

RETAIL

NRF states concerns over vaccine requirements

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NRF believes emergency vaccine standards will disrupt the upcoming holiday retail period. Image credit: NRF

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

The National Retail Federation (NRF) has issued a statement in response to the Biden administration's U.S. retail employee vaccine mandate, voicing concerns about the upcoming holiday season.

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In September, as part of a strict six-point plan to combat the COVID-19 virus and its rampant delta variant, President Biden issued an executive order requiring businesses with more than 100 employees to mandate vaccines or weekly testing ([see story](#)). As the holiday season approaches, a crucial period for retail, the NRF is concerned that the new emergency standard will disrupt the economy.

"Over the past 19 months, retailers across the country have taken extraordinary measures to keep their employees, customers and communities safe during the COVID-19 pandemic," said David French, senior vice president for government relations at NRF, in a statement.

"Since the president's announcement of the vaccine mandate for private industry, the seven-day average number of cases in the United States has plummeted by more than half," he said. "Nevertheless, the Biden administration has chosen to declare an emergency' and impose burdensome new requirements on retailers during the crucial holiday shopping season.

Retail worries

Last month, NRF sent a detailed letter to Labor Secretary Marty Walsh outlining the retail industry's concerns about and recommendations for the emergency temporary standard.

Then, it contacted the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs and was granted a meeting with administration officials.



Based on results from the clinical trial, the BioNTech, Pfizer vaccine was 91 percent effective in preventing COVID-19 disease. Image credit: U.S. Center for Disease Control

"As an industry that supports one in four American jobs, retailers have consistently requested that the administration take public comment on this new vaccine mandate," Mr. French said. "Last month, NRF met with the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs and stressed the importance of feasibility of implementation for employers.

"It is critical that the rule not cause unnecessary disruption to the economy, exacerbate the preexisting workforce shortage or saddle retailers, who are already taking considerable steps to keep their employees and customers safe, with needless additional requirements and regulatory burdens."

The NRF does not appear too pleased with the current administration, as this statement is its second complaint in two weeks.

Last week, the federation launched an advertising campaign opposing tax increases to fund the Biden administration's proposed reconciliation bill. As the focal point of President Biden's domestic plan, the reconciliation package **intends to** expand education, healthcare and child care support, as well as combatting the climate crisis.

However, the NRF, among others, believes the bill is too expensive and aims to warn businesses and consumers that the multi-trillion dollar bill will cost them (**see story**).

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