

# COVID-19 Vaccination Toolkit for Employers

Guide, FAQs, & Sample Policies

Updated July 2021



**Littler**<sup>®</sup>

## Overview: COVID-19 Vaccination Toolkit for Employers

This Toolkit provides guidance to in-house legal and human resources as an employer decides on the workplace vaccination approach that best serves the needs of its organization.

### Guide

This Guide provides an update on the approval status, availability, and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines. It also covers EEOC and CDC guidance regarding the vaccinations.

### Questions & Answers

In order to assist employers regarding the COVID-19 vaccine and developing appropriate employer-related policies, as well as answer many of the questions they will face in deciding on the best approach for their operations, a series of frequently asked questions and answers have been prepared.

### Template Policies\*

*\*included under separate cover within the Toolkit zip file, as Appendix D*

This Toolkit includes two different policies for employers: (1) a policy in which vaccinations are recommended (**non-mandatory**) for employees; and (2) a policy in which vaccinations are required (**mandatory**) for employees, recognizing that exceptions may be required in order to comply with applicable federal, state and local law. The policies need to be customized for an employer's use with the help of the Guide/Q&As.

**DISCLAIMER:** Please be advised that this Toolkit is not intended to provide legal advice or opinion. Such advice may only be given when related to specific fact situations. The materials are for informational purposes only, not for the purpose of establishing an attorney-client relationship and should not be relied upon as legal advice. This document is a general example. It is not a substitute for experienced legal counsel. **For use in practice, it is highly recommended that experienced employment counsel review and revise any policies or procedures in light of the circumstances of each specific employer.**

**The materials in this Toolkit may be updated periodically given the rapidly evolving legal issues occurring in this area.**

## Table Of Contents

<b>A. COVID-19 VACCINATION GUIDE.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1. Background on Authorized Vaccines Under the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) .....	1
2. Access to the Vaccines .....	2
3. EEOC Guidance on Vaccinations.....	2
4. CDC Vaccination Guidance for Employers.....	7
<b>B. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS REGARDING A COVID-19 VACCINE .....</b>	<b>9</b>
1. If an employee already had COVID-19, should we consider excusing the employee from any vaccination program or mandate? .....	9
2. Can we mandate that our employees be vaccinated? .....	9
3. What EEO standards should an employer consider in requesting that employees (or applicants) take a COVID-19 vaccine? .....	14
4. If we mandate the COVID-19 vaccine, what are the circumstances in which an employee can request to be excused from the vaccine? .....	15
5. How should we address reasonable accommodation requests in circumstances in which an employee requests to be excused from a COVID-19 vaccine based on his or her religious beliefs or based on religious practices? .....	16
6. What types of issues should we consider if an employee refuses to take a COVID-19 vaccine based on a disability and/or medical-related reasons? .....	19
7. What if an employee cites pregnancy or breastfeeding as a reason for refusing an employer-mandated COVID-19 vaccination? .....	22
8. Can we ask employees if they have been vaccinated for COVID-19, including requesting proof of vaccination? .....	23
9. If we ask our employees for proof of vaccination, should we maintain a copy? If so, where should we maintain that information? Are there any record retention requirements surrounding this information? .....	26
10. Should we treat our employees' proof of vaccination (whether those are attestation forms or copies of vaccination cards) as medical records? .....	27
11. Can we ask non-employee contingent workers whether they have been vaccinated, and/or require them to be vaccinated as a condition of providing on-site services? .....	27
12. Can we disclose to third parties whether an employee has been vaccinated for COVID-19? .....	28
13. Can we have a policy making a distinction between vaccinated and unvaccinated employees, such as conditioning worksite access, business travel, assignments, amenities or other employment decisions on COVID-19 vaccination status? .....	30
14. What are the benefits-related ramifications if we want to provide the vaccine to employees on our premises? .....	31
15. Can we ask or require our employees to wear a sticker or other indicator that they have been vaccinated? .....	32
16. Can we provide an award to employees as an incentive to be vaccinated? .....	32
17. Are we required to grant paid leave for employees to obtain COVID-19 vaccinations? Does it matter whether we mandate the vaccination? .....	36
18. Must we pay employees for the time spent getting a vaccination from a wage-hour perspective? .....	37
19. Are we required to provide employees with paid time off to recover from side effects from the COVID-19 vaccination? .....	39

20. If a government order requires COVID-19 vaccination, can we mandate vaccines for our unionized workforces? .....	39
21. Absent a government order, can we unilaterally mandate vaccines for our unionized workforces? .....	40
22. What type of “effects” bargaining obligations may a unionized employer have? .....	40
23. Has the NLRB issued any decisions concerning COVID-19 vaccination policies? .....	41
24. Should a unionized employer expect requests for information about vaccination-related plans? .....	42
25. Are there potential legal risks that could arise if groups of workers protest the vaccine as part of the anti-vaccine movement? .....	42
26. Has OSHA provided any guidance to employers on employee vaccinations? .....	44
27. Do vaccinated employees still have to comply with testing and quarantine requirements if they are exposed or suspected of having been exposed to COVID-19? .....	46
28. Can our fully vaccinated employees discontinue the use of masks and social distancing? .....	47

**C. LIST OF APPENDICES..... 48**

APPENDIX A: FDA Fact Sheets Regarding Emergency Use Authorization of the COVID-19 Vaccines .....	48
APPENDIX B: Relevant Excerpts from EEOC Guidance Updated May 28, 2021 Regarding COVID-19 Vaccinations (“What You Should Know About COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws”).....	48
APPENDIX C: Littler Report on Legal Issues Tied to the COVID-19 Vaccine .....	48
APPENDIX D: Sample COVID-19 Vaccination Policies.....	48
Sample Policy #1 – Non-Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy .....	48
Sample Policy #2 – Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy.....	48
APPENDIX E: Recent, Illustrative Lawsuit Challenging Employer-Mandated Vaccination Program.....	49
APPENDIX F: Sample Employee Attestation Form for COVID-19 Vaccination .....	49

**D. LITTLER’S VACCINATION WORKING GROUP..... 50**