

## THE EPOCH TIMES



President Joe Biden speaks on workers rights and labor unions in the East Room at the White House in Washington on Sept. 8, 2021. (Kevin Dietsch/Getty Images)

## EXECUTIVE BRANCH

# Biden Plans to Require Vaccines or Weekly Testing for 80 Million Private-Sector Workers

BY JACK PHILLIPS September 9, 2021 Updated: September 10, 2021

**A** Print

President [Joe Biden](#) will direct the Department of Labor to develop a rule that companies with more than 100 employees will require vaccinations or once-per-week testing for their workers, potentially affecting tens of millions of U.S. private-sector employees, [according](#) to the White House.

The administration's rule will require that "all employers with 100 or more employees to ensure their workforce is fully vaccinated or require any workers who remain unvaccinated to produce a negative test result on at least a weekly basis before coming to work," which will affect more than 80 million workers in the private sector.

During remarks on Sept. 9, Biden said that the United States “can and will turn the tide” against [COVID-19](#) by mass vaccinations, while casting blame “at the 80 million” people who haven’t been vaccinated. “We’re in a tough stretch,” he said. “This is not about freedom or personal choice” but is about protection against COVID-19.

The president further claimed the “unvaccinated” are “crowding our hospitals” and said vaccines provide protection against COVID-19 hospitalizations.

The Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) will issue an Emergency Temporary Standard to implement the requirement, the White House document stated. It didn’t mention religious exemptions or individuals whose doctors have recommended against getting COVID-19 shots.

Biden will sign an executive order [requiring most federal employees and contractors to get a COVID-19 vaccine](#) without the option of getting regular testing, according to the document. Federal workers unions suggested on Sept. 9 that they would accept the vaccine mandate. It isn’t clear if the U.S. Postal Service will be under the new mandate.

“As part of this effort, the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Indian Health Service, and the National Institute of Health will complete implementation of their previously announced vaccination requirements that cover 2.5 million people,” the document states.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki speaks to reporters in Washington on Aug. 24, 2021. (Drew Angerer/Getty Images)

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COVID-19 is the illness caused by the [CCP \(Chinese Communist Party\) virus](#).

The new measures are being unveiled as part of a more aggressive attempt to push for vaccination.

Such mandates will likely create more opposition. A recent Gallup poll found that about 52 percent favored employer vaccine mandates but 38 percent opposed, with 29 percent saying they were strongly opposed.

A number of unions also have issued statements in recent weeks saying they are opposed to vaccine mandates, including some hospital workers unions, firefighters unions, and police unions.

Some other unions have voiced opposition to vaccine mandates. Hospital workers with Service Employee International Union 1199 held a rally in July to oppose a mandate imposed by New York-Presbyterian Hospital in Manhattan. Firefighter and police unions from Chicago to Newark, New Jersey, are also opposing mandates.

The plan has received widespread criticism from Republicans and conservatives who said that it's tantamount to federal overreach.

"My legal team is standing by ready to file our lawsuit the minute [Biden] files his unconstitutional rule. This gross example of federal intrusion will not stand," South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem [wrote](#) on Twitter.

Rep. Andy Biggs (R-Ariz.) [wrote](#) that he'll introduce a measure to block what he called an "egregious assault on Americans' freedom and liberty," adding that "we must fight against these attempts to force vaccine mandates on the American people."

Under the plan, the administration would also require vaccinations for some 17 million health care workers at hospitals and other institutions that participate in Medicaid and Medicare programs, or for programs serving disabled and older Americans.

Biden also will use the federal government's authority under the Defense Production Act to spur companies to produce COVID-19 tests, which will then be sold at large retailers around the country.

Meanwhile, the plan is also calling on entertainment venues such as arenas, concert halls, and others to mandate vaccine passports or show a negative test to enter.

"Our overarching objective here is to reduce the number of unvaccinated Americans," White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki said on Sept. 9. "We want to reduce that number, decrease hospitalizations and deaths, and allow our children to go to school safely."

The White House also plans to offer booster shots for “fully vaccinated” individuals and has a goal of Sept. 20 to begin rolling them out. The World Health Organization and other groups have said that with limited global vaccine supplies and production, wealthier countries need to issue a moratorium on boosters until more people are vaccinated around the world.

According to the White House fact sheet, the administration also will continue to mandate masks on federal property and aboard public transportation.

Previously, the White House stated that the federal government can’t mandate vaccines nationwide, but it has pressured school districts, businesses, and other entities to require shots.

*Reuters contributed to this report.*



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