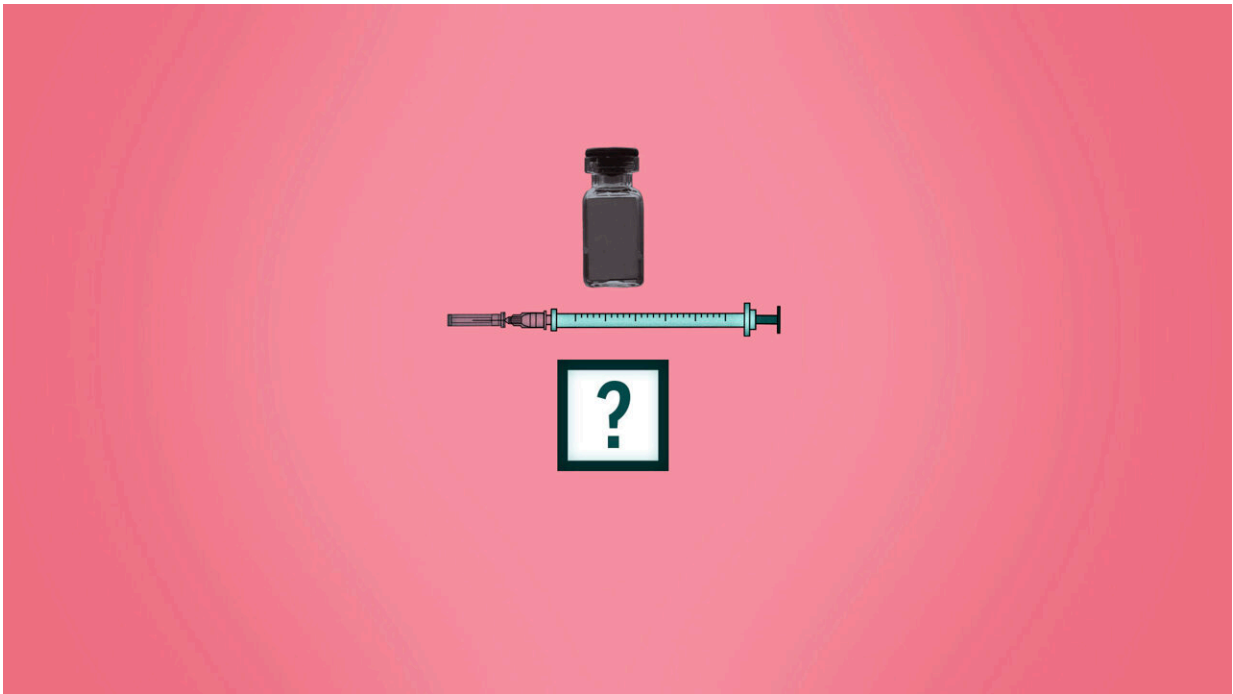


What's the status of the COVID-19 vaccine mandate in the US?

December 2 2021, by Tom Krisher



What's the status of the COVID-19 vaccine mandate in the US? Credit: AP Illustration/Peter Hamlin

What's the status of the COVID-19 vaccine mandate in the U.S.?

It's on hold indefinitely because of [legal challenges](#), but employers can still require the shots.

To control the spread of COVID-19, President Joe Biden previously said businesses with 100 or more employees would need to require COVID-19 vaccination or have workers get tested weekly for the virus. The rule was to take effect Jan. 4, affecting about 84 million workers nationwide.

But soon after the rule was issued by the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration, it faced multiple legal challenges from businesses, [conservative groups](#) and Republican attorneys general that said the agency doesn't have the authority to mandate vaccines.

On Nov. 6, a federal appeals court in New Orleans put the rule on hold, saying it was "a one-size fits-all sledgehammer" that was too broad. Ten days later, all challenges to the requirement were consolidated in another appeals court in Cincinnati.

In a [court filing](#), lawyers for the Biden administration said the mandate was needed to reduce transmission of the virus in workplaces. It asked that it be allowed to move ahead with the rule.

The requirement for employers is among several challenges to the Biden administration's vaccine rules. Federal judges also have placed a hold on a mandate for health care workers in the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

More information: [Is travel safe during the pandemic this holiday season?](#)

[Can at-home COVID-19 tests make holiday gatherings safer?](#)

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