



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on July 26, 2021

Montclair, California, City Workers Required to Wear Stickers in Order to Go Maskless

A California city has ordered its employees to wear a sticker on their ID badges identifying their fully vaccinated status if they choose to come to work without a mask, a move made in line with a strengthening global trend of distinguishing the vaccinated from the unvaccinated.

The city of Montclair, in San Bernardino County, sent a memo to its employees with a compliance form from the Human Resources Department asking that workers provide proof of vaccinations. Those who do so will be given a yellow sticker saying they've been vaccinated and would be exempt from wearing face masks. The sticker should be attached to the employee's ID badge (see the picture [here](#)). Employees who have not been vaccinated, or do not provide proof of vaccination, will be required to wear face masks, [according](#) to City Manager Edward Starr.



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Starr explained that the city's policy is designed to ensure that Montclair is in compliance a June [directive](#) from the California Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board (Cal/OSHA) on how employers should treat mask-wearing and vaccinated workers to protect against the spread of coronavirus. That Cal/OSHA directive requires all vaccinated employees to submit evidence or sign a pledge they have been vaccinated if they choose not to wear face masks. If workers do not produce documentation or a written statement of vaccination, they are required to mask up.

In response to the May [recommendations](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that largely dropped indoor facemask recommendations for those who are fully vaccinated, California issued a new guidance that aligned with the CDC's update, and said fully vaccinated individuals could forgo masks in most settings. To distinguish between those who are "allowed" to go maskless and those who are not, the use of a sticker is very helpful, Starr believes. The city official dismissed the notion that the labels could be seen as potentially problematic and stressed that the policy would help the city to fulfill state and federal guidelines.

Starr also noted the CDC recommends workplaces provide stickers for employees to wear after vaccination and even has [printable stickers](#) on its website — even though it doesn't appear that the public health authority has issued guidance recommending stickers be used as forms of identification..

If the city does not comply with both federal and state regulations, fines as much as \$10,000 a day could be issued or the city could be placed under investigation, Starr added.



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At least one Montclair councilmember has [expressed](#) concerns about the policy. In a City Council meeting last week, Councilman Ben Lopez took issue with the requirement, saying it's a violation of employee privacy and could lead to potential lawsuits against the city.

"There are many in this organization taking a position of an employee's right to privacy," Lopez said. "I clearly disagree with the sticker. It is like disclosing your medical history to anyone around you."

Lopez also [implied](#) that the stickers could make employees "uncomfortable" around one another and that they may even create a "level of ostracism" in the workplace. "This policy is being rushed through and rammed down the throats of our employees with no legal counsel being sought and no discussion from our City Council," Lopez [said](#) during a council meeting, adding, "I think we are on shaky legal ground."

Since the policy implementation is arguably connected to the rise of COVID-19 cases, the "necessity" to tell "safe" from potentially "unsafe" employees seemed like a logical step to the mayor, but not so obvious to Lopez. "Just because numbers are going up doesn't mean that people's individual rights to privacy, especially with their medical information, [are] and void. We don't need a sticker. The default is the mask," he [said](#). "If you're wearing the mask, clearly you're not vaccinated or you choose not to reveal it, or if you're not wearing the mask, you're vaccinated."

Fox 11 [spoke](#) to Montclair residents about the policy, and got mixed reactions, noting that the majority of those interviewed "didn't seem to care one way or another if the employee at the city's traffic ticket counter, for example, was wearing a sticker." Just one person said that making employees wear a sticker was reminiscent of yellow stars that Jewish people were ordered to wear in Nazi-era Germany.

Notably, the use of Star of David badges has become popular among protesters who object to vaccine rollouts and other COVID-related measures. The use of the sign has been routinely criticized as "insensitive." The demonstrators are usually called "conspiracy theorists" and blamed by the media for their allegedly extremist views about worldwide vaccination drives and COVID passport systems that would create two-tier society, despite the fact that the vax campaign has now become openly coercive, as suggested by the calls of high-ranking officials and locally introduced vaccine mandates that punish or discriminate against those who reject the jab (such as suspension without pay, prohibition to attend certain public places and events, etc.)

At the same time, a [growing number](#) of California counties are now urging even fully vaccinated people to wear masks indoors, arguing the coronavirus cases continue to rise. Los Angeles County has gone a step further and [mandated](#) that masks be worn in such settings. Similarly, starting today, all San Mateo County residents [are required](#) to wear masks indoors despite 89 percent of the population being fully vaccinated.



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