



## **Position Statement on Immunization Policies to Protect the Public**

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

- 1. The American College of Physicians supports immunization of the public according to the recommendations and standards established by the U.S. Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), National Vaccine Advisory Committee (NVAC), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).**
- 2. The American College of Physicians supports state laws designed to promote all recommended immunizations.**
- 3. The American College of Physicians calls on states to pass legislation to eliminate any existing exemptions, except for clear medical contraindications, from their immunization laws.**
- 4. The American College of Physicians believes that employers and schools may appropriately require proof of vaccination for recommended immunizations for 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. This should be combined with other approaches to increase immunization along with science-based infection control protocols.**
  - a. The American College of Physicians opposes state laws, regulations or executive orders that prohibit employers and schools from instituting such requirements.**
  - b. During a pandemic or other public health emergency for highly transmissible diseases that might result in severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths which could be prevented or reduced by requiring safe and effective vaccinations, the American College of Physicians supports appropriate federal and state regulations to expand vaccination rates, including requiring employers and government agencies to mandate that their employees show proof of age-appropriate vaccination, and requiring organizations that receive government funding to show such proof of vaccination by their employees and contractors.**
  - c. The American College of Physicians recognizes that some individuals 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.

- d. Individuals subject to such requirements should first have meaningful opportunity to voluntarily accept vaccination.
- e. 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.
- f. The American College of Physicians recognizes the historical and continued mistrust of health care institutions by individuals from marginalized populations subject to discrimination and racism. ACP recommends that employers, working in concert with public health officials and trusted community leaders, commit to ongoing engagement, outreach, education, and deployment of resources to support all in informed vaccination decision making.