

Statement Supporting OSHA's COVID Vaccination or Testing Requirement

November 18, 2021

Tragically, over 750,000 Americans have died of COVID since the beginning of 2020.¹ Many thousands have died from COVID contracted on the job, such as while caring for patients, supporting the elderly, preparing food for customers, selling goods in stores, and protecting the public from crime, fires, and other threats.

For example, in North Carolina nearly a quarter of COVID clusters are linked to workplace, retail and food settings.² COVID has also inflicted many other societal harms including loss of educational achievement and job opportunities, and increases in mental health challenges and social isolation, all of which have disproportionately hurt the most vulnerable.^{3,4}

To overcome COVID and the highly transmissible Delta variant, and return to “normal,” we need to substantially increase the vaccination rate from its current level of under 60 percent. We need to vaccinate about another quarter of the American population, roughly 80 million more people.

Vaccines are effective in preventing COVID cases, hospitalizations and, most importantly, deaths. Compared to the vaccinated, the unvaccinated are 11 times more likely to die.⁵ A recent study shows that in the United States, vaccines are five times more effective in preventing serious illness and hospitalization than a previous COVID infection.⁶ Any vaccine risk is considerably less common and less serious than the consequences of contracting COVID.

Finally, we know that vaccine mandates are effective. When employers require workers to get vaccinated, vaccination rates increase to over 90 percent.⁷⁻⁹ This is especially true for people who intended to get vaccinated but have just delayed or procrastinated. Courts have repeatedly supported the legality of employer mandates.

We — physicians, nurses and advanced practice clinicians, health experts, and health care professional societies — fully support the requirement that workers at companies with over 100 workers be vaccinated or tested. This requirement by the Occupational, Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is reasonable and essential to protect workers.

We encourage all businesses with 100 or more employees to not delay in implementing this standard.

Requiring masks for all unvaccinated workers by the December 5th deadline will be key to keeping customers and fellow workers safe during the holiday shopping and travel season. And getting workers vaccinated or tested by the January 4th deadline will further protect workplaces and communities, bringing us closer to normal life and the end of this pandemic.

From the first day of this pandemic, businesses have wanted to vanquish this virus. Now is their chance to step up and show they are serious. Implementing these commonsense OSHA standards is an important step for our workers, businesses, and the nation as a whole.

References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. COVID Data Tracker. <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#datatracker-home> [Accessed 12 November 2021].
2. NC Department of Health and Human Services. COVID-19 Clusters in North Carolina. <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/media/725/download> [Accessed 12 November 2021].
3. Dorn E, Hancock B, Sarakatsannis J, Viruleg E. COVID-19 and learning loss - disparities grow and students need help. McKinsey & Company. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/covid-19-and-learning-loss-disparities-grow-and-students-need-help> [Accessed 12 November 2021].
4. Czeisler M, et al. Mental Health, Substance Use, and Suicidal Ideation During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, June 24–30, 2020. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), 69(32);1049-1057. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6932a1.htm> [Accessed 12 November 2021].
5. Sullivan P. CDC data: Unvaccinated 11 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than fully vaccinated. *The Hill*. <https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/576980-cdc-data-unvaccinated-11-times-more-likely-to-die-from-covid-19-than-fully> [Accessed 12 November 2021].
6. Bozio C, et al. Laboratory-Confirmed COVID-19 Among Adults Hospitalized with COVID-19–Like Illness with Infection-Induced or mRNA Vaccine-Induced SARS-CoV-2 Immunity — Nine States, January–September 2021. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), 70(44);1539-1544. https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7044e1.htm?s_cid=mm7044e1_w [Accessed 12 November 2021].
7. Hirsch L. After Mandate, 91% of Tyson Workers Are Vaccinated. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/30/business/tyson-foods-vaccination-mandate-rate.html> [Accessed 12 November 2021].
8. Marcos C. United Airlines to Fire Workers Who Refused to Get a Vaccination. *The New York Times*. Available from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/29/business/united-airlines-vaccine-mandate.html> [Accessed 12 November 2021].
9. Hubler S. ‘Mandates Are Working’: Employer Ultimatums Lift Vaccination Rates, So Far. *The New York Times*. Available from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/30/us/california-vaccine-mandate-health-care.html> [Accessed 12 November 2021].

Signatories

Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy (AMCP)
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI)
American Academy of Emergency Medicine (AAEM) American
Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
American Association of Clinical Endocrinology (AACE)
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACCP)
American College of Chest Physicians (CHEST)
American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP)
American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG)
American College of Medical Toxicology (ACMT)
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)
American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians (ACOEP)
American College of Physicians (ACP)
American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM)
American College of Surgeons (ACS)
American Epilepsy Society (AES)
American Geriatrics Society (AGS)
American Medical Association (AMA)
American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association (AMRPA)
American Medical Women's Association (AMWA)
American Public Health Association (APHA)
American Psychiatric Association (APA)
American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP)
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP)
American Society of Hematology (ASH)
American Society of Nephrology (ASN)
American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology (ASPHO)
American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO) American
Thoracic Society (ATS)
Association for Clinical Oncology (ASCO)
Association of Academic Health Centers (AAHC)
Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)
Association of Bioethics Program Directors (ABPD)
Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses (APHON)
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses (ARN)
College of American Pathologists (CAP)
Council of Medical Specialty Societies (CMSS)
Doctors for America (DFA)

Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA)
Illinois Pharmacists Association (IPhA)
Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA)
National Association of EMS Physicians (NAEMSP)
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP)
National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)
National League for Nursing (NLN)
National Medical Association (NMA)
National Society of Genetic Counselors (NSGC)
New Hampshire Nurses Association (NHNA)
Nurses Who Vaccinate (NWV)
Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (OADN)
Pediatric Infectious Disease Society (PIDS)
Society of Emergency Medicine Physician Assistants (SEMPA)
Society of Gynecologic Oncology (SGO)
Society of Hospital Medicine (SHM)
Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists (SIDP)
Society of Interventional Radiology (SIR)
Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging (SNMMI)
The John A. Hartford Foundation (JAHF)
The Patient Is U Foundation (TPIU)
Transcultural Nursing Society (TCNS)

Nahid Bhadelia, MD, MALD

Founding Director, Boston University Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases Policy and Research

Uché Blackstock, MD

Founder and CEO, Advancing Health Equity

Oni Blackstock, MD, MHS

Founder and Executive Director, Health Justice

Luciana Borio, MD

Rick Bright, PhD

Former U.S. HHS Deputy Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response and Director of BARDA

Esther Choo, MD, MPH
Professor of Emergency Medicine, Oregon Health & Science University

Cedric Dark, MD, MPH, FACEP
*Assistant Professor | Emergency Medicine
Baylor College of Medicine*

Natalie Dean, PhD
Assistant Professor, Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University

Carlos Del Río, MD
*Distinguished Professor of Medicine, Emory University School of Medicine
International Secretary for the National Academy of Medicine*

Mark Dybul, MD
*Professor of Medicine, Georgetown University
Former Head of PEPFAR and The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria*

Ezekiel J. Emanuel, MD, PhD
Vice Provost for Global Initiatives, University of Pennsylvania

Jeremy Samuel Faust, MD, MS
*Brigham and Women's Hospital Department of Emergency Medicine/Division of Health Policy
Public Health
Harvard Medical School*

Tom Frieden, MD, MPH
President and CEO, Resolve to Save Lives

Akiko Iwasaki, PhD
*Waldemar Von Zedtwitz Professor of Immunobiology and Molecular Cellular and
Developmental Biology
Yale University*

Ashish K. Jha, MD, MPH
Dean, Brown University School of Public Health

Krutika Kuppalli, MD, FIDSA
*Chair, Global Health Committee
Infectious Diseases Society of America*

Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, MD, MBA
President Emerita, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Syra Madad, DHSc, MSc, MCP
*Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School
Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases, Boston University*

David Michaels, PhD, MPH
*Professor, Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, Milken Institute School of
Public Health, The George Washington University
Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health 2009-2017*

Michael Joseph Mina, MD, PhD
Epidemiologist, Immunologist and Physician

John P. Moore, PhD
Professor of Microbiology and Immunology, Weill Cornell Medicine

Saad B. Omer, MBBS, MPH, PhD
Director, Yale Institute for Global Health

Michael Osterholm, PhD, MPH
*Regents Professor, McKnight Presidential Endowed Chair in Public Health; Director, Center
for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, University of Minnesota*

Saskia Popescu, PhD, MPH, MA, CIC
*Assistant Professor, Biodefense Program - Schar School of Policy and Government
George Mason University*

Megan L. Ranney, MD, MPH
*Professor of Emergency Medicine & Associate Dean of Strategy & Innovation, School of Public
Health & Alpert Medical School, Brown University*

Irwin Redlener, MD, FAAP
*Senior Research Scholar, Earth Institute at Columbia University
Clinical Professor of Pediatrics, Albert Einstein College of Medicine*

Andy Slavitt, MBA

Former White House Senior Advisor COVID Response

Former Acting CMS Administrator

Craig Spencer MD, MPH

Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine and Population and Family Health

Columbia University Irving Medical Center

Eric Topol, MD

Executive VP and Professor, Scripps Research

Seth Trueger, MD, MPH, FACEP

Northwestern University

Robert M. Wachter, MD

Chair, Department of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco

Michelle A. Williams, ScD

Dean of the Faculty, Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health, & Angelopoulos Professor in

Public Health and International Development