

AIRMAIL

AUGUST 2021



DELTA AIR LINES TO EMPLOYEES:
**GET VACCINATED OR
PAY \$200 A MONTH**

AIRLINES & VACCINES

COVID-19 Vaccine Requirements
Come to Airlines.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin:
All American Service Members
to be Protected from COVID 19
"IMMEDIATELY"

IAMAW DIST 141

AUGUST 2021

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IAMAW District 141 President and Directing General Chair: Mike Klemm

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On The Cover

The Staff of Hermes, also known as a Caduceus, integrated with the Grand Seal of the IAMAW.

Created by Eric Price (Local 811)



WHAT IS UNITED AIRLINES DOING?

As you are likely aware, United Airlines top management has mandated that all United Airlines employees must have received their second shot of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or the only shot of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine, by September 27th or face termination. IAM District 141 opposes mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations. We have discussed ways to increase vaccination incentives and testing procedures for IAM members who are hesitant to get the vaccine. United has refused to adequately use incentive programs in this effort.

Yesterday, however, United Ground Express, a wholly owned subsidiary of United Continental Holdings Inc., a subsidiary which is completely controlled by United CEO, Scott Kirby, informed UGE employees that they are NOT required to be vaccinated as a condition of employment AND there exists NO plan for a testing regime for UGE employees. The lack of consistent vaccine rules at UA/UGE will not create a safer environment for our membership.

CEO Scott Kirby and President Brett Hart said the following: "We know some of you will disagree with this decision to require the vaccine for all United employees, but we have no greater responsibility to you and your colleagues than to ensure your safety when you're at work, and the facts are crystal clear: everyone is safer when everyone is vaccinated."

What the hell is the difference between United and UGE employees?

On the one hand, Scott Kirby is framing the vaccine requirements at United as a matter of employee safety. On the other hand, he is allowing vaccinations to be optional at UGE. The decision on whether or not to impose vaccine mandates is already extremely controversial. Mixed messaging like this is making the situation far more provocative than it needs to be. If mandates are not needed at UGE, then why are they being imposed at United?

UGE and United employees work side by side in locations such as EWR, ORD and DEN. Workers in those locations are entitled to the same safety measures when at work.

While we may not agree with an unnecessarily punitive strategy of vaccine mandates, we must have a consistent approach from the company.

This is what UGE President Ken Brown wrote to his employees yesterday: "We have heard from many employees on this topic and every possible point of view has been represented. No deeply held position is invalid and we respect everyone's ability to decide what is best for themselves."

All IAM members at United Continental Holdings Inc. can rest assured that IAM District 141 will do all that it can to find out why United management has two completely different and conflicting policies regarding keeping their employees safe during the worst pandemic in over 100 years.

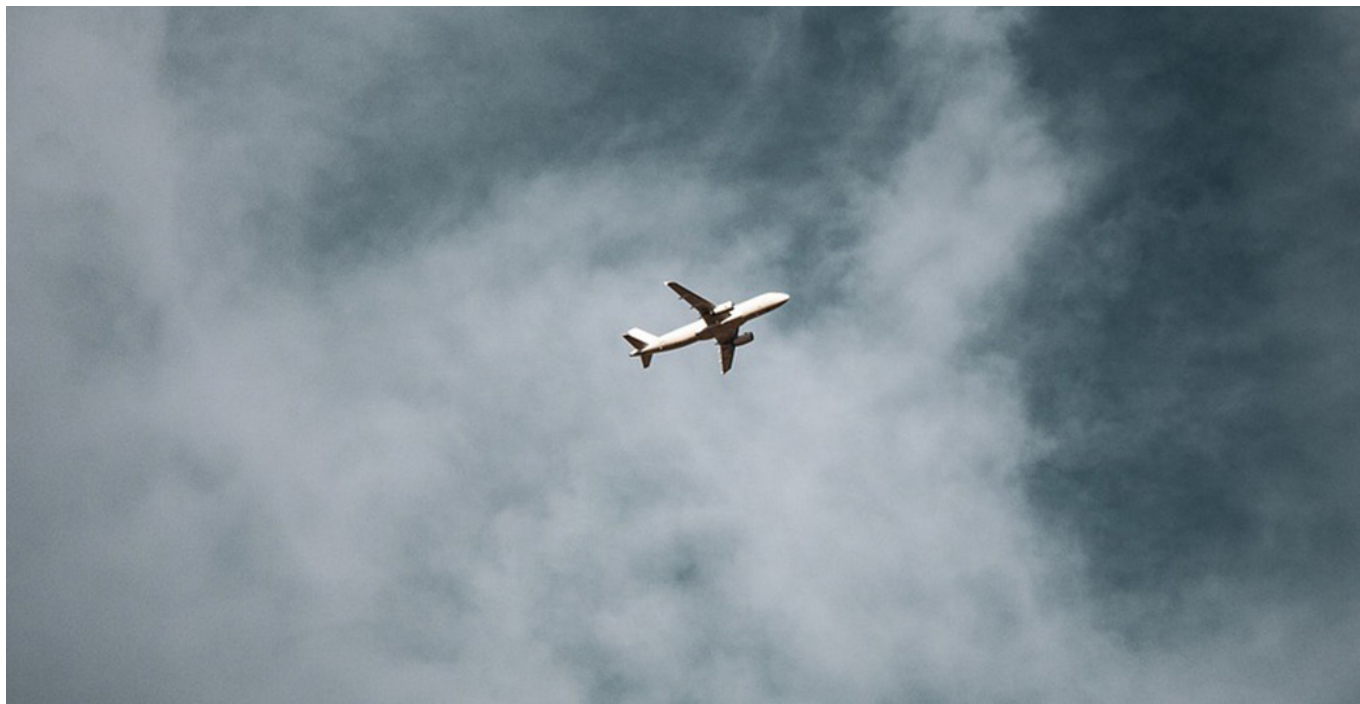
In Solidarity with all IAM members,

Michael G. Klemm
President & Directing General Chairman
IAM, District Lodge 141



NEW VACCINE REQUIREMENTS

With each passing day, the number of companies that are requiring employee vaccinations gets longer. Among the list: Airlines. It now appears likely that carriers like United, Air Canada, Delta, and Frontier will have workforces that are immune to COVID-19.



AIRLINE BUSINESS WEAKER DUE TO DELTA VARIANT

While summer traffic has been promising for airlines, there are troubling signs that the profit season for airlines may have peaked early – due to the continuing Pandemic, fueled by the Delta Variant and the unvaccinated.

TSA bookings year over year show positive growth throughout commercial aviation. Compared to 2019, the year before the pandemic began to ravage airlines, today's air traffic is 80% of what it historically should be for August.

However, it may be too early to declare the pandemic behind us. With the Delta variant clogging hospitals with unvaccinated Americans, airline travel is showing severe signs of weakening. For the third straight week, airline bookings are down and far weaker than in 2019. System bookings are currently 53.8% lower than 2019 levels. That could show that the most profitable quarter for airlines may be shorter this year than the historical average. If the trend continues,

many airlines will not have enough summer profits to get them through the rest of 2021 as they might have wanted.

The cause of the general malaise within airlines can be attributed to the continued COVID-19 pandemic.

Lucrative business and international travel is down at all airlines and show few signs of a quick comeback. Popular destinations for American air travelers, including France, remain on the CDC's "Do Not Travel" list. Hawaii is restarting restrictions on travel to the islands, including group sizes. Several other resort destinations are asking visitors to leave as soon as possible, while others extend border closures. All of which are challenges that airlines do not need right now.

Southwest attributed a general slowdown "close-in reservations" for August to the Delta Variant in an SEC filing last week. Delta, Hawaiian, Air Canada, United, and Frontier have imposed some vaccine requirements for employees.

A recent study of air travelers conducted by Longwoods International is not helping relieve fears of long-term, pandemic-related slowdowns for air travel. According to the research, a shocking 67% of communities want to shut their doors to tourists and their money. This number is high and growing; two months ago, it was at 47%, an already incomprehensibly high figure for areas dependent on tourist revenue. The study also found other indicators that COVID-19 concerns are a serious threat to aviation.

30% of respondents reported that they would rather drive instead of fly to their next travel destination, with 25% choosing domestic rather than international travel. The number that said COVID-19 concerns would "greatly" impact their travel decisions over the next six months was a staggering 34%.

If all these indications of weakening air travel demand are accurate, airlines may have hit the high point of their profit season.



HAWAIIAN AIRLINES WILL REQUIRE EMPLOYEE VACCINATIONS FOR COVID-19

Last week, Hawaiian Airlines announced plans to require all US-based employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19. The new policy will make Hawaiian the fourth airline to issue a vaccine requirement for employees. Delta issued vaccine mandates for new hires this spring. United and Frontier made similar policy changes in early August.

"As of November 1, 2021, Hawaiian Airlines will require all of our U.S.-based employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19," the airline said in a memo to employees. The airline presented the policy partly as a safety measure and necessary to coordinate with pandemic-related restrictions in other countries. "There is no greater demonstration of our values than ensuring the safety of others," the memo read. "Safety is the foundation of air travel, and it is ingrained throughout our operation and service. This is no different. By getting vaccinated, we protect ourselves and those around us. That is malama."

The list of major companies requiring vaccines includes executives at Walmart – as well as workers at companies such as Google, Facebook, Tyson Foods, Disney, and others. Members of the armed forces are also required to undergo immunizations. Fox Corporation is strongly encouraging executives and talent at the company to get vaccinated, using a voluntary self-

reporting system.

Hawaiian Airlines CEO Peter Ingram told workers they had until November 1 to be fully vaccinated. This timeframe means that employees getting a two-shot vaccine will need to get the first dose in the next two months. United set a deadline for its 67,000 employees of five weeks after the FDA grants full use authorization to have at least one vaccine, or October 25, whichever date is sooner. Frontier will require vaccinations by October 1 or employees will need to undergo regular testing. Frontier has a 'soft' vaccine requirement, granting exemptions to virtually anyone that requests one.

All airlines have had vaccine mandates for some employees for years, dating back to long before the pandemic. Pilots and flight attendants who travel to regions where certain diseases are prevalent, for example, must get vaccinated.

Delta has mandated vaccinations for new hires, meaning anyone leaving

Hawaiian, Frontier, or United for Delta will need to prove vaccination status. The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (District 141), which represents ground crews at Hawaiian, has supported incentive programs for airlines trying to immunize their workforces. These efforts have encouraged airlines to offer on-site clinics, time off from work, extra pay, and more.

However, the union's District President Mike Klemm has voiced concern that similar requirements happening at United Airlines are being made without proper communication with workers, leading to a clumsy and ineffective vaccination policy overall. He stressed that Hawaiian has been much more professional than United and that Hawaiian managers are actively trying to partner with employees, and are largely avoiding the widespread backlash occurring at United.

"Hawaiian has been courteous and careful with their communications with



“Hawaiian has been courteous and careful with their communications with the union, that shows a lot of respect. And, that kind of partnership will go a long way towards encouraging more vaccine participation.”

-IAMAW District 141 PDGC, Mike Klemm



the union,” he said. “That shows a lot of respect. And, that kind of partnership will go a long way towards encouraging more vaccine participation.”

Federal agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and courts have repeatedly found that requiring employee vaccinations is a power companies have. Earlier in 2020, the IAMAW consulted with attorneys and legal experts who determined that companies that choose to require employee vaccinations are legally able to do so.

It is not yet clear how the decision by airlines to require vaccinations will impact their business liability insurance costs, or whether or not such concerns are influencing their decision-making. Those eligible for an exemption will have to get frequent COVID-19 tests and wear masks, among other safety procedures.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT UNION: DON'T COME TO US FOR HELP GETTING VACCINE WAIVERS



The union representing Flight Attendants at United is staying away from medical and religious exemption waivers.

The list of major companies requiring employees to get a COVID-19 vaccine grows every day. Delta was the first airline to mandate proof of vaccination for new hires in the spring of 2021. By August, Hawaiian, Frontier, and United had issued some type of vaccine requirement.

Union members looking to avoid vaccinations have very few options outside of asking the company for an exemption. Companies are well within their legal rights to require employees to get vaccinated – and have been doing so without controversy for decades. However, federal law allows a few exceptions.

According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act requires an employer to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals who cannot follow a given company policy. Companies are not required to accept unsubstantiated requests for reasonable accommodations; they can claim that an employee's demands create an "undue hardship" for the company.

Reasonable Accommodation laws fall into two categories. Employees can avoid following specific company rules if they show that the policy is unsafe for them due to medical reasons or forbidden by a sincerely held religious belief. These employees can apply to get a "Reasonable Accommodation" from their employer. At airlines, a Reasonable Accommodation might involve frequent testing, allowing the employee to work from home, or requiring them to wear a mask at work.

United has set an August 31 deadline for all Reasonable Accommodation requests.

In an August 13 statement to union members, the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) said union representatives would not help those who want to avoid vaccination against COVID-19. A union spokesperson said questions about the Reasonable Accommodation Process and exemptions to vaccine requirements should go to management, not the union.

"The Company is responsible for the administration of this program, and your base manager should be your primary point of contact on questions about the Reasonable Accommodation Process," the statement read.

"We do want to be very clear. These are private issues between the employer, United Airlines, and the employee. It is for this reason that we must direct those seeking a reasonable accommodation to United management for these details."

In other words, an employee's personal medical history and religious practices are not things the AFA wants to mediate.

Poor communication of the new policy by United, which lacked a clear explanation of exactly how the Reasonable Accommodation Process will work, has caused confusion, anger, and resentment amongst employees. According to the AFA, 80% of flight attendants are already vaccinated, making the workgroup largely unbothered by the vaccination policy. The Flight Attendants and Pilots unions are both supportive of the vaccine mandates, although not without concerns.



“We do want to be very clear. These are private issues between the employer, United Airlines, and the employee. It is for this reason that we must direct those seeking a reasonable accommodation to United management for these details.”

Association of Flight Attendants

Photo Credit: United Airlines



According to the AFA, more than 80% of flight attendants at United are already vaccinated

Photo Credit: AFA



If the process leads to any negative effect on employment the Union will, of course, represent those Flight Attendants' rights under the contract and law."

AFA General Counsel Ed Gilmartin

United is telling employees very little about the Reasonable Accommodation Process at the airline. The company said it has medical experts and lawyers who will review every accommodation request, but not much beyond that. Those who want a medical exemption will need to supply "supporting documentation" from their doctor. Those applying for a religious exemption will have to provide a letter from a faith leader (on letterhead) explaining why they are forbidden to receive the vaccine. These documents will need to be handed over no later than August 31.

Most doctors will not state in writing that a COVID-19 vaccine is harmful without a significant (and genuine) health concern. There's a very small number of known health issues that would prompt

doctors to advise their patients to avoid vaccination. These conditions include having a weakened immune system due to taking certain medications or undergoing a recent organ transplant, or having an allergy to Polyethylene glycol, a component of some vaccines. People who are simply unwilling to get the shot are not likely to get an exemption letter from their doctor.

Moreover, getting a faith leader to write a letter stating a religious exemption claim may be just as complicated if there is no existing relationship between that place of worship and the unvaccinated employee.

If the Reasonable Accommodation Process takes too long, or if a request for exemption is not submitted before the August 31 deadline, employees could

quickly run out of time. At United, this most likely means that the company will begin the process to fire the employee after October 25. In that case, the AFA says it will step in and try to prevent job loss.

AFA General Counsel Ed Gilmartin said that "If the process leads to any negative effect on employment the Union will, of course, represent those Flight Attendants' rights under the contract and law."



Negotiations Update

Aloha Sisters and Brothers of Hawaiian Airlines,

A couple of weeks ago, we informed you that we would advise you of any new developments with Hawaiian Airlines and the scheduling of negotiations. Last night we confirmed with the carrier that we will meet the week of August 29th in San Francisco, California. We, along with your negotiating teams, remain cautiously optimistic that we can reach a tentative agreement during that session that will recognize and honor the work you do and the value you deliver to this company.

Together, we can secure an outstanding contract on your behalf and avoid the need to enter into Section Six negotiations.

On a separate note, Hawaiian Airlines has informed us that they plan to follow United Airlines and mandate the vaccine for their employees. Although morally we don't agree with a mandates-only approach to the Covid-19 vaccine, our attorneys have advised us the carriers are within their legal right to mandate the vaccine.

Employees with specific disabilities and sincerely held religious beliefs may have additional legal rights that employers must respect. The EEOC can offer further guidance and legal assistance.

We continue to thank you for your support and solidarity.

Mike Klemm

President and Directing General Chair,
District 141, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

Dave Supplee

President and Directing General Chair,
District 142, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers



United Airlines: Timeframe for Employee Vaccinations is Tight

United Airlines issued a memo on Tuesday laying out the dates by which employees must receive their vaccinations against COVID-19. For those who have yet to get immunized, the timeframes are tight.

According to the memo, “every U.S.-based United employee (including Guam and Puerto Rico) will be required to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and upload their vaccination record to Flying Together by September 27, 2021,” to remain employed at the airline. United CEO Scott Kirby has also stated that health and religious exemptions are available for those who qualify. Few details about how this process will work have been adequately explained.

The latest date unvaccinated employees can get their first dose of the fully FDA-approved Pfizer vaccine is September 6. The FDA granted General Use Authorization status to the Pfizer vaccine on Monday of this week.

For those receiving the Moderna vaccine, the last date to begin the two-shot process is August 30. These dates give United employees enough time to get their second doses by the September 27 cut-off date.

Those getting the one dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine have until September 27, but should still get vaccinated as soon as possible in case only Pfizer or Moderna vaccines are available in their area.

Those who can show proof of vaccination before September 20 qualify for an extra day's pay.

United Airlines: Vaccination Timeframes

August 30

Last day to get first shot of Moderna Vaccine

August 31

Last day to submit Reasonable Accommodation Requests*

September 6

Last day to get first shot of Pfizer Vaccine

September 20

Last day to qualify for a days pay by uploading proof of vaccination

September 27

All United employees must be vaccinated by this date unless granted an exemption

***Reasonable Accommodations don't have a deadline. The date (8/31) provided by United is intended to provide enough time for review and processing for this specific requirement's deadline**



How the Machinists Union is Critical to the Afghanistan Evacuation Efforts

The IAM is proud to be the largest aerospace, airline and defense labor union in North America. The recent evacuation efforts of thousands of U.S. citizens and allies in Afghanistan have been made possible by IAM members throughout the union.

Both commercial and military aircraft being used in the evacuation effort are built and maintained by IAM members. In addition, IAM members work side-by-side with the military on bases across the country that are housing Afghan refugees upon their arrival to the United States.

"Our union is proud to be a part of this important mission to safely return U.S. citizens back home and to keep our promises to Afghan allies," said IAM International President Robert Martinez Jr., a U.S. Navy veteran. "As a union with such a large percentage of military veterans, we are honored to once again play a vital role in supporting our men and women in uniform. I send my sincere thanks to every

IAM member and our brave service members who make this effort possible."

The IAM Veteran Services Department has compiled resources available to military veterans experiencing a wide range of emotions during the withdrawal from Afghanistan.





VACCINE REQUIREMENTS: HERE'S HOW TO APPLY FOR AN EXEMPTION AT UNITED

United has done a poor job in communicating its new vaccine requirements to employees. This has (predictably) led to widespread confusion and resentment at the airline. Among the aspects of the policy that have not been clearly communicated: how will United apply medical and religious exemptions to the vaccine mandates?

The Supreme Court and Federal Agencies have ruled that private companies like United can require employees to get vaccinated. Flight Attendant and Pilot unions are not contesting the policy, and finding another job may not help since many companies also require employees to be immunized from COVID-19. An employee fleeing vaccine mandates at one company may find themselves facing new mandates at their next job. Outside of getting an exemption, there are few options for avoiding vaccination.

Recently, a growing list of airlines and transportation-sector companies, including United, Frontier, Air Canada, and Hawaiian Airlines, announced policies that will require employee

vaccinations. Delta Air Lines was the first carrier to announce vaccine mandates in the spring when it began requiring new hires to show proof of COVID-19 immunization as a condition of employment. The airlines join a constantly expanding parade of large companies requiring at least some form of COVID-19 vaccination. This list includes giant companies such as McDonald's, Facebook, Google, Tyson Foods, and federal departments and agencies.

Meaning, that employees who do not want to get vaccinated can't simply find another job. Many of the largest employers in the nation, including the Federal Government, are already requiring at least some vaccination mandates for employees. More companies will certainly follow suit, especially once the FDA grants General-Use Authorization to one of the vaccines.

Meanwhile, with its three Trump-appointed justices, the Republican-dominated Supreme Court has ruled that companies, schools, and other organizations may require vaccinations if they choose, including the specific COVID-19 vaccines available in the US. (*Bridges vs. Houston Methodist Hospital*, *Klassen vs. Trustees of Indiana University*).

In *Bridges*, the Supreme Court refused to hear a challenge to mandated vaccinations, thus upholding the requirements. In *Klassen*, Justice Amy Coney Barrett in her role with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit refused to block similar mandates at Indiana University. Coney Barrett threw that case out without requesting more information or consulting any of the other justices, a move that happens when a case is considered frivolous or otherwise meritless.

A second case involving Houston Methodist is currently working its way through the system, but the outcome is not expected to change.

Moreover, state laws designed to prevent “vaccine passports” apply mostly to business customers – not to employees. To date, vaccine mandates for employees in one form or another have been found legal in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Major airline unions are also largely backing vaccine requirements. The Association of Flight Attendants, the Airline Pilots Association, and the Teamsters have all issued statements supporting vaccine requirements at airlines to varying degrees. All three acknowledge that the mandates would be upheld in court but stressed that safety measures must be in place.

The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (District 141) has been gathering input from front-line membership on the subject. While supportive of vaccines, the position most union members is that companies should not resort to mandates until an honest, good-faith effort to use incentives has been tested first. While United has offered some incentives, the company is focused on a punishment-first approach, complicating participation in vaccination programs.

All mass-scale vaccine requirements come with exemptions for those with certain medical, cultural and religious conditions. For example, employees who have recently undergone an organ transplant or chemotherapy treatments are generally exempted from vaccine mandates.

The most strict vaccine requirements are at Air Canada and United. Air Canada’s exemption follows Federal rules in that country, which are slightly different from those in the US. At United, reasonable accommodations are available for employees that can show that the vaccines may harm them or that their faith leaders forbid the use of immunizations.

To obtain a reasonable accommodation, employees will need to fill out a form at United’s HelpHub. In the case of medical exemptions, the employee will need to provide documentation from their doctor. Religious exemptions will require a note from a faith leader explaining the religious prohibitions that the employee follows. The letter will need to be on letterhead.

United is building a staff of lawyers and medical experts to evaluate each request for an exemption. United is not saying how long the process will take. Once the employee has filed for a waiver to the vaccine requirements and submitted supporting documentation, the matter goes to the Human Resources Department, local management, and the Employee Service Center (ESC). Together, these departments will work with the employee to see if they can reasonably accommodate their continued employment in light of their work restrictions.

United employees seeking a vaccine waiver should start the process as soon as possible. The cut-off date for new requests is August 31.

To date, United is not clear on whether or not unvaccinated people seeking exemptions will be spared termination while waiting for a decision past the fall deadlines, after which employees must be vaccinated.

The FDA has given full, General Use Authorization to the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID vaccine. This will trigger the 5-week countdown United has for when employees must be vaccinated, which ends on the week of September 25.

According to the company, once any vaccine is granted General Use status, employees will only have five weeks to get immunized against COVID-19. Since two-dose vaccines can take weeks to administer, time can run out very quickly. (If the FDA does not grant General-Use Authorization before

Employers must offer exemptions from vaccination requirements to those who are likely to be harmed by the vaccine. The EEOC requires employers to offer “Reasonable Accommodations” that will allow these employees to continue to work for the business.

However, an employer does not have to offer reasonable accommodation exemptions if it determines that the danger of unvaccinated employees spreading COVID-19 within the workplace constitutes an undue hardship for that business.

Employers who determine unvaccinated employees constitute an undue hardship must demonstrate that the individual would pose a “direct threat” to the health or safety of the employee or others in the workplace. A “direct threat” is a “significant risk of substantial harm” that cannot be

October 25th, employees will have to get vaccinated by that date at the latest.)

In that case, employees at United will need to get their final dose by late September or early October in order to have time to develop full immunity.

The vaccine requirements could potentially lead to terminations just as the carrier pays signing and moving bonuses of up to \$25,000 to attract new employees.



Photo Credit: United Airlines

DELTA AIR LINES WILL CHARGE UNVACCINATED EMPLOYEES \$200 A MONTH

According to Delta CEO Ed Bastian, employees who refuse to get vaccinated will have to pay a \$200 a month insurance surcharge to help offset the financial burden they create for the company.

The policy, announced in a memo this week, will make Delta the first company of its size to require unvaccinated workers to help pay for a portion of the financial risk involved with employing them. According to Bastian, each employee hospitalized with COVID 19 costs the airline an average of \$50,000. Delta self-insures its workforce, which means the company has to bear the brunt of employees' COVID-related health care.

"The average hospital stay for COVID-19 has cost Delta \$50,000 per person," Bastian wrote in the memo. "This surcharge will be necessary to address the financial risk the decision to not vaccinate is creating for our company," he continued.

"In recent weeks since the rise of the B.1.617.2 variant, all Delta employees who have been hospitalized with COVID were not fully vaccinated," he said. Bastian estimates that 70% of employees are already at least partially vaccinated.

Delta was the first US airline to impose vaccine mandates when it began requiring new hires to show proof that they had received a COVID vaccination. However, until now, Delta had stopped short of extending the requirement to all employees.

The \$200 a month surcharge will apply to employees' health insurance premiums and are set to begin on November 1.

In addition, unvaccinated employees will need to turn in weekly COVID tests and must wear masks indoors. Delta employees get "Pay Protection" when they contract a COVID-related illness and have to miss work. Starting September 30, only vaccinated employees who experience a breakthrough infection will qualify for the program. Unvaccinated employees will have to use their sick banks.

Earlier this week, the Pentagon ordered all US Military Servicemembers and civilian contractors to be vaccinated. In making that policy announcement, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin previewed much of the same reasoning behind the Delta memo. Citing the impact that widespread COVID infections could pose to military readiness, he ordered that servicemen be vaccinated "immediately." The Federal Government is the largest employer in the US.

Other large companies require proof of immunity to COVID of their workforces, including many of Delta's competitors. United Airlines, Frontier, Hawaiian, Cathay Airlines, and Air Canada are now requiring employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Alaska Airlines is considering a similar move, citing this week's FDA General Use Authorization of the Pfizer vaccine.



The average hospital stay for an employee stricken with COVID-19 costs airlines like Delta an average of \$50,000, according to Delta CEO, Ed Bastian.

AMERICAN TROOPS WILL BE PROTECTED FROM COVID-19 “IMMEDIATELY”

On Monday, the FDA granted complete General Use Authorization for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. The decision means that orders issued by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin that all United States military service members must get inoculated against COVID-19 will go into effect “immediately.”

The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers is one of the largest labor unions within the Defense and Aerospace industry. Members of the IAMAW build and maintain a wide range of military hardware, including warships, planes, and armored vehicles.

“I will seek the President’s approval to make the vaccines mandatory no later than mid-September,” Secretary Austin wrote in a memo to the Department of Defense issued earlier this month. “Or immediately upon the U.S. Food and Drug Agency (FDA) licensure, whichever comes first.”

The orders extend to all active-duty and national guard service members and all civilian employees of the Department of Defense. Companies who work on behalf of the Defense Department will also need to prove their

employees are vaccinated before being awarded contracts.

In all, the orders ensure that the Nation’s 1.3 million military service members and 400 thousand members of the National Guard are protected from COVID-19.

“To defend this Nation, we need a healthy and ready force. I strongly encourage all DoD military and civilian personnel – as well as contractor personnel – to get vaccinated now,” Secretary Austin wrote. Members of the Armed Forces should “not to wait for the mandate,” he continued.

A timeline for when the vaccinations would be completed is expected to be released later this week.

The decision by the FDA to grant General Use Authorization to the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine is expected to set off a tidal wave of employer vaccine requirements. According to a USA Today / Ipsos poll released this week, 61% of Americans support COVID vaccine requirements. A substantial majority of respondents, 72%, say that mask mandates are a “matter of health and safety,” and are not infringements of personal liberty. Another 68% voiced support for businesses that choose to deny service to unvaccinated customers.

According to the Pentagon, 76%

of the Armed Forces are partially vaccinated already, and 68% are fully vaccinated. A breakdown by branch shows that the US Marine Corp is 57% fully vaccinated, along with 65% of active-duty soldiers in the Army. In the Air Force, 62% of Airmen are fully vaccinated. The Navy is the most well-protected, with 76% of active duty Sailors fully immunized against COVID-19.

Military leaders have compared illnesses related to COVID-19 to other diseases that have weakened military readiness, such as malaria and smallpox.

Since the founding of the Nation, disease has routinely killed more military personnel than enemy soldiers. In 1776, then-General George Washington ordered troops under his command to be vaccinated against smallpox.

Although rare in the U.S. today, smallpox took a nightmarish toll on Washington’s Army. Smallpox causes vomiting and deep, painful ulcers in the mouth and skin, eventually leading to death in some cases. A staggering 90% of Washington’s military casualties resulted from smallpox. Since

Washington’s vaccine mandates, the U.S. military has considered them a tool that gives Service Members a strategic advantage over armies that do not



require vaccines.

Many civilian companies are reaching the same conclusion as the U.S. Military. A growing number of private companies now require employee vaccinations, expecting a strategic advantage over competitors. COVID-related employee outages and health care costs are a potentially crushing expense for companies and a significant drag on worker productivity. Companies such as United Airlines, McDonald's, Citigroup, among many others, now require vaccinations that they hope will keep critical staff healthy and on the frontlines of the economy. Machinists and Aerospace Union members employed at the airline.

“

**TO DEFEND THIS
NATION, WE NEED
A HEALTHY AND
READY FORCE.**

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin



CANADA WILL REQUIRE ALL AIRLINE EMPLOYEES AND PASSENGERS TO BE VACCINATED

All Canadian forms of mass travel will soon require proof of vaccination for both passengers and employees. The new rules will include commercial air travel, trains, busses, and all federal workers. The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers has represented workplaces in Canadian rail and Commercial Aerospace and has a significant presence in the Canadian medical industry.

The requirements will impact about 1.2 million Canadians. Commercial air travelers within Canada will also need to vaccinate, but not those traveling Air Canada from two destinations in the United States. According to the Canadian Treasury Board, the changes will take effect “as soon as possible in the fall and no later than the end of October.”

“Today, we are announcing that the government of Canada intends to require vaccination across the Federal public services,” said Transport Minister Omar Alghabra as he announced the plan. The move is not limited to government agencies but will extend to employees at private companies in the federally regulated sector. “The government of Canada will require employees in the federally-regulated air, rail, and marine transportation sector to be vaccinated,” Alghabra said in the statement.

The mandates will extend to passengers flying on Canada’s two large airlines, as well. Air Canada and WestJet employees and passengers will need to show proof of vaccination by the end of October at the latest,” he said. The goal is to have the new rules enacted as early as the end of September, however.

“We have seen how devastating COVID-19 has been to our transportation and tourism sectors,” Alghabra said of the new mandates. “We must protect the hard-won gains made by Canadians,” he said. Canada has a vaccination rate of 73%, with 64% being fully vaccinated, making Canadians one of the best-protected populations in North America. About 26,000 Canadians have died of the COVID-19 virus.

The vaccination requirements allow those who cannot get vaccinated due to cancer or who have undergone a recent organ transplant, among other medical conditions, to get exemptions. Those with exemptions will have to pass frequent testing and other screening measures.

In early August, Canada began relaxing some of the travel restrictions for US air travelers, which have somewhat slowed the recovery of air travel in the US. While the requirements do not reflect a policy specific to airlines per se, the addition of Air Canada and WestJet to the “vaccinated” column grows the list of airlines that are now requiring immunizations for employees. Delta was the first to mandate vaccinations for new hires

in the Spring, and United, Hawaiian, and Frontier have at least some form of vaccine requirements for employees. Delta was the first to mandate vaccinations for new hires in the Spring, and United, Hawaiian, and Frontier have at least some form of vaccine requirements for employees. The Supreme Court in the United States has thus far thrown out two challenges to vaccine mandates, upholding a 1905 decision that allows employers and other organizations to require them.

Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons

GET VACCINATED!



GET VACCINATED, AND THEN HELP OTHERS GET VACCINATED, AS WELL!

Let's End This Pandemic

This Pandemic has gone on long enough.

Scientists are doing their part. Medical professionals are doing their part. Front-line workers are doing their part. Together, we have helped this nation face its most dire hour of need in generations. Now, it's time to take this fight to the virus.

In addition to wearing masks, social distancing, and avoiding gatherings of any kind, we now have an additional weapon: virus-stopping vaccines.

Learn how to get vaccinated. Help others get vaccinated. Let's kill this virus for good.

Aim your camera or QR Scanner at this code to get vaccination information in your state. Or, visit IAM141.org/KillCovid



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**Get
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Let's End This Pandemic

Learn how to get vaccinated. Help others get vaccinated. Let's kill this virus for good.

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