



Boston Ends Indoor COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate

Insights

2.21.22

Boston Mayor Michelle Wu just lifted the city's proof-of-COVID-19 vaccine mandate for indoor businesses, effective immediately. The city's February 18 announcement was based on public health data, citing a recent drop in COVID-19 cases and hospitalization rates and improved hospital capacity. **The mandate's end means Boston businesses are no longer required to verify the vaccination status of people — patrons, employees, contractors, and all other individuals — before they enter indoor spaces.**

Early End to Vaccine Mandate

The mandate, which took effect January 15, required proof of COVID-19 vaccination for entry into indoor dining, entertainment, recreation, and fitness establishments (we discussed the phases and requirements of the mandate in this December [insight](#)). It was intended to be a long-term strategy, rolled out in phases through May, to combat high rates of COVID-19 cases while preserving indoor gatherings. But fast-moving developments over the past month have altered those plans and relieved businesses of their compliance obligations when it comes to vaccination status.

Notably, the repeal follows news that the Massachusetts Appeals Court temporarily blocked Boston's vaccine requirement for city employees on February 15. Several unions, including the Boston Police Superior Officers Federation, the Boston Police Detectives Benevolent Society, and the Boston Firefighters Union Local 718, challenged the policy in December as violating the city's contract obligations and state collective bargaining law. In light of this decision, Boston cannot enforce the municipal employee vaccine mandate until the final resolution of the dispute. Mayor Wu's administration expressed disappointment in the decision and stated it intends to review it carefully.

Mask Mandate Remains in Place...For Now

Boston's indoor mask rule remains in place. However, Mayor Wu has indicated the Boston Public Health Commission will review this in the upcoming days. We will continue to monitor further developments and provide updates on this and other labor and employment issues affecting Massachusetts employers, so make sure you are subscribed to [Fisher Phillips' Insight system](#) to gather the most up-to-date information.

If you have questions, please contact your Fisher Phillips attorney, the authors of this alert, or any attorney in our [Boston](#) office.

Related People



Deepa K. Desai

Associate

617.532.8211

Email



Joshua D. Nadreau

Regional Managing Partner and Vice Chair, Labor Relations Group

617.722.0044

Email





Jeffrey Shapiro

Partner

617.532.5891

Email

Trending

COVID-19/Vaccine Resource Center

Related Offices

Boston