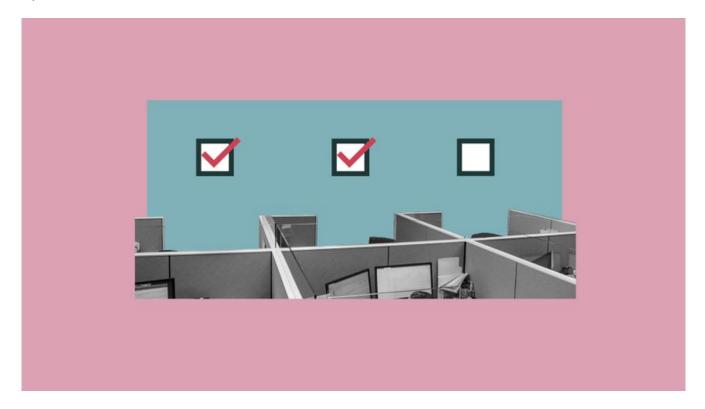# Can employers make COVID-19 vaccination mandatory?

AP **apnews.com**/article/can-employers-covid-19-vaccine-mandatory-ba22c99f01f24ea3be7631ff751f0d82

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By The Associated Press

Can my employer make me get a COVID-19 vaccine? AP Illustration/Peter Hamlin

Can employers make COVID-19 vaccination mandatory?

Yes, with some exceptions.

Experts say employers can require employees to take safety measures, including vaccination. That doesn't necessarily mean you would get fired if you refuse, but you might need to sign a waiver or agree to work under specific conditions to limit any risk you might pose to yourself or others.

"Employers generally have wide scope" to make rules for the workplace, said Dorit Reiss, a law professor who specializes in vaccine policies at the University of California Hastings College of the Law. "It's their business."

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has allowed companies to mandate the flu and other vaccines, and has also indicated they can require COVID-19 vaccines.

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There are exceptions; for example, people can request exemptions for medical or religious reasons.

And even though employers can require vaccinations, there are reasons they might not want to.

Tracking compliance with mandatory vaccination would be an administrative burden, said Michelle S. Strowhiro, an employment adviser and lawyer at McDermott Will & Emery. Employers would also have to manage exemption requests — not to mention legal claims that might arise.

As a result, many employers will likely strongly encourage vaccination without requiring it, Strowhiro said.