

# Office and Professional Employees International Union, AFL-CIO, CLC



**Richard Lanigan**  
President

**Mary Mahoney**  
Secretary-Treasurer

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To All OPEIU Local Unions:

OPEIU supports the recommendation that everyone be vaccinated against SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 in a just, fair, and equitable manner. A safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine will, at a minimum, decrease the number of people experiencing severe effects of the virus and save countless lives. ***We hope that the full approval today by the FDA will increase peoples' confidence in the vaccine's effectiveness and safety so that many more will get vaccinated. Many more employers have now announced mandatory vaccinations in both public and private employment settings.***

We agree that deciding whether to be vaccinated or not is a personal choice and should be defended. Our union will defend those rights for those with medical or religious objections to the extent possible. We will not tolerate discrimination and will enforce the guidelines set by the EEOC.

However, we also believe that as a union, we must be concerned with the right to a safe and healthy workplace as paramount. There are numerous regulations, policies and laws that dictate proper safety equipment, ventilation systems and training that all employees in all types of workplaces or roles are expected to adhere to in order to protect themselves, coworkers, customers and the public. This situation is no different than a surgical nurse wearing a mask and gloves to safeguard the patient and themselves or meatcutters wearing mesh gloves to prevent severing their fingers. It is well established legal precedent that vaccine mandates are legal as long as they are not discriminatory.

OPEIU demands and expects that our employers should do everything possible in running their business or organization to safeguard the health and well-being of their employees, our members, by doing the following:

- Ensuring that all protocols recommended by the CDC and OSHA are being adhered to by all employees, contractors, customers, students and visitors - That includes wearing proper fitting masks when necessary, social distancing and following proper hygiene procedures.
- Upgrading ventilations systems and/or providing portable HEPA air purifiers to improve the air quality and lower the possibility of transmission of dangerous airborne particles.
- Educating employees about the dangers of Covid-19, how it's transmitted and how to safe- guard their co-workers and family members.

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-Providing free on-site vaccinations and additional paid sick days to cover time off if needed to get the vaccine or because of the side effects of the vaccine or from falling ill from Covid-19.

-Engaging in helping underserved communities get vaccinated.

-Establishing committees and hold regular meetings with local unions to ensure fair treatment educate employees and to update policies.

Unions stand for promoting the greater good for all working people, our families, and communities. This pandemic calls for all of us working together to eradicate Covid-19.

Please share this with stewards and members and request bargaining with your employers to help protect our members, our jobs and our communities.

In Solidarity,

Sandy Pope

OPEIU Bargaining Director

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