

USW NEWSLETTER

VACCINATION AND PREVENTION

Monday August 30, 2021

As vaccine passports are set to come into effect for non-essential services and the government is considering instituting mandatory vaccines in the healthcare setting, several questions have come up in our workplaces.

Can employers require vaccination or a QR code? What's happening in terms of preventive measures?

Here is the USW's position on these delicate subjects:

1. **Vaccination: a choice that we encourage**

Vaccines are an effective way to fight this pandemic. We encourage all USW members to take advantage of this measure to protect themselves and those around them. At the USW, we believe that it is a choice that each person makes individually and we respect the decision of those who chose not to get the vaccine.

2. **It is not up to the employer to decide**

The government is studying the possibility of mandating the vaccine for certain fields (such as healthcare) and certain jobs. Some private employers may be tempted to do the same.

At the USW, we believe that employers should not get involved in this personal decision, except under certain rare conditions in specific sectors.

The USW will defend all of its members. The personal choices they make in regards to their bodily autonomy and their health should not result in sanctions by their employer.

3. **The vaccine passport is for access to NON-essential services.**

The health passport that will be in effect tomorrow will be required to gain access to non-essential services. Here is the [list of services](#) that can require the vaccine passport.

The USW believes that requiring the QR code or vaccine passport to gain access to the workplace would be a mis-application of the spirit of this measure, which is intended for non-essential services and activities.

Making a living **is essential**.

• **Prevention is key!**

As the fourth wave hits, we must face the fact that this pandemic is still persisting, even if vaccines offer some hope. This is not the time to let down our guard.

The USW recommends continuing preventive and risk-reducing measures at the source in our workplaces. These measures could be:

- Staying home if you are sick
- Getting tested if you have symptoms or have had contact with a sick person
- Social distancing, mask-wearing and breathing etiquette
- Adequate ventilation in the workplace
- Hand hygiene, disinfecting surfaces
- Prioritize working from home when possible.

If you have questions, contact your union representatives. The USW will keep you informed as the situation develops.