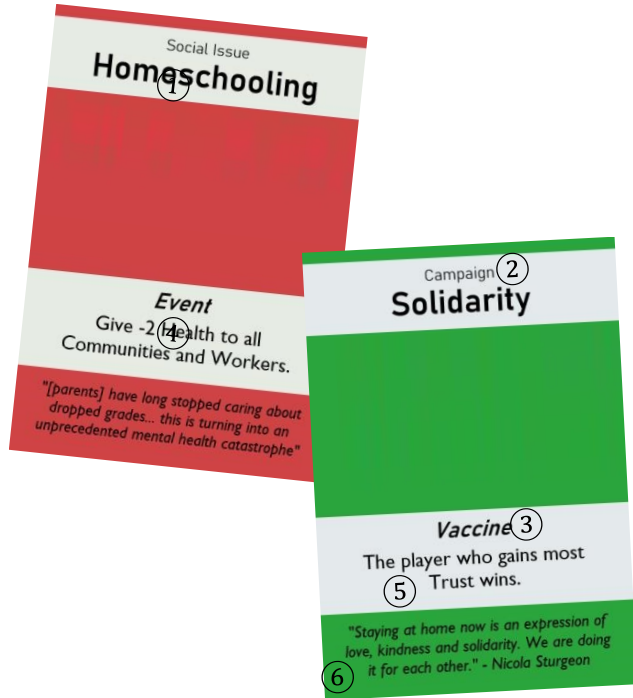© Alastair Barron 2020

Card Anatomy

Concerns

①	Name	The name of the Concern.	

Worker ②
① **Construction Industry**

Concern ③

Kneel, and no Company may play this round.
④

4 ⑤   ⑥ 4

②	Traits	Further information about the card. Concerns are grouped into *Communities*, *Companies*, *Workers* and *Figures*. These traits have importance for certain Events and Vaccines.
③	Card Type	Along with the blue colour and layout, identifies this card as a Concern.
④	Concern Ability	Usually referred to simply as "Abilities". Various actions that Concerns may initiate by kneeling, or passive effects that are always active.
⑤	Health	The number on the left – coloured red – is this Concern's Health rating.
⑥	Economy	The number on the right – coloured yellow – is this Concern's Economy rating.

Events / Vaccines

①	Name	The name of the Event/Vaccine.
②	Traits	Further information about the card – of no relevance to gameplay.
③	Card Type	Along with the red or green colour, identifies this card as an Event or Vaccine respectively.
④	Effect (Events only)	Describes the effects of playing this Event card. May alter the Health or Economy or Links of Concerns, or otherwise alter the state of the game.
⑤	Win Condition (Vaccines only)	Describes the win condition of this Vaccine. Players will have to achieve the highest or lowest stat or some other condition to win the Vaccine and thereby win the round.
⑥	Flavour Text	A quote or insight regarding the card's real-world basis – of no relevance to gameplay.

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Find flavour text references in the list below. Events and Vaccines are grouped together and listed in alphabetical order.

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Campaign
Any Means Necessary

Vaccine

The player who gains most Economy wins.

"[we] will not hesitate to use any instrument - conventional and unconventional - to mitigate the impact of Covid-19"

Social Issue
Chokepoints

Vaccine

The Concern with most Links is Vaccinated.

"students have been widely criticised for spreading coronavirus"

Movement
Collaboration

Vaccine

The player with most Links wins.

"we are scientists, physicians, funders and manufacturers who have come together as part of an international collaboration... "

Social Issue
Faulty Investment

Vaccine

The player with highest total Economy sacrifices a Vaccine.

"The question remains: what happens if a vaccine doesn't actually work?"

Campaign
For the Front Line

Vaccine

Only Workers may play. The player with most Links wins and Vaccinates a Worker.

"it is believed that care home residents and workers will be the first to receive the vaccine, followed by front line workers"

Social Issue
Homogeneity

Vaccine

The player with the most Concerns of equal Health wins and Vaccinates one of those Concerns.

"attempts at pretending [to be homogenous] created nightmarish situations for those who did not fit in"

Campaign
International Aid

Vaccine

The player with lowest total Health wins.

"no one country can respond to the devastating impact of this invisible killer"

Social Issue
Old Boys Network

Vaccine

Only Concerns with Economy 6 or higher may play. The player with most Links wins and Vaccinates one of those Concerns.

"nearly a third of the UK's biggest companies largely rely on personal networks to identify new board members"

Movement
Philanthropy

Vaccine

The player with most Vaccines chooses an opponent's Concern to Vaccinate.

"[doses are] reserved for high-income countries, leaving potentially very little for [low-income] countries"

Campaign
Political Outreach

Vaccine

The player with lowest Trust wins. The Concern with lowest Health is Vaccinated.

"prosperity must help more than the prosperous and good fortune must help more than the fortunate" - Gordon Brown

Infrastructure
Public Health

Vaccine

The player with highest Trust wins.

"the worst is a vaccine that's safe, a vaccine that's effective... - and people just don't take it"

Campaign
Social Enterprise

Vaccine

Only Concerns with Health 5 or lower may play. The player with highest Economy wins and Vaccinates one of those Concerns.

"social entrepreneurs are ready, able, and willing to reach underserved groups"

Campaign
Solidarity

Vaccine

The player who gains most Trust wins.

"Staying at home now is an expression of love, kindness and solidarity. We are doing it for each other." - Nicola Sturgeon

Infrastructure
Super-Cold Storage

Vaccine

The player with highest total Economy wins.

"the vaccine must be kept at minus 70 degrees Celsius... don't expect [it to be] widely available anytime soon"

Infrastructure
Vaccination on Entry

Vaccine

In order of descending vaccines, players submit a Concern. The Concern with lowest Health is Vaccinated. In reverse, players take a Concern.

Image: measles vaccines for Venezuelans entering Columbia.

Campaign
Warp Speed

Vaccine

The player who sacrifices most Trust wins.

"more than $6 billion in Operation Warp Speed funding has been routed through an intermediary"

Social Issue
Widening the Gap

Vaccine

The Concern with highest Health is Vaccinated.

"COVID-19 is expected to make inequality even worse [with] disproportionate effects on vulnerable workers and women"

Social Issue
Work From Home

Vaccine

The Concern with highest Economy is Vaccinated.

"like everything, Covid-19 is dividing the rich from the poor"

Community	Company	Community
Affluent Community	**Big Pharma**	**Carehomes**
Concern	*Concern*	*Concern*
Kneel to give any Concern +2 Economy.	Sacrifice 3 Trust and kneel to give BIG PHARMA double Economy.	Kneel to Link CAREHOMES to any Concern. Give both Concerns -3 Health.
6 6	5 10	2 3
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Worker	Worker	Worker
CEO	**Construction Industry**	**Frontline Workers**
Concern	*Concern*	*Concern*
Kneel to Link CEO to a Company and gain 1 Trust.	Kneel, and no Company may play this round.	FRONTLINE WORKERS Links to all Concerns controlled by you.
6 9	4 4	3 2
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Figure	Community	Worker
Influencer	**Isolated Elite**	**Performer**
Concern	*Concern*	*Concern*
Kneel to Link the two Concerns you control with highest and lowest Economy.	ISOLATED ELITE cannot be Linked.	Kneel to Link PERFORMER to any Concern and gain 2 Trust.
7 3	5 8	4 3
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Figure
Politician

Concern

Sacrifice X Trust and kneel to give POLITICIAN plus or minus X Health or Economy.

4   **4**

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Worker
Researchers

Concern

Kneel to move a vaccine from a Concern you control to another.

5   **4**

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Company
Restaurant

Concern

When EAT OUT TO HELP OUT is played, gain 2 Trust.

4   **6**

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Company
Small Venue

Concern

Kneel to give SMALL VENUE +8 Economy and gain 1 Trust. SMALL VENUE can never stand again.

4   **0**

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Figure
Speaker

Concern

Kneel to Link any two Concerns. Kneel one of those Concerns and do not trigger its ability.

4   **4**

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Company
Tech Company

Concern

TECH COMPANY gets -1 Economy for every Vaccinated Concern controlled by you.

6   **11**

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Community
The Homeless

Concern

Kneel to gain 2 trust for every Link to THE HOMELESS.

1   **0**

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Infrastructure
Botched Rollout

Event

Sacrifice 1 Trust. Give one Concern +5 Health.

Developed for child immunisations, the system vaccinates older patients - those most at risk - last.

Movement
Cycling Uptake

Event

Give all Workers double Health.

"cycling in the UK has increased by as much as 200% over the coronavirus lockdown"

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Social Issue
Domestic Violence

Event
Give any Concern you control zero Health .

"Refuge has reported a 700% increase in calls to its helpline in a single day"

March 27th
Dominic Cummings

Event
Sacrifice 2 Trust, or 3 if you control POLITICIAN.

"the public strongly believed Mr Cummings [had] 'undermined compliance with lockdown rules'"

Policy
Eat Out to Help Out

Event
Give every Concern you control +2 Economy.

"the release of pent-up demand with the easing of lockdown is driving the sharpest rebound in economic growth"

Social Issue
Economic Downturn

Event
Give any three Concerns -1, -2 and -3 Economy respectively.

"Britain has entered the deepest recession since records began"

Campaign
Fatima's Next Job

Event
Sacrifice 1 Trust. Give each Concern you control +1 Economy.

"ballet dancing is easy... it isn't hard like cyber"

March 16th
First Lockdown

Event
Break all links between Concerns you control.

"I must give the British people a very simple instruction: You must stay at home." - Boris Johnson

Movement
Free School Meals

Event
Gain 1 Trust for every Concern you control with Economy 3 or lower.

"When you wake up this morning and run your shower... think about parents who have had their water turned off"

Social Issue
Homeschooling

Event
Give -2 Health to all Communities and Workers.

"[parents] have long stopped caring about dropped grades... this is turning into an unprecedented mental health catastrophe"

Social Issue
Nowhere To Go

Event
Stand all Concerns you control with Economy 4 or lower.

"my husband earns day-by-day, we live from hand to mouth, what should we do?"

Policy
Open for Takeaway

Event

Give all Companies +2 Economy.

"UK households have ordered nearly 50 million meals in the past three months from one delivery service alone"

March 11th
Pandemic Declared

Event

Give every Concern you control +1 Health.

118,000 cases in over 110 countries and territories with sustained risk of further spread

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Movement
Plandemic

Event

You automatically lose the round. Stand all Concerns controlled by you.

"these are not measures to control a virus, these are measures to control you"
- Piers Corbyn

Vaccine Development
Precautions

Event

No player can win this round. Each player may stand 1 Concern.

"the average vaccine, taken from the preclinical phase, requires a development timeline of 10.7 years"

Policy
Promises

Event

Flip a coin. Heads, gain 1 Trust. Tails, sacrifice 1 Trust.

"the prime minister promised..."

November 5th
Second Lockdown

Event

Sacrifice 1 Trust. Break all links between Concerns you control and give these Concerns -1 Economy.

"It's winter and there's nowhere to go"

Policy
Self-Employed Support

Event

Choose a Worker, flip a coin. Heads, give them double Economy. Tails, give them zero Economy.

"this is no comfort to young people starting out in the creative industries"

September 2nd
The First Audience

Event

Link a Community to up to two other Communities.

"in the midst of crises and storms, the Lord challenges us and invites us to reawaken and activate this solidarity" - Pope Francis

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June 20th - Guernsey
The First Nightclub

Event

Gain 1 Trust. Give any Concern +1 Health.

"this will be bigger than the Saturday before Christmas"

Social Issue

The Unfolding Disaster

Event

Give any two Concerns half Health.

"more than 400,000 elderly people in carehomes are caught in an unfolding disaster"