

Philadelphia Mandates COVID-19 Vaccine for All City Workers

By Eileen K. Keefe and Sarah McKinney

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On November 19, 2021, the [City of Philadelphia announced](#) that all City workers must “complete a full schedule of COVID-19 vaccination(s)” by January 14, 2022, or risk losing their jobs. This mandate follows the City’s announcements requiring all Philadelphia healthcare workers, college students, faculty, and staff to be vaccinated by October 15, 2021, and all non-union workers to be fully vaccinated by December 1, 2021.

The latest Philadelphia mandate applies to all city employees, union workers, and contractors functioning as Embedded Contractors, whether full-time, part-time, season, or temporary and regardless of location of work. Embedded Contractors are individuals who are not City employees and “(1) fulfill a City staffing need by regularly spending more than one third of their work week providing services to the City pursuant to a City contract in such a time, manner, or place that members of the public or City employees could reasonably believe that they are City employees; or (2) utilize a City email address or wear a City uniform pursuant to a City contract.”

A fully vaccinated person is two weeks out from the second dose or the single dose of the approved options. Full-time City employees who provide proof of vaccination by December 24, 2021, will receive a vaccination bonus of up to \$300. However, City workers who fail to comply with the vaccine mandate will no longer be permitted to report for work and will be placed on unpaid status for up to 15 days, after which their employment will be terminated if they have not started their vaccination schedule.

Workers may request a vaccine exemption on [medical or religious grounds](#). All requests must be submitted to the Employee Relations Unit using appropriate forms by December 20, 2021. If granted, the exempt employee must wear two masks or an N95 mask and submit to regular COVID-19 testing. Medical requests must include documentation from a licensed healthcare provider certifying the vaccine is medically contraindicated for the individual. Religious requests must include a signed certification explaining that the employee has a sincerely held religious belief preventing them from receiving the vaccination.

If you have questions about your compliance obligations under applicable federal or state laws, or need assistance with updating your policies and practices to ensure compliance with the COVID-19 vaccine mandate, please reach out to the Jackson Lewis attorney with whom you often work or our [COVID-19 team](#).

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