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Biden's Management Agenda Puts Feds Front And Center



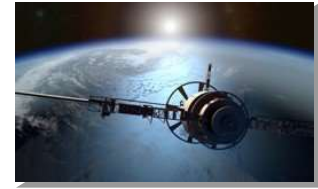
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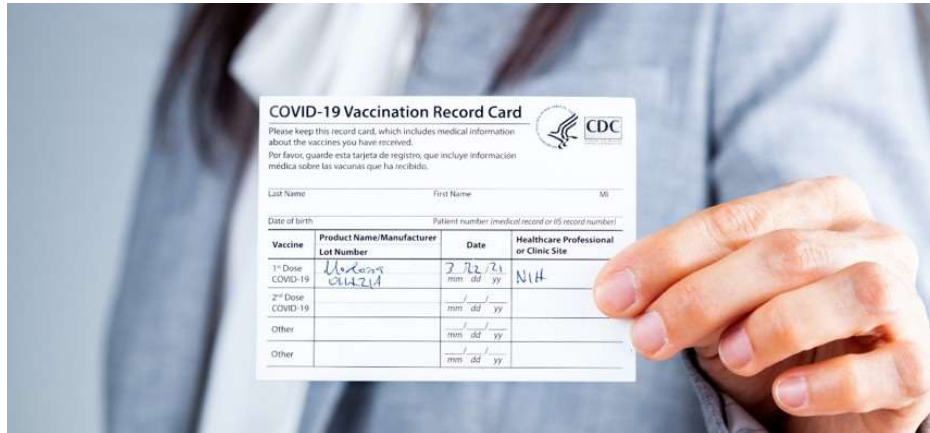
White House: Vaccine Deadline For Feds Isn't Changing



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On Deadline Day, 90% of U.S. Government Personnel Are Vaccinated Against COVID-19

Another 5% are seeking exemptions and about 175,000 employees are now facing disciplinary action.

ERIC KATZ | NOVEMBER 22, 2021 01:44 PM ET

CORONAVIRUS



About 90% of the federal workforce is vaccinated against COVID-19, the Biden administration announced on the deadline day for the more than 3.5 million civilian and military employees to receive their shots, with another 5% seeking a religious or medical exemption.

That leaves about 175,000 federal employees who are not in compliance with President Biden's executive order to prove they are vaccinated or request an opt out by Monday. According to administration guidance, those employees will now enter the progressive disciplinary process. That will start with counseling efforts seeking to convince employees to get inoculated and could end with their firing.

The 90% who are vaccinated includes those who have only so far received half of their two-dose regimen, though a senior administration official said the "vast majority" are fully vaccinated. Those seeking exemptions are largely still awaiting a sign off from their agencies,

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though for now they are considered in compliance with the order. They could still eventually face discipline if their requests are denied or the specific circumstances of their jobs do not allow for the exemptions.

“There are no disruptions related to the requirement,” said Kevin Munoz, a White House spokesman. “We’ll avoid COVID-related disruptions through vaccinations. Today isn’t a cliff and we’ll be working with employees.”



The Defense Department said earlier this month that 97% of active-duty military personnel were in compliance with Biden's order, meaning the more than 2 million civil servants are lagging behind the overall 95% compliance rate. A senior administration official lauded the progress agencies have made in the 75 days since Biden issued his mandate.

“These numbers make one thing perfectly clear: vaccination requirements work,” the official said.

The White House is planning to release detailed agency-by-agency figures on Wednesday, multiple officials said. Some agencies declined to provide any data prior to that rollout, though some figures have trickled out.

- Lisa Farbstein, a spokesperson for the **Transportation Security Administration**, said on Monday that 93% of its workforce is in compliance with the order and promised it would “not impact holiday travel.”
- The Customs and Border Protection workforce is 98% compliant with Biden’s order, according to Marsha Espinosa, a Homeland Security Department spokeswoman.
- As of Nov. 17, only a slight majority of **Defense Department** civilians had demonstrated they were vaccinated, leaving a large gap of hundreds of thousands of personnel with just days until Monday’s deadline. The department did not release how many employees were seeking an exemption, and a spokesman said it could not provide any updates ahead of Wednesday’s White House release.
- **The Veterans Affairs Department**—which had an earlier deadline for the vast majority of its workforce—said last week 94% of its health care employees had turned in their vaccination status or requested an exemption. The rest of the workforce is going through counseling.
- At **NASA**, 98% of the workforce is in compliance with the mandate. About 90% of the workforce is vaccinated, while 1,150 employees are seeking medical or religious exemptions.

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