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## **ALL LOS ANGELES COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT EMPLOYEES WILL BE REQUIRED TO GET VACCINATED UNDER NEW MANDATORY POLICY**

The largest trial court in the nation will require its 4,600 employees to get vaccinated as a condition of employment no later than 45 days after the Food & Drug Administration gives final approval to at least one COVID-19 vaccine, Presiding Judge Eric C. Taylor and Executive Officer/Clerk of Court Sherri R. Carter announced today.

"The Court has a duty to protect the people we serve," Presiding Judge Taylor said. "By ensuring a safe workplace, through mandatory vaccination, the Court is protecting both its employees who provide essential public services and those who are required to come into a courthouse. Throughout the pandemic, the Court has strictly followed public health and CDC guidelines to protect our workforce, justice partners and the public from COVID-19."

Added Carter, "The Court's employees are considered disaster service workers under state law and are required to deliver statutorily mandated, time-sensitive and emergency services in times of local, state and national emergencies such as this global pandemic. People who enter our courthouses are required, and many times ordered, to come to court so it is important that the Court do everything possible to protect our workforce and the public we serve."

Today's announcement reflects the Court's emphasis on balancing access to justice during the ongoing pandemic while prioritizing the health and safety of the public, justice

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## **VACCINATIONS**

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partners, judicial officers, and employees. The Court has continuously required face masks since June 2020 without interruption. While social distancing is no longer required because of the change in guidance from state, county and federal public health agencies, the Court strongly urges attorneys to appear remotely for hearings and urges the public to make appointments for Self-Help and Clerk's Office services. Presiding Judge Taylor recently has urged bench officers to discuss options with attorneys to space out jurors throughout the courtrooms and seek larger courtrooms for jury selection when possible.

The recent surge in COVID-19 has shown the prudence of the Court's protective and methodical approach.

Carter today outlined the details of the new policy, including:

- Employees with a medical condition that prevents them from getting a vaccine, as verified by their medical provider, or those with a confirmed sincerely held religious belief that prohibits them from receiving a vaccine, may request to be excused from this vaccination requirement as a reasonable accommodation.
- The Court will review requests for accommodation on a case-by-case basis consistent with its existing procedures for reasonable accommodation requests.
- Employees will be required to submit their vaccine verification through a portal. The information will be kept confidential.

Although judicial officers are independently elected officials and, thus, not subject to "employee" policies and procedures, judges will be provided a portal to facilitate submission of their vaccination certificates tomorrow and, from all indications, have participated in this ongoing effort.

"Vaccination is the chief tool we have as a society to keep everyone safe and end this pandemic," Presiding Judge Taylor said. "Earlier this year, the Court worked with county health department officials to prioritize vaccinations for court staff, judicial officers and justice partners working in our court facilities. The Court is now proud to join healthcare companies, higher education, businesses, and government to do its part to promote public health and safety."

For updates, follow the Court on Twitter ([@LASuperiorCourt](#)) and the Court's website ([LACourt.org](#)).

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