



## **Position Statement on Immunization of Health Care Workers**

**Approved by the ACP Board of Regents on September 14, 2021**

- 1. The American College of Physicians recommends that for the safety of patients and the public, fellow health care workers, and the individual health care worker, all health care workers should be immunized at the intervals recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention against transmissible infectious diseases, unless there is a clear medical contraindication or other exemption under applicable employment law.**
  
- 2. The American College of Physicians supports requiring all health care workers to be vaccinated as a condition of employment against highly transmissible diseases that pose a substantial risk of transmission resulting in severe illness, hospitalizations and deaths which could be prevented or reduced by requiring safe and effective vaccinations against the disease as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This may include vaccines with emergency use authorization from the Food and Drug Administration.<sup>i</sup> This should be combined with other approaches to increase immunization along with science-based infection control protocols.**
  - a. The American College of Physicians encourages health care employers to develop mechanisms to facilitate and support staff in becoming vaccinated including education and outreach, and resources to counter vaccine misinformation, such as the *Health Misinformation: The US Surgeon General's Advisory on Building a Healthy Information Environment*.<sup>ii</sup> Employers should remove barriers to employees getting vaccinated, including offering paid time off to get vaccinated and any additional time off that may be required because of short-term side effects associated with vaccination, without charging that against their usual paid leave benefits.**
  - b. The American College of Physicians is committed to health equity and recognizes the historical and continued mistrust of health care institutions by individuals, including marginalized populations subject to discrimination and racism, many of whom work in health care. ACP recommends that employers and health care professional societies and organizations commit to ongoing engagement, outreach, education, and provision of resources to all including historically marginalized groups to support informed vaccination decision making.**

- 3. The American College of Physicians recognizes that some health care workers cannot be vaccinated because a clear medical contraindication exists, and these individuals should be exempted from employer vaccine requirements. While ACP believes that allowing exemptions based on non-medical reasons poses a risk to public health and our patients, we acknowledge that applicable federal laws and regulations that recognize religious exemptions as well as other relevant equal opportunity, anti-discriminatory and employment laws need to be considered.**

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<sup>i</sup> Whether Section 564 of the Food, Drug and Cosmetics Act Prohibits Entities from Requiring the Use of a Vaccine Subject to an Emergency Use Authorization. Memorandum Opinion for the Deputy Counsel to the President. 6 July 2021. Accessed 3 August 2021 at <https://www.justice.gov/olc/file/1415446/download>.

<sup>ii</sup> Health Misinformation: The US Surgeon General's Advisory on Building a Healthy Information Environment. 2021. Accessed 8 August 2021 at <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-misinformation-advisory.pdf>.