

Vaccination requirements may promote COVID vaccine uptake in the US

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A medical assistant prepares a dose of a COVID-19 vaccine to be administered to a patient. Credit: Public domain image courtesy of Lisa Ferdinando, U.S. Department of Defense

Making vaccination against SARS-CoV-2 a requirement for work, school or travel in the USA may be more effective at promoting vaccine uptake than employer policies which express a preference for, or emphasize the benefits of, vaccination. The findings are published in

Scientific Reports.

Dolores Albarracin and colleagues surveyed 299 adults from across the USA to identify whether they would be vaccinated against SARS-CoV-2 if it was required for work, travel or school. They then conducted three experiments in which a total of 1,324 participants were asked whether a hypothetical new or current employer requiring, preferring or emphasizing the benefits of vaccination against SARS-CoV-2 would make them more or less likely to be vaccinated. The authors also used a psychological questionnaire to measure the tendency of participants to react negatively to regulations and asked participants whether hypothetical [vaccine](#) requirements affected their perceptions of vaccination.

The authors found that 86% of the 299 people surveyed reported that they would get vaccinated if it was required for work, [travel](#) or [school](#). In response to hypothetical workplace vaccination policies, participants reported stronger intentions to be vaccinated in response to vaccination being required, rather than preferred or promoted by the employer. Those who reported they tended to react negatively to regulations were found to be similarly or more positively influenced to be vaccinated as a result of vaccination requirements compared to those who tended to react neutrally or positively to regulations. Among participants who tended to react negatively to regulations, hypothetical vaccination requirements were not found to affect how beneficial they felt vaccination was, but did make them feel less morally obliged to be vaccinated when compared to vaccination being preferred or promoted. This suggests that while vaccination requirements may promote vaccination among those who tended to react negatively to regulations, this is not due to perceptions of vaccine benefits or a [moral obligation](#) to get vaccinated.

More information: Rather than inducing psychological reactance,

requiring vaccination strengthens intentions to vaccinate in US populations, *Scientific Reports* (2021). DOI: [10.1038/s41598-021-00256-z](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-021-00256-z)

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