

CREATING A COVID VACCINE POLICY FOR YOUR WORKPLACE

Now that a few different COVID-19 vaccines have been approved for use by the FDA and are actively being distributed, it's time to think about a vaccine policy for your business. In December 2020, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) ruled that companies could mandate the vaccine. Deciding if the vaccine is required or voluntary is critical to the health and safety of your employees and in determining the overall impact vaccination can have on your business.

Here's a quick guide for creating the right vaccine policy for your business:



1

ASSESS YOUR BUSINESS'S NEEDS

Do your research.



- What are other companies in your sector or that are similar in size doing?
- What is the vaccine distribution plan, timeline, and/or availability in the state(s) in which you operate?

Check in with your employees.



- What do your employees think about the vaccine?
- What are their questions and concerns?
- How does a vaccination policy fit into the overall culture of your business?

2

DECIDE ON THE NECESSARY POLICY POINTS



Follow government guidelines.

If mandating is right for your business, decide which roles will require vaccination. It's recommended that employees in "high-contact" roles, such as in healthcare, travel, and retail, should be required to vaccinate, while employees in "minimal contact" roles, such as office- or telephone-based roles, can voluntarily vaccinate. It could be that a hybrid policy in which some employees are required to vaccinate and others aren't is best for your business.



Pay attention to market trends.

Deciding what your vaccine policy should be isn't just about what the government recommends. If the market is pushing for vaccination, consider the ways in which you can encourage it among your workforce, and how vaccinations can contribute to greater health and safety in your community.



3 IMPLEMENT THE POLICY



Communicate and educate.

It's helpful if you can designate an HR or executive point person to roll out the policy. They can educate employees with factual and trustworthy vaccine information, outline the reasoning behind the policy, answer any questions, and resolve any conflicts that vaccination may invariably bring up.



Track compliance.

If some employees are required to get the vaccine, have a process in place for tracking who is compliant and who isn't, and following up with individual employees as needed.



Offer incentives for vaccination.

Making the vaccine available at work for free, paying for any time off needed to get vaccinated, and offering a small bonus for employees that move forward with vaccination can ensure the success of your vaccine policy and encourage more employees to participate.



Get clear on the cost.

Incentives and rewards may seem like an unnecessary cost, but when juxtaposed with the costs of COVID-related illness and isolation and the unexpected time away from work that can result, these incentives may actually be minimally expensive in comparison.

4 REASSESS CONTINUOUSLY

Stay informed about regulations.

- Are there any new or changing laws regarding vaccination at the state and federal level?
- Do you need to adjust the way you handle mandated vs. voluntary vaccination at your workplace?
- What documentation do you need to provide, if any?

Prepare for additional HR needs.

- What additional resources do you need to have in place to administer the policy?
- How will you notify employees of any revisions to the vaccination process or policy?
- How will you continue to ensure employees are compliant?

Like so much else, your vaccine policy will need to evolve over time. Until a large percentage of the population is vaccinated, stay vigilant and continue to prioritize the health and wellness of your workforce however you can.

Go [here](#) for more information and the latest updates about Colorado's vaccination plan.

If you need help creating a workplace vaccine policy or have specific questions, contact Obsidian HR: inquiry@obsidianhr.com or 720-456-3590.



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