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COVID-19 Workplace



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COVID-19 Workplace Newsletter

In this issue we share with you discussions on vaccine and the workplace. What does the new vaccine mean for returning to the office? What are some legal and policy guidelines being considered by leadership for employees?

If you are interested in the articles below, please contact the [IMF Library](#).

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Vaccine Legal and Policy Guidance

1. What Will Covid-19 Vaccines Mean for the Return of Travel

(National Geographic, Jan 1, 2021)

At the end of December 2020, hope returned to the world, including hope for restarting travel and countries began approving the Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna, and Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines. Sometime in 2021, when enough people are vaccinated against-and immune from - COVID-19, this could mean a return to globetrotting (or at least less-risky domestic vacations).

2. EEOC Guidance on COVID-19 Vaccinations: What Now for Employers?

(The National Law Review, Dec 22, 2020)

In that article, I first addressed the pivotal, threshold issue of whether a vaccination constituted a “medical examination” or health screening under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as whether a private employer can implement a mandatory vaccination policy turns largely on this issue. However, I also expressed “it is difficult to predict precisely how current jurisprudence on mandatory vaccine rules and policies will translate to the COVID-19 workplace” given the scale and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Returning to Work After Lockdown: Lessons from Wuhan

(Harvard Business Review, Dec 11, 2020)

As Covid lockdowns are lifted and workplaces reopen, how can businesses promote employee engagement, productivity, and safety? The authors surveyed more than 350 employees in Wuhan, China a few weeks after the city’s lockdown was lifted to explore how both employees and managers prepared for the return to work.

Vaccines and Returning to the Office

[1. Why Executives Need a COVID-19 Vaccine Strategy](#)

(Podcast, Gartner, Jan 5, 2021)

Is your organization prepared with a COVID-19 vaccine strategy? From mandatory vaccinations to keeping employees safe, there are many layers to the distribution strategy. These conversations will vary depending on geography and organizational setup, but all business leaders need to anticipate questions that will arise and scenario planning.

[2. US Companies Warned Against Mandatory Vaccine for Staff](#)

(Financial Times, Dec 22, 2020)

US companies risk a backlash if they insist that staff be vaccinated against Covid-19 before returning to the workplace, according to corporate advisers who warn that employers' desire to mandate vaccination will clash with deep concerns among many employees. (SSO instructions [here](#).)

[3. Why Many Bosses Won't Require Workers to Get the Covid-19 Vaccine](#)

(Wall Street Journal, Dec 21, 2020)

Some of America's largest businesses say they will encourage—but not mandate—employees to get Covid-19 vaccines, using a mix of incentives and consequences to ensure as many workers as possible are inoculated. (Full report requires a WSJ login, [access instructions](#).)

[4. Employers Can Require Workers to Get Covid-19 Vaccine, U.S. Says](#)

(New York Times via Factiva, Dec 18, 2020)

The federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission said employees could be barred from the workplace if they refused the vaccine. Employers can require workers to get a Covid-19 vaccine and bar them from the workplace if they refuse, the federal government said in guidelines issued this week. (Full report requires a Factiva login, [access instructions](#).)

[5. Legal Guidance for the Vaccine, Employers and Workers](#)

(Forbes, Dec 15, 2020)

Can an employer mandate a vaccination for a worker to return to work? Conversely, can an employer be required to mandate vaccines for a safe workplace? What of workers who refuse to take the vaccine due to a disability, or religious reasons or because they don't feel safe doing so?

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