

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS  
GENERAL ORDER 21-0033**

**September 20, 2021**

**IN RE: Employee COVID-Vaccine Condition of Employment**

By unanimous vote of the Court's Executive Committee and its Restart Task Force, it is hereby ordered:

1. As of November 22, 2021, all employees and all contractors (including all law clerks, externs and interns) of the District Court, the Bankruptcy Court, the Probation Office, and the Pretrial Services Office must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, unless they have requested and been granted an exemption in writing from the Chief Judge of the United States District Court. Being "fully vaccinated" means having received the second shot of a two-shot vaccine or a single shot of one-shot vaccine at least 14 days prior to November 22, 2021. Any person whose vaccine status has changed since August 2, 2021, must complete and return the Vaccine Attestation form on or before November 8, 2021. New employees must be fully vaccinated prior to the first day of employment and must submit the Vaccine Attestation form or seek an exemption prior to their start date. Forms must be e-mailed to: [covid\\_report@ilnd.uscourts.gov](mailto:covid_report@ilnd.uscourts.gov).
2. Persons who have not previously sought a medical or sincerely-held religious exemption may seek such an exemption by making a written request (in a sealed envelope marked "confidential") to the Chief Judge, Chambers 2548, no later than October 1, 2021 (or one week prior to the start date for any new employee or contractor). A request for a medical exemption must include documentation from the requester's medical provider.
3. Any employee or contractor who has not been granted an exemption and is not fully vaccinated (or declines to disclose vaccination status) by November 22, 2021 will be deemed to have resigned voluntarily on that date.
4. Until November 22, 2021, testing and masking requirements, and travel/gym restrictions, set out below remain in force for persons not yet fully vaccinated. For employees who have been granted an exemption, the testing and masking requirements and travel/gym restrictions continue until further order of this court:

- the employee/contractor must take a PCR-based COVID-19 test and submit the results to covid\_report@ilnd.uscourts.gov twice each week, regardless of leave or remote work status;
- testing must be arranged at a location outside the Courthouse and at the employee/contractor's expense, during non-work hours;
- PCR-based test results must be submitted prior to 8:00 a.m. on the Monday following each work week, and
- employees/contractors are prohibited from work-related travel and from use of the employee gym.

ENTER:  
FOR THE COURT:



Chief Judge

Dated at Chicago, Illinois this 20<sup>th</sup> day of September 2021

### **Comments**

In a Memorandum dated August 2, 2021, the Court announced a COVID-19 vaccination requirement for employees and contractors working in the District Court, the Bankruptcy Court, the Probation Office, and the Pretrial Services Office. Developments since that date have led the Court to reconsider the portion of that policy that permitted some to remain unvaccinated:

- Full FDA approval of the Pfizer vaccine;
- President Biden's September 9, 2021 Executive Order mandating vaccination as a condition of continued employment in the Executive Branch;
- Continued high levels of transmission of COVID-19 in this District, posing a serious public health risk to potential jurors and persons who must do business with the Court;
- Significant administrative burden to monitor submission of testing results from unvaccinated individuals, which diverts resources from the Court's core mission.

## Timeline

To meet the November 22, 2021 deadline of being fully vaccinated, the following dates are provided as guidance:

October 11, 2021 – First shot Moderna

October 18, 2021 – First shot Pfizer

November 8, 2021 – Second shot Moderna (4 weeks after first shot Moderna)

November 8, 2021 – Second shot Pfizer (3 weeks after first shot Pfizer)

November 8, 2021 – Single shot Johnson & Johnson

November 22, 2021 – Fully vaccinated (2 weeks after second shot Moderna/Pfizer or single shot Johnson & Johnson)

Because of the gaps between shots for a two-shot vaccine, unvaccinated employees who choose to obtain a two-shot vaccine are responsible for arranging to receive their first dose soon enough to ensure that they receive their second dose no later than November 8, 2021. Employees who chose the single shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine must receive their vaccine no later than November 8, 2021.