

MAY 01, 2023

The Biden-Harris Administration Will End COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements for Federal Employees, Contractors, International Travelers, Head Start Educators, and CMS-Certified Facilities

In 2021, the Biden-Harris Administration announced COVID-19 vaccination requirements to promote the health and safety of individuals and the efficiency of workplaces, protecting vital sectors of our economy and vulnerable populations. Since January 2021, COVID-19 deaths have declined by 95%, and hospitalizations are down nearly 91%. Globally, COVID-19 deaths are at their lowest levels since the start of the pandemic. Following a whole-of-government effort that led to a record number of nearly 270 million Americans receiving at least one shot of the COVID-19 vaccine, we are in a different phase of our response to COVID-19 than we were when many of these requirements were put into place.

Today, we are announcing that the Administration will end the COVID-19 vaccine requirements for Federal employees, Federal contractors, and international air travelers at the end of the day on May 11, the same day that the COVID-19 public health emergency ends. Additionally, HHS and DHS announced today that they will start the process to end their vaccination requirements for Head Start educators, CMS-certified healthcare facilities, and certain noncitizens at the land border. In the coming days, further details related to ending these requirements will be provided.

Our Administration's vaccination requirements helped ensure the safety of workers in critical workforces including those in the healthcare and education sectors, protecting themselves and the populations they serve, and strengthening their ability to provide services without disruptions to operations. The Federal government successfully implemented requirements for its workforce in a way that increased vaccination to achieve 98% compliance, reflecting employees who had received at least one dose of a vaccine or had a pending or approved exception or extension request filed by January 2022. We also put in place vaccination requirements for certain international travelers to slow the spread of new variants entering the country and to allow our healthcare system time to effectively manage access to care if faced with an increase in cases and hospitalizations.

Our COVID-19 vaccine requirements bolstered vaccination across the nation, and our broader vaccination campaign has saved millions of lives. We have successfully marshalled a response to make historic investments in broadly accessible vaccines, tests, and treatments to help us combat COVID-19. While vaccination remains one of the most important tools in advancing the health and safety of employees and promoting the efficiency of workplaces, we are now in a different phase of our response when these measures are no longer necessary.

###