

Evaluation of COVID-19 Vaccine Requirements for Indoor Public Spaces

As COVID-19 resurges in Los Angeles County, the more contagious Delta variant now accounts for the majority of new COVID-19 cases among residents. Vaccines remain the most powerful tool in our recovery journey, as those who are fully vaccinated have a significantly lower risk of severe illness, hospitalization, or death than those who are unvaccinated. Los Angeles County and other public and private partners have made the COVID-19 vaccines widely accessible. Further, the County has proactively promoted the vaccines by providing vaccine incentives and partnering with trusted community organizations to encourage residents to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

However, nearly 4 million people in Los Angeles County are still unvaccinated and COVID-19 continues to spread more easily in indoor spaces, crowds, and other settings where unvaccinated people are in close contact. To prevent future surges and new variants from circulating, especially as we approach fall and winter, we must consider whether additional measures are necessary, such as vaccine requirements for certain settings.

MOTION

MITCHELL _____

KUEHL _____

HAHN _____

BARGER _____

SOLIS _____

Vaccine uptake is slowly rising in Los Angeles County as some Angelenos seek protection from the Delta variant and vaccine mandates are rolled out for healthcare workers, government employees and other private companies. Modeled after the vaccine requirements rolled out in France and other European countries, New York City is mandating proof of COVID-19 vaccination to enter certain indoor businesses, including all indoor restaurants, entertainment venues and gyms. According to preliminary data from the New York City Health department, this new mandate is encouraging more people to get vaccinated. Last week, almost 80,000 New Yorkers got their first COVID-19 vaccine dose, which is 40 percent increase from the number of residents who got their first shot in the first week of July. This initial report shows promising results and may build a case for implementing similar mandates in other cities.

Both government and private sectors play an important role in encouraging vaccinations. Many federal, state, and local government entities are requiring vaccines for their workforces in the interest of protecting occupational health and the wellbeing of the public they serve. Similarly, a growing number of private firms and universities are beginning to announce vaccine mandates. In Los Angeles, we are seeing some restaurants and bars requiring proof of vaccination for entry.

Los Angeles County is committed to taking the necessary steps to increase vaccination rates and protect public health. As other local jurisdictions move forward with vaccine mandates, it is important for Los Angeles County to evaluate options for requiring proof of vaccination to enter certain indoor public settings.

I, THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the Department of Public Health, in concert with the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs and County Counsel, to report back within 14 days on possible options for requiring vaccines in certain indoor public spaces in the County of Los Angeles. The report back should look at other jurisdictions that have adopted similar mandates (i.e. New York City, France, possibly City of Los Angeles), consider whether a mandate should require one dose or full vaccination, and whether the policy should apply to all indoor public spaces or certain non-essential businesses and events (i.e. should grocery stores be exempt).
2. Instruct the County Department of Public Health to report back to the Board in 14 days with the process for how people can prove their vaccination status and businesses can verify vaccination status using existing digital forms of records and/or paper records.

#

JH: kb