



ABPD Statement in Support of COVID-19 Vaccine Mandates For All Eligible Americans

The Association of Bioethics Program Directors (ABPD) represents the leadership of nearly 100 academic bioethics programs at medical centers and universities across North America.

In the face of the ongoing worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, vaccines have been medically shown to greatly reduce rates of COVID-19 infection, transmission, severe disease, and death. With full approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration of one COVID-19 vaccine and others soon to follow, the clear benefits of vaccination when compared to the overwhelming risks of COVID-19, mean getting vaccinated is a vital step toward overcoming this collective, dire threat to humankind and is a collective obligation for all of us.

Given the ability of authorized vaccines to save lives, all eligible persons should be vaccinated to protect themselves as well as other vulnerable members of society, such as young children who cannot yet be vaccinated, older adults, those at elevated risk of infection because of their work or housing situation, and those with immune compromise. Eligible persons who refuse to be vaccinated risk infecting themselves, spreading the COVID virus to others, increasing the likelihood that worse virus strains emerge, and perpetuating the need for more invasive public health strategies like lockdowns and limiting travel, which can impinge upon common welfare and liberties.

Some claim that vaccine mandates are “tyranny” that violates rights to individual liberty and autonomy. However, there is common agreement among both secular and religious ethical worldviews and traditions that preventing risk to others justifies enforcing limits to personal decision-making.

We stand with the growing number of institutions both public and private who mandate vaccination with suitably-narrow exemptions for all employees, visitors, students, and other eligible persons.

To protect the health, safety and future prosperity of humankind, mandated vaccination is now necessary. ***The ABPD supports the use of vaccine mandates as an essential measure against COVID-19.***