



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on August 2, 2021

Cuomo Urges Businesses to Switch to “Vaccine-only” Admission

Democratic New York Governor Andrew Cuomo urged private businesses in the state to adopt a “vaccine-only admission” and allow entry exclusively to patrons that verify their vaccination status, while admitting his office lacks legal standing to declare a sweeping statewide mandate.

Since the “purely voluntary system” of vaccination has reached its limits, as New York Mayor Bill de Blasio [put it](#), both the city and the state of New York started employing other methods of coercing people to get a jab.

Speaking at a [press briefing](#) dedicated to the latest COVID-19 update and the state’s response on Monday, Cuomo said, “Private businesses, I am asking them and suggesting to them: Go to vaccine-only admission. Go to vaccine-only admission.” Cuomo suggested the companies that would embrace the policy don’t need to worry about their bottom lines, on the contrary, they will attract even more clients, as proven by Radio City Music Hall, which [introduced](#) the requirement in May. “Reopened vaccine-only, sold out all the shows,” claimed Cuomo, continuing: “Sports arenas. They went up to about 90 percent vaccine-only. Private businesses, bars, restaurants. Go to a vaccine-only admission. I believe it’s in your best business interest,” Cuomo said.

“You know, if I go to a bar and I want to have a drink and I want to talk to the person next to me, I want to know that that person is vaccinated,” Cuomo continued.

“I believe it’s in your business interest to run a vaccine-only establishment,” he added, telling business owners it would be very “simple” to operate, telling customers “you have to show that you’re vaccinated when you walk in the door.” “It’s going to help your business, not hurt it,” he claimed.

Cuomo praised the state’s COVID-19 vaccination app called [Excelsior Pass](#) — “easily present your Pass at participating businesses and become part of New York’s safe reopening,” advertises the app’s website. The app was launched in May as an electronic proof of one’s vaccinated status against



AP Images
Andrew Cuomo



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COVID-19.

Cuomo also asked local governments to implement the CDC's updated mask rules that now recommend vaccinated individuals to wear facemasks and get tested for COVID-19 if they develop symptoms or have been in contact with an infected person.

Finally, Cuomo announced that Metropolitan Transportation Authority and Port Authority workers will be the latest group required to be vaccinated or submit to weekly coronavirus testing, joining all state and city public employees. And this is just the beginning, the governor suggested, as vaccinations could become mandatory for more New Yorkers as the "highly contagious" "Delta" variant spreads across the nation.

Since New York's COVID-19 state of emergency expired in June, Governor Cuomo doesn't have the authority to mandate vaccines beyond state public employees, nor can he require masks for New Yorkers in areas with high case numbers. Instead, he said he strongly recommends counties and local governments "be smart again."

"You know how this turns out," the governor said, citing the recent increase in COVID-19 cases and implying it is the unvaccinated people who are to blame for spreading the virus. "You know what those facts mean. You know what's going to happen in the movie. Don't wait for what you know is going to happen. We beat the damn thing by being smart the first time. Be smart again."

"It's up to the local governments. Learn the lesson from last year. Don't deny reality," he added.

It appeared Cuomo believes his office has no legal ground to impose the mandates itself, but a [legal opinion](#) published last week by the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel argued both public agencies and private businesses may be permitted to mandate the jobs, despite the fact that they are not yet fully approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The opinion was highly [praised](#) by President Joe Biden when he announced all federal workers should be vaccinated against COVID-19 or face regular testing and follow other strict "safety" protocols.

Last week, Cuomo [urged](#) New York businesses to "do their part" by refusing to serve unvaccinated guests and only employing vaccinated workers — and many restaurants, bars, and clubs around the city have started requiring proof of vaccination for entry. Union Square Hospitality Group — whose outposts include barbecue joint Blue Smoke, the Hudson Yards-based bar Cedric's, and the chic Gramercy Tavern — will require proof of vaccination against COVID-19 from staff as well as anyone who wants to eat or drink inside the group's various restaurants across New York City and Washington, D.C., [according](#) to the company's chairman, Danny Meyer.

All 41 Broadway theaters in New York City will require proof of a coronavirus vaccination from ticketed audience members, officials [announced](#) last Friday.

On Monday, Equinox fitness company, which operates 34 studios in New York along with its 19 SoulCycle spinning studios, [reportedly](#) said it is set to require proof of vaccination for customers and employees alike.



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