

NEWS BRIEF

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Supreme Court Won't Stop Vaccine Mandate for Maine's Health Care Workers

On Tuesday, Oct. 19, 2021, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to block a COVID-19 vaccine mandate for health care workers in the state of Maine. This emergency request was denied by Justice Stephen Breyer.

This mandate, issued on Aug. 12 by Governor Janet Mills, requires health care workers in Maine to be vaccinated against COVID-19 as of Oct. 1. The mandate applies to the majority of health care workers in the state, including hospital and nursing home employees.

Health care workers are [contesting](#) the mandate on the grounds that it does not include religious exemptions, contending that Maine has granted such accommodations in previous vaccination mandates.

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This case will proceed to a federal appeals court. However, challengers may be able to refile the case with the Supreme Court if the federal appeals court does not act by Oct. 29, when the mandate is scheduled to be enforced.

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What This Means

Notably, this is the first action the Supreme Court has taken on statewide COVID-19 vaccine mandates, though the court has rejected challenges to local vaccine mandates in educational systems.

This may be an early signal as to how the highest federal court might view vaccine mandates. This is an important development as employers await upcoming federal vaccine mandates, which will apply to all U.S. employers with 100 or more employees, according to the White House.

Employers should continue to monitor updates regarding COVID-19 vaccine mandates from federal and local officials.

Contact us today for more COVID-19 vaccine mandate resources.

