

California Poised to Become First State to Mandate COVID Vaccines for Students and All Workplaces



In [sweeping new legislation](#) unveiled Friday, a bill in California would mandate that all businesses require their employees or independent contractors receive a COVID vaccine.

The bill, proposed by Buffy Wicks (D-Oakland), would require anyone who receives a medical or religious exemption to regularly test for COVID, while those who do not qualify would have to get at least one dose by the time they start work and a second dose within 45 days of being on the job.

The [previous version of the bill](#) would have allowed workers to submit to weekly testing as an alternative to getting vaccinated, but that option is absent in the new version of the bill.

Wicks and democratic supporters said the mandate is needed even though California is easing COVID requirements and moving into an “endemic” phase that accepts the virus is here to stay.

“That’s fundamentally what this bill is about,” Wicks said. “Getting back to some sense of normalcy so we can go on with our lives, and we don’t have these constant interruptions and outbreaks and all these things that we’ve been experiencing for so long.”

But there is nothing normal about forcing individuals to inject a substance into their body that could cause a risk of harm, including death, in order to preserve their livelihoods and provide for their families.

Wicks felt the need to bring the bill forward after the U.S. Supreme Court [rejected](#) the Biden administration’s attempt to push through a COVID vaccine mandate via the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#) – a decision that she said, “[opened the door](#) for state lawmakers to take the lead on the issue.”

The bill also states that the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health and the California Department of Public Health would determine what constitutes a valid medical condition, disability or religious belief entitling someone to a medical or [religious vaccine exemption](#). Businesses that don’t comply would face penalties, yet to be decided.

Assembly Republican Leader James Gallagher said he is vaccinated and encourages others to do so, but “telling people they can’t feed their family unless they get the vaccine is just wrong,” Gallagher said. “I trust Californians enough to treat them like adults who can make their own health care decisions. It’s unfortunate that a few Democrats in the Legislature don’t.”

Jonathan Keller, president of the conservative [California Family Council](#) advocacy group, said the “government should not force employers to fire people over personal medical decisions.”

The bill is silent on whether a booster shot is required to be considered fully vaccinated, and would remain in effect until the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention determines vaccines are no longer necessary – a day that will never come as the agency is captured by the billion-dollar pharmaceutical industry.

Wicks’ bill [marks the fourth piece of legislation](#) to come out of the newly formed “vaccine caucus,” a group of seven California lawmakers committed to introducing tyrannical COVID policy measures and dedicated to combating information they’ve subjectively deemed “misinformation.”

Other bills on the table include CA SB866 (21R), by Sen. Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco), which would allow children 12 and older to get vaccinated without parental consent, and CA SB871 (21R), by Sen. Richard Pan (D-Sacramento), which would require all school children receive a COVID vaccine starting in 2023, despite the fact that all COVID vaccines for children are experimental.

Assemblymember Akilah Weber (D-San Diego) last week introduced legislation that would allow districts to access the state’s immunization registry to track whether a student is vaccinated against COVID.