



## COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

There have been a lot of calls and confusion on what is and is not allowed pertaining to vaccinations and mandates in our industry. California Plumbing Mechanical Contractors Association and its 97 affiliated contractors, our industry partners, the Southern California Pipe Trades, District Council 16 and its affiliated Local Unions, would like to dispel some of the myths and rumors and make sure that all of you get the same message at the same time.

According to virus experts, the recent rise in cases is an indication that we may be entering yet another wave of the pandemic. The latest surge in cases is being driven by the Delta Variant which is far more transmissible than any of the previous variants. The surge in new cases and hospitalizations are statistically driven by the unvaccinated population.

Out of 504 people who died from COVID-19 April 1<sup>st</sup> and June 30<sup>th</sup> 2021 in Los Angeles County, 96 percent were either unvaccinated or had not completed their inoculation regimen according to the Los Angeles Times.

California is now the first state in the nation to pursue COVID-19 vaccine mandates for state employees. The Health and Human Services Department is also requiring all public and private health care providers to implement similar mandates. The Department of Veterans Affairs is requiring on site health workers be vaccinated in the next two months, the first federal agency to order a mandate.

There can be no denying that we are facing a new COVID 19 threat which will affect the health of all our members and work opportunities for members and signatory contractors. We know getting vaccinated is a very sensitive subject and this message is in no way a judgement of your personal vaccination decisions, nor should it be considered medical advice, for or against, getting vaccinated. **However, we collectively as an industry, in order to remain most employable, we encourage you to get vaccinated as soon as possible.** Though we have not mandated vaccinations nor does the current Master Labor Agreement address vaccinations, it is an industry issue that we must address collectively. There are **some important issues we face right now**, that every member has the right to know so that each one of you have a working knowledge of what our industry is facing.

End users and owners of projects have the legal right to mandate anyone working on their property to follow their guidelines such as mandatory masks, social distancing, vaccinations, and other protocols intended to keep all workers on site safe and stop the spread of the virus. Several owners and developers have already released schedules and deadlines where vaccinations will be mandatory to work on their projects. These mandates **are not** coming from our signatory contractors or your local union, but from owners and developers and is out of our control. If the company, you work for has work on one of these projects, you as the worker will be required to follow the protocols required for that project. If you are not vaccinated, and your contractor has work on other projects where vaccinations are not required, you may be transferred to that project if there is available work. If no other work is available, you will be laid off and will not be dispatched to projects where vaccinations are required. This is not a threat but a reality of working during this pandemic. Though we recognize the decision to vaccinate is personal and not mandated, we are making you aware of the work implications of that decision.



For Labor and Management to survive this pandemic, we need to work together to protect our jobs, our work hours, and our trust funds. This means having a vaccinated workforce which can continue working on the increasing number of projects which require vaccination. This has been an evolving situation and it will continue to evolve very quickly. However, based on what has been occurring recently the trend of requiring vaccination on projects is on the rise and will continue through the foreseeable future.

On a final note, we are also hearing of several instances where fake or counterfeit vaccination cards are being sold or used on some construction sites. The California Department of Public health uses the state's central immunization database to verify each cards authenticity. **We have attached** a Public Service Announcement from the FBI on the legal issues an individual might face if they decide to furnish or utilize a counterfeit card. If anyone chooses to be involved in this illegal practice, the responsibility and risk fall solely on the individual. <https://www.ic3.gov/media/y2021/psa210330>

The sooner everyone who is eligible is vaccinated, the sooner we can get past this pandemic and continue growing the industry. For your own health and that of your family, as well as to secure your future employment, we encourage everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated.

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