

Mandatory Vaccination Programs – A U.S. Requirement?

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Earlier this evening, the [President](#) of the United States announced a series of actions aimed at confronting the COVID-19 pandemic. For one thing, President Biden stated he is signing an Executive Order requiring all healthcare workers to be fully vaccinated. He also stated that he is signing another Executive Order requiring all Executive Branch employees, as well as all employees of federal contractors, to be fully vaccinated.

In addition, the [Department of Labor](#) released a statement that the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#) (OSHA) is working on an emergency rule requiring all employers with 100 or more employees to mandate vaccinations or weekly COVID-19 testing for all employees.

President Biden also discussed a number of other programs aimed at expanding testing and vaccination programs as well as other steps to encourage mask-wearing. For example, the President has directed the [Department of Transportation](#) to double fines for those who refuse to wear a mask when traveling on airplanes, trains and buses.

There will obviously be much more discussion and explanation on the details of the various announcement and requirements in the coming days. However, for now, we know this much:

- Healthcare workers must be fully vaccinated
- Executive branch employees must be fully vaccinated
- Federal contractor employees must be fully vaccinated
- OSHA is being tasked with issuing an emergency regulation that will require large employers – those with at least 100 employees – to require vaccinations or weekly testing for all employees
- Mandatory mask wearing on public transportation will be enforced thru a doubling of fines
- Over the next three months, retailers will sell at-home test kits at cost, and free testing is happening at pharmacies

Many employers have already started to implement mandatory vaccination programs. This became more likely when the FDA provided full authorization for the Pfizer vaccine. With the President's comments and actions – we can expect a significant increase in the number of employers implementing such programs.

In the President's words: "This is the Pandemic of the Unvaccinated." And, these steps are aimed at ending that circumstance. Whether they will be successful or not will be seen.

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