

Austrian COVID vaccine mandate to remain suspended in summer

May 25 2022

Austria's coronavirus vaccination mandate has been suspended for another three months until the end of August.

A parliamentary committee signed off Wednesday on an order from the [health minister](#) extending the suspension, the Austria Press Agency reported.

Officials said on Tuesday that the mandate for people aged 18 and over, which became law in early February but hasn't yet been put into effect, would remain suspended. They said a commission of experts had concluded that enforcing it currently would not be proportionate and therefore was unjustified.

The plan was first announced in November amid a surge in COVID-19 cases that sent Austria into a lockdown. However, by the time the legislation was in place, much of the sense of urgency had evaporated.

The plan was for police to start checking people's vaccination status in mid-March, for example during traffic stops. But the government suspended the mandate only a week before its enforcement was due to begin, arguing that there was no need to implement it as things stood.

The legislation provides for people who can't produce proof of vaccination to be asked in writing to do so and be fined up to 600 euros (around \$650) if they don't. Fines could reach 3,600 euros if people contest their punishment.

Austria was the first country in Europe to legislate for a universal [vaccine](#) mandate. Only neighboring Germany even considered emulating it, but its parliament last month [shot down](#) a proposal even for a mandate for people aged 60 and above.

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