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# Bello says ‘no vaccine, no work’ policy illegal

By CNN Philippines Staff (/cnn-website/search/?queryStr=CNN Philippines Staff)

Published Mar 6, 2021 4:30:22 PM

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**Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, March 6)** — Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III said no worker should be forced to be vaccinated against COVID-19 prior to returning to work, noting that a policy requiring such is illegal.

“Hindi pwede na pilitin mo ang isang tao na magpabakuna kung ayaw nya and lalo hindi pwede na gawin mong kundisyon para makapasok siya na kailangang magpabakuna muna sya. That is a very illegal policy,” he said during the Laging Handa briefing on Saturday.

[Translation: You cannot force a person to undergo vaccination if he does not want to and you cannot make it a condition that a worker should get vaccinated first before physically returning to work.]

Bello also said that workers should give their consent on whether they are willing to get a vaccine shot or not.

This is in relation to reports that there are workers being required to be inoculated first before physically reporting to work.

The Association of Labor Unions earlier said that they have received complaints that there are workers who have been told by their superiors that they would not be allowed to report to work unless they participate in the company-sponsored vaccine rollout.

Some are also being threatened to be placed on floating status until they get inoculated, while another group said they will be required to present proof that they really received vaccine.

Bello said no labor group has filed a complaint yet and an advisory will be released on Monday regarding the said matter. Violators will be issued with a compliance order and affected employees will still have to be paid their salary, he added.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III previously said that [he is against proposals to require employees to get vaccinated first](https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2021/3/3/No-vaccine-no-work-policy-Duque.html), (https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2021/3/3/No-vaccine-no-work-policy-Duque.html) noting that workers have been physically going to work prior to the arrival of the vaccines.

Bello then encouraged Filipinos to get vaccinated once they become available since this is “the best way for us to ensure our return to normalcy.”

Currently, the country has around 1 million doses of the Sinovac and AstraZeneca vaccines combined, which is still not enough to immunize 1.7 million healthcare workers across the country.



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