

September 9, 2021

Federal Government to Expand Vaccination Requirements for Staff in Hospitals, Other Health Care Settings that Receive Medicare and Medicaid Funding

Action is among six new measures to stem tide of COVID-19; see AHA's statement in response to today's announcement

President Biden today announced six new mitigation steps for combatting the COVID-19 pandemic, including a series of vaccine mandates for certain workers nationwide.

Among other items included in the plan are:

- Requiring COVID-19 vaccinations for workers in most health care settings that receive Medicare or Medicaid reimbursement, including, but not limited to, hospitals, dialysis facilities, ambulatory surgical settings and home health agencies. This policy will apply to nursing home staff as well as certain staff in hospitals and other Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services-regulated settings.
- Establishing a new Emergency Temporary Standard from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration requiring most employers with 100 or more employees to mandate vaccination or implement weekly testing.
- Doubling the number of Department of Defense clinician teams deployed to support hospitals battling surges in COVID-19 cases.
- Increasing the shipments of monoclonal antibody treatments and expanding the types of providers who can administer monoclonal antibody treatments to include pharmacists.

Visit the White House's [webpage](#) for more details on these and other proposals.

AHA Take: The AHA shared the following [statement](#) from AHA President and CEO Rick Pollack after today's announcement:

"The mission of all hospitals and health systems is to care for patients and improve the health of their communities. This includes taking recommended and proven steps to protect both patients and the caregivers and other dedicated staff who proudly support this mission. The AHA has consistently urged all health care workers to be vaccinated and supports hospitals and health systems that chose to mandate COVID-19 vaccines for their workforce, based on local factors.

"Since the COVID-19 vaccines have become available, hospitals and health systems

have been hard at work both to increase vaccination rates among their workforce and their broader community. We have supported hospitals that have mandatory vaccination policies. And, as a result, we have seen a growing number of hospitals and health systems announce mandatory vaccination policies for their workers...and more are doing so each day. In addition, the AHA, along with the American Medical Association and American Nurses Association, has been actively—and repeatedly—calling on the public to get vaccinated and adopt public health measures through the media and public service announcements that have reached millions.

“We look forward to reviewing the details related to today’s announcement of these new policies in regard to implementation, timing and the need for appropriate exceptions to accommodate medical and religious concerns. As a practical matter, this policy may result in exacerbating the severe workforce shortage problems that currently exist. Consequently, given the critical challenges that we are facing in maintaining the resiliency of our workforce, and dealing with severe shortages, which the American Nurses Association has called a national crisis, we call on the Administration to work with us as partners in developing aggressive and creative strategies to address this matter to ensure that hospitals and health systems on the front lines of fighting the battle against COVID-19 have the necessary human resources to both win this battle and maintain essential health services for the patients and communities we serve.”

FURTHER QUESTIONS

If you have questions, please contact AHA at 800-424-4301.