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## ICYMI: GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS SIGNS LEGISLATION TO PROTECT FLORIDA JOBS



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**BRANDON, Fla.**— Today, Governor Ron DeSantis was joined by Florida Speaker Chris Sprowls and Senate President Wilton Simpson to sign legislation that will protect Floridians from losing their jobs due to COVID-19 vaccine mandates and protect parents' rights to make healthcare decisions for students. The bills were passed through a Special Session of the Florida Legislature and are effective upon the Governor's signature. The legislation signed today is the strongest pro-freedom, anti-mandate action taken by any state in the nation. Read about the legislation [HERE](#).

In Florida, effective immediately:

✓ **Private Employer COVID-19 vaccine mandates are prohibited.**

- ▶ Employees can choose from numerous exemptions, including but not limited to, health or religious concerns; pregnancy or anticipated future pregnancy; and past recovery from COVID-19.
- ▶ Employees can choose to opt for periodic testing or PPE as an exemption.
- ▶ Employers must cover the costs of testing and PPE exemptions for employees.

✓ **Employers who violate these employee health protections will be fined.**

- ▶ Small businesses (99 employees or less) will face \$10,000 per employee violation.
- ▶ Medium and big businesses will face \$50,000 per employee violation.

✓ **Government entities may not require COVID-19 vaccinations of anyone, including employees.**

✓ **Educational institutions may not require students to be COVID-19 vaccinated.**

✓ **School districts may not have school face mask policies.**

✓ **School districts may not quarantine healthy students.**

✓ **Students and parents may sue violating school districts and recover costs and attorney's fees.**

"I told Floridians that we would protect their jobs and today we made that the law," **said Governor Ron DeSantis**. "Nobody should lose their job due to heavy-handed COVID mandates and we had a responsibility to protect the livelihoods of the people of Florida. I'm thankful to the Florida Legislature for joining me in standing up for freedom."

Also at the event today, Attorney General Ashley Moody announced that Florida is challenging the CMS rule in court. Read more about that announcement [HERE](#).

"Governor DeSantis has shown exemplary leadership throughout the pandemic, and I am proud to stand with him as we challenge unlawful vaccine mandates forced on Floridians by the president and his power-hungry bureaucrats," **said Attorney General Ashley Moody**. "I will always fight for freedom, Florida's sovereignty and the autonomy of American workers."

"Governor DeSantis was clear: no Floridian should lose their jobs over vaccines mandates," **said Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nuñez**. "I applaud the leadership of President Simpson and Speaker Sprowls for their efforts in protecting Floridians. The Free state of Florida will never bend the knee to the Biden Administration's unconstitutional overreach."

"I am honored to be here today as Governor DeSantis signs the 'Keep Florida Free' agenda into law," **said Senate President Wilton Simpson**. "We are sending a clear message that Florida stands for freedom. To our health care workers, law enforcement, first responders, farmers, truckers, and every other worker who never got a day off and couldn't work from home during the pandemic – thank you for getting us through this crisis. Thank you for putting your family at risk. You stood with us when we needed you most, and we are proud to stand with you now. The Florida Legislature and Governor DeSantis are fighting for you. We will not allow the Biden Administration to make political pawns of the very people who put their lives on the line to keep our economy running while everyone else was safe at home, and we certainly will never cede the responsibility of parenting to the school system or bureaucrats in the federal government. Florida respects the dignity of work, the responsibility to parent and the right to live in freedom."

"Today is a great day for Florida. Working together with Governor DeSantis, Senate President Simpson, House members and our Senate colleagues, we have passed the smartest, strongest legislation in America to combat the Biden Administration's unlawful vaccine mandate," **said Speaker Chris Sprowls**. "We are proud to stand alongside every Florida parent and worker and say that forced masking of our kids in schools and forced vaccinations to keep your job stops here in Florida. We are proud to stand alongside businesses and provide some sanity and options to treat their employees as the individuals they are instead of succumbing to a one-size-fits-all federal mandate. The result of this week's work is simple: No one who is subject to Florida law will be forced to get a vaccine who does not want one."

“The mission of this special session was to ensure that the law reflects the values of liberty in our state,” **said Surgeon General Dr. Joseph Ladapo.** “Floridians are now protected in their jobs, at school and as parents to choose how to protect themselves from COVID-19. Thank you Governor DeSantis for your leadership in making practical and informed decisions based on science.”

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The Florida Department of Health, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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