

NYC ending COVID-19 vaccination mandate for city employees

February 7 2023, by Karen Matthews



A man walks out of a vaccination bus at a mobile vaccine clinic in Midtown Manhattan, Dec. 6, 2021. New York City is ending its COVID-19 vaccination mandate for municipal employees including police officers, firefighters and teachers, Mayor Eric Adams announced Monday, Feb. 6, 2023. The vaccine mandate, which led to the firing of hundreds of city workers who declined to get the shots, will end on Friday, the Democratic mayor said in a news release. Credit: AP Photo/Mary Altaffer, File

New York City, which once had the nation's strictest workplace vaccination rules for COVID-19, is ending one of its last such mandates, saying it will no longer require the shots for municipal employees including police officers, firefighters and teachers.

The [vaccine mandate](#), which led to the firing of hundreds of city workers who declined to get the shots, will end Friday, Mayor Eric Adams announced Monday.

Adams, a Democrat, said that with more than 96% of city employees and more than 80% of city residents having received their initial vaccine series, "this is the right moment for this decision."

City Health Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan said, "It's clear these mandates saved lives and were absolutely necessary to meet the moment. We're grateful that we can now, as we leave the emergency phase of the pandemic, modify more of the rules that have gotten us to this point."

The vaccination mandate for city employees was one of the last COVID-19 measures still in place in New York City. The [city](#) ended its vaccine requirement for employees of private businesses in November 2022, and masks are now optional in most [public spaces](#) including subways and buses.

New York City's private-sector mandate forced All-Star point guard and vaccine skeptic Kyrie Irving to miss most of the Brooklyn Nets home games last season.



FDNY firefighters are seen reflected in a mirror holding signs as their union leaders speak during a news conference to protest New York City's COVID-19 vaccine mandate, Tuesday, Nov. 2, 2021, in New York. New York City is ending its COVID-19 vaccination mandate for municipal employees including police officers, firefighters and teachers, Mayor Eric Adams announced Monday, Feb. 6, 2023. The vaccine mandate, which led to the firing of hundreds of city workers who declined to get the shots, will end on Friday, the Democratic mayor said in a news release. Credit: AP Photo/Mary Altaffer, File



Protesters rallying against COVID-19 vaccination mandates gather in the street outside the Barclays Center before an NBA basketball game between the Brooklyn Nets and the Charlotte Hornets, Sunday, Oct. 24, 2021, in New York. New York City is ending its COVID-19 vaccination mandate for municipal employees including police officers, firefighters and teachers, Mayor Eric Adams announced Monday, Feb. 6, 2023. The vaccine mandate, which led to the firing of hundreds of city workers who declined to get the shots, will end on Friday, the Democratic mayor said in a news release. Credit: AP Photo/John Minchillo, File

Irving will no longer be affected by any changes in New York City's coronavirus policies. The Nets and the Dallas Mavericks announced a deal Monday that will send Irving to Dallas.

New York City's municipal work force of about 337,000 was one of the largest groups of government employees in the United States to be affected by a COVID-19 vaccine mandate.

The vaccine requirement for the 1.3 million-strong U.S. military was lifted in December under an \$858 billion defense spending bill passed by Congress and signed into law by President Joe Biden.

The approximately 1,780 New York City workers who have been terminated for failing to comply with the municipal [employee](#) vaccination requirement will not get their jobs back automatically but can apply for positions with their former agencies, [city officials](#) said.

Unions representing some of the fired workers planned a news conference later Monday to demand their reinstatement with back pay.

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