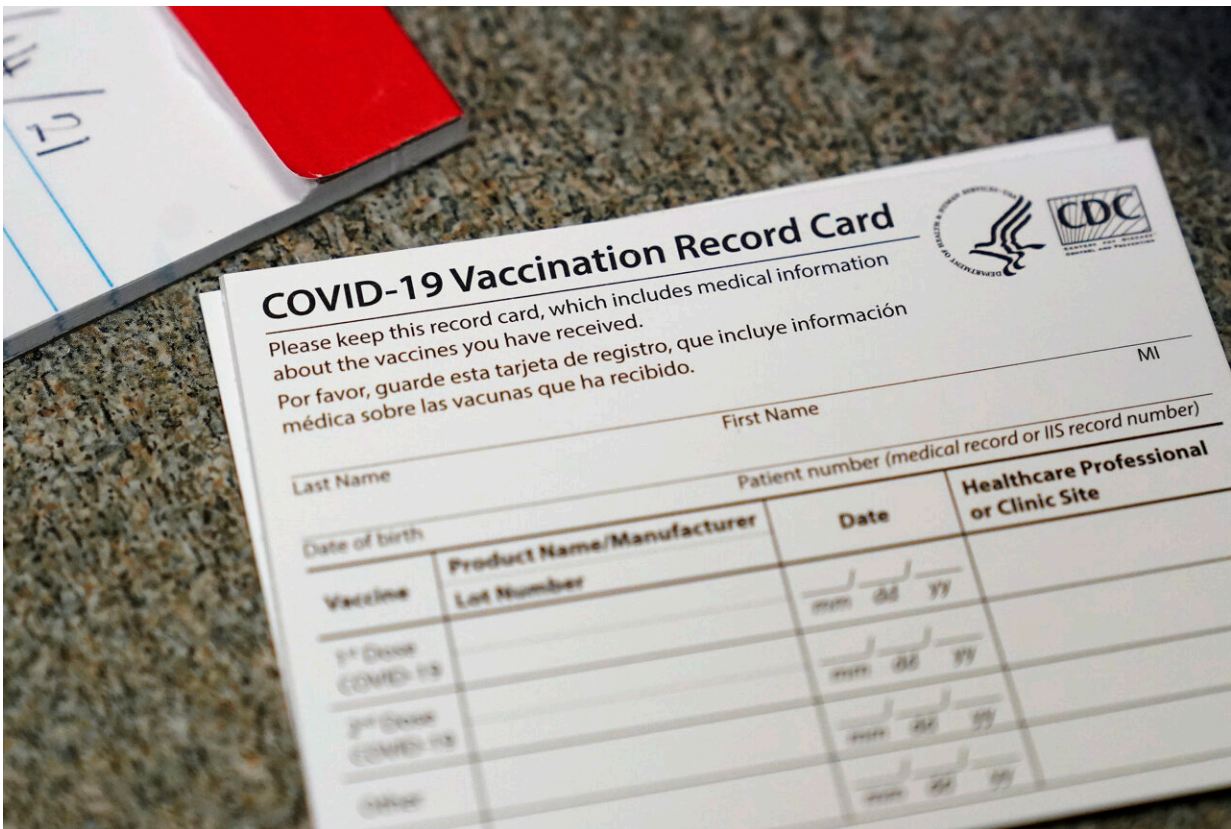


Los Angeles poised to enact strict vaccination mandate

October 6 2021



In this Dec. 24, 2020, file photo, a COVID-19 vaccination record card is shown at Seton Medical Center in Daly City, Calif. Los Angeles leaders are poised to enact one of the nation's strictest vaccine mandates, a sweeping measure that would require the shots for everyone entering a bar, restaurant, nail salon, gym or even a Lakers game. The City Council on Wednesday, Oct. 6, 2021, is scheduled to consider the proposal and most members have said they support it as a way of preventing further COVID-019 surges. Credit: AP Photo/Jeff Chiu, File

Los Angeles leaders on Wednesday were poised to enact one of the nation's strictest vaccine mandates—a sweeping measure that would require the shots for everyone entering a bar, restaurant, nail salon, gym or even a Lakers game.

The City Council was scheduled to consider the proposal after postponing a vote last week to deal with concerns ranging from who could be fined for violations to whether employees could end up in fist-fights when they have to serve as vaccine door monitors.

Some critics charge that a mandate would amount to segregation of those who cannot or refuse to be vaccinated. Others call it unenforceable.

Business trade groups have said the city mandate will sow confusion because Los Angeles County's own vaccine rules—which apply both in LA and in surrounding communities—are less sweeping.

However, council members generally support the ordinance, which is intended to reduce the risk of new COVID-19 surges. The nation's second-most populous city faced a huge rise in infections and hospitalizations last winter and a smaller surge this summer linked to the spread of the highly contagious delta variant.

Mayor Eric Garcetti expressed his support for a vaccine measure last week, saying: "I don't want to bury another city employee, police officer, firefighter."

The ordinance would require people to be fully vaccinated to enter indoor public spaces including shopping malls, restaurants, bars, gyms, sports arenas, museums, spas, nail salons, indoor city facilities and other locations. Current eligibility includes people age 12 and up.

Negative coronavirus tests within 72 hours of entry to those places would

be required for people with religious or medical exemptions for vaccinations.

Council President Nury Martinez has said it is clear that the vaccines work but too many people remain unvaccinated despite widespread availability and door-to-door campaigns to vaccinate more people.

The ordinance arrives at a time when COVID-19 cases are plunging while political ambitions are rising—two council members are running for mayor, as is the city attorney who wrote the proposal.

During a recent City Hall meeting, councilman and mayoral candidate Joe Buscaino challenged the measure as being "clear as mud" regarding enforcement.

"Making a teenager ... serve as a bouncer to keep people in or out of a restaurant, and then fining the business for their failure is not the way to go about it," he said.

Buscaino also noted that the conflict between city's measure and county's vaccination mandate, which only covers patrons and workers at indoor bars, wineries, breweries, lounges and nightclubs. The county will require proof of one dose as of Thursday, while proof of full vaccination will be required by Nov. 4.

Of the county's roughly 10 million residents, 78% have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose and 69% are fully vaccinated, according to [public health officials](#).

The county on Tuesday reported 35 new deaths and 964 new cases of COVID-19. Health officials said the county has reported 14 deaths a day, on average, even though deaths and hospitalization figures have plunged by some 50% since late August.

A growing number of places across the U.S., including San Francisco and New York City, are requiring people to show proof of vaccination to enter various types of businesses and venues.

New York City this summer began requiring proof of vaccination to dine inside restaurants and bars, or to enter certain types of public places, including museums, theaters, gyms, indoor sports arenas and concert halls.

Compliance has been mixed and enforcement purposefully light, with the [city](#) favoring initial warnings for violators and fines for repeat offenders.

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