

# Rising Cases and the Delta Variant Spur Over 50 Health Care Groups to Support Mandatory Vaccinations for Health Care Employees

Article By:

Alexis L. Angell

Blake H. Reeves

David E. Bird

---

On Monday, July 26, 2021, a group of nearly 60 major medical organizations, including the American Medical Association, American Nursing Association, American Pharmacists Association, American College of Physicians, American College of Preventative Medicine, and American Public Health Association advocated for all health care and long-term care employers to require their employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

This [joint statement](#), comes in the wake of the recent surge in “highly contagious variants, including the Delta variant, and significant numbers of unvaccinated people, COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths” in the United States. The joint statement also stressed the ethical obligations for health care workers, “[Vaccination] is the logical fulfillment of the ethical commitment of all health care workers to put patients as well as residents of long-term care facilities first and take all steps necessary to ensure their health and well-being.”

In recent weeks, an increasing number of hospitals and health care systems have announced COVID-19 vaccination requirements for their employees. On July 21, 2021, the American Hospital Association released a statement urging all health care workers to be fully vaccinated. The [statement](#) encourages health care systems to take certain steps to facilitate an orderly roll out of any mandatory policy, including:

- Providing exemptions to the policy for medical reasons and accommodations (e.g., a sincerely held religious belief);
- Following relevant CDC guidelines, OSHA requirements, and other applicable state or federal law and/or guidelines regarding the use of personal protective equipment and other infection control practices for unvaccinated workers who have been granted an exemption or accommodation;

- 
- Implementing the policy in compliance with applicable local and state laws;
  - Following CDC and FDA guidelines on how to determine which workers are eligible and should be prioritized for vaccination;
  - Monitoring data relating to FDA authorized or approved vaccines that are being distributed;
  - Providing workers with information about the efficacy and safety of the COVID-19 vaccine in an effort to encourage voluntary vaccinations; and
  - Offering flexibility in workers' schedules to permit time for workers to receive the vaccine and recover from potential side effects.

Also announced on Monday, the Department of Veterans Affairs became the first federal agency to mandate all 115,000 of its frontline health care workers who work in Veterans Health Administration facilities, visit VHA facilities, or provide direct care to those VA serves—including physicians, dentists, podiatrists, optometrists, registered nurses, physician assistants, expanded-function dental auxiliaries, and chiropractors—to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Each employee will have eight (8) weeks to be fully vaccinated.

© Polsinelli PC, Polsinelli LLP in California

---

National Law Review, Volume XI, Number 209

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/rising-cases-and-delta-variant-spur-over-50-health-care-groups-to-support-mandatory>