



CDPH makes new order mandating vaccine for prison staff

Yes, the vaccine mandate for prison staff has been ordered. Bargaining Unit 18 employees working in state prisons must be fully vaccinated by **October 14, 2021**. The California Department of Public Health order was issued August 19, preempting the Federal Receiver's vaccine mandate report and recommendation filed in court and calendared for a September 16 hearing. The new CDPH order closely coincides with the Federal Food and Drug Administration's announcement today that it has fully approved Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine. The FDA-approved Pfizer vaccine will likely usher a new wave of vaccine mandates for private and public sector workers. Additionally, recent polling by Gallop shows that most workers favor vaccine mandates in the workplace (52% in favor, 38% opposed, and 10% being neutral).

CAPT warned in its August 16 flier that a similar mandate order would likely be forthcoming despite the news that the August 5 CDPH order did not apply to prison staff. The August 19 order includes **ALL** prison staff, health care or otherwise, who are "regularly assigned to work within hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities, or the equivalent that are integrated into the correctional facility or detention center in areas where health care is provided. This includes workers providing health care to inmates, prisoners, and detainees, as well as persons not directly involved in delivering health care, but who could be exposed to infec-

tious agents that can be transmitted in the health care setting (e.g., clerical, dietary, janitorial services, laundry, correctional officers, facilities maintenance staff, administrative, inmate workers, and volunteer personnel)."

CAPT is preparing to meet and confer with CDCR representatives to discuss the order's implementation and its implications upon BU 18 staff. Please forward any questions or concerns you would like addressed to your local chapter.

As with the previous order, employees may refuse vaccination for either a Religious Belief or a Qualifying Medical Reason(s). To receive a vaccine exemption, you must file a CDCR 855 by **September 14** that states the reason for your declination. Medical exemptions must be substantiated with a written statement signed by a physician or other licensed medical professional. A medical exemption shall indicate probable duration, whether it is specific, unknown, or permanent. The medical statement does not need to specify or include the medical condition or disability. Vaccine-exempt employees will be required to undergo twice-weekly testing and masking.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact your local chapter for assistance.

