



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on January 11, 2022

Illinois Cities Stand Up Against County Vaccine-passport Mandate

At least seven municipalities in Cook County, Illinois, have declared that they will not enforce the county health department's vaccine-passport mandate.

The mandate, which took effect January 3, requires businesses including restaurants, theaters, and gyms to deny entry to patrons aged five or older who have not been vaccinated for COVID-19.

Cook County, which includes Chicago, is a heavily Democratic jurisdiction.

However, the village of Niles, on Chicago's northwestern border, will not enforce the mandate. "We will follow up if we get complaints, we will call the business and say, 'Listen, there is a mandate out there.' But it's not up to us to enforce it and get them to do those things," [said](#) Mayor George Alpogianis.

Michael Glotz, mayor of Tinley Park, was more forceful in his refusal to act as vaccine policeman. According to [Fox 32 Chicago](#), Glotz called the mandate "an abuse of power."

In a [message](#) on the city's website, Glotz said part of his job was to "provide that all residents, visitors and employees are treated equally."

"We have all struggled over the last 21 months with this pandemic, but we can get through this together by using common sense and respecting others," Glotz wrote, stating that it would be up to the county health department to enforce its own mandate.

But the local official to oppose the mandate most vocally is Orland Park Mayor Keith Pekau. Pekau, who is seeking the Republican nomination for Congress in his district, has stood up against mask and vaccine mandates for quite some time, once dubbing Governor J.B. Pritzker's executive orders "the actions of a dictator."

In a letter to Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle declaring the vaccine-passport mandate "unlawful," Pekau said officials have "yet to provide any data indicating that restaurants, indoor entertainment facilities, or gyms are the source of covid," reported [Patch](#).

At a subsequent news conference, "Preckwinkle said the county was only moving in lockstep with the city of Chicago to target indoor venues where there is the greatest risk of spreading the coronavirus," said the website.

Dissatisfied with Preckwinkle's response, Pekau recorded a [video](#) explaining why Orland Park would not be enforcing the mandate.



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“It is clear from [Preckwinkle’s] correspondence that she believes as long as COVID exists, the Cook County Public Health Department has the power to do several things: circumvent citizens’ constitutional Fourth Amendment protections, bypass federal HIPAA [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act] laws, use business owners as agents of the government for enforcement, supersede the home-rule authority of the village of Orland Park, and dictate the actions of Orland Park’s police department,” Pekau said in the video.

“The Orland Park village board and I respectfully disagree,” he added. “We have taken an oath to uphold both the U.S. and Illinois constitutions and to follow the rule of law, and the vaccine-passport requirement, ordered by one person through unelected bureaucrats, is an affront to our laws and the rights of our citizens and businesses.”

Pekau noted that the “legal opinion” Preckwinkle offered to justify the mandate was issued “six days after the mandate was announced.” “I am amazed this opinion was not sought prior to usurping the rights of so many,” he said.

He also criticized the data Preckwinkle provided to bolster her case. Among said data were three reports, two of which concerned the effectiveness of masks. (Orland Park has never enforced a mask mandate yet has a lower COVID-19 case rate than either Chicago or suburban Cook County as a whole, according to a chart shown in the video.) The third was a study of three fitness centers in Hawaii in the summer of 2020 “because somehow three gyms on an island three months into the pandemic prior to vaccines justify vaccine mandates here in Cook County in 2022,” quipped Pekau.

Pekau said that rather than enforce the health department’s dictate, he and the Orland Park trustees believe “that if we provide our residents and businesses facts, data, and accurate information, they will consult their doctors and professional resources to make the decisions that are best for them.”

Other Cook County municipalities that have refused to enforce the mandate include Burr Ridge, Park Ridge, Morton Grove, and Lincolnwood.





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