



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on November 26, 2021

Phoenix Mayor's Vax Mandate Virtually Guarantees Massive Loss of Police, Firefighters

Phoenix, Arizona, announced last Thursday that all 13,000 city employees must be vaccinated against COVID-19 by January 18 or face the possibility of termination. This includes the city's police officers and firefighters. But with 75 percent of those working as police officers and firefighters in Phoenix having not yet submitted any proof of vaccinations, the city could very soon see vacancies in those positions, which would leave the city crippled in any attempt to maintain public safety.

The Defund the Police movement is still alive and well; it has merely taken a different tack. Whereas last year, it was straightforward about cutting police budgets to the bone and even abolishing police, it is now using the pretense of COVID — which is itself largely a pretense — to make an end-run around getting rid of police.

Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego — like many of her Democrat counterparts in cities across America — has already shown herself to be an enemy of those who maintain the thin blue line. In the midst of the Summer of Terror when Antifa, BLM, and other Marxist terrorist groups burned and pillaged their way through more than 200 American cities, Gallego marched to their orders. As Britt London, opinion contributor to AZ Central, [wrote](#) in June 2020:

While some are calling to “Defund Police” the reality is that the Phoenix Police Department is woefully underfunded and officers are underpaid. There were no wage increases from 2012-2019 as a result of the Great Recession, and we are still 450 officers short of our maximum staffing levels in 2008, which was 3,385 officers.

Bottom line, our Phoenix police officers having been doing more with less as the population of the Phoenix metro area continues to skyrocket. Transparency and accountability require funding; body cameras require funding; crisis response teams require funding; ensuring rapid response times to emergency calls requires funding.

We are also on the brink of another crisis — officer retirement. More than 800 officers can retire immediately and another 465 can retire by 2024. That is more than 1,200 officers who are eligible to retire within the next four years. We need the resources to recruit, train and retain quality officers to keep every corner of the city of Phoenix safe.



AP Images
Kate Gallego

By keeping wages and other funding depressed, Mayor Gallego — who served on the Phoenix City



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Council for four years before rising to her current level of powerful ineptitude — nearly guaranteed fewer officers would be on the force and able to respond to calls for help. But then the bloom began to wear off the fake rose of the Defund the Police movement. Nationwide, cities witnessed the predictable results of slashing or freezing police budgets in the midst of the Summer of Terror: Increased crime — especially violent crime — drove a grassroots demand for *more* police and *more* funding for training, equipment, and programs that could help police departments fight that crime.

Even the Phoenix City Council used the word “crisis” to describe those low law-enforcement numbers — though it appears to be little more than lip service. By mid-October 2021, the number of police officers protecting Phoenix had dropped to a low of only 2,776. The council voted to provide funding to raise that number to 3,125 — still hundreds less than 2008 staffing levels, though Phoenix has seen a population increase of more than 300,000 people since 2008.

Even with the lip service of the Phoenix City Council duly noted, it seems clear that strident Defund the Police rhetoric is out of vogue. The question, then, for liberals is, “How do we get rid of cops without looking like we are getting rid of cops?”

Enter (from stage Left) the COVID “crisis.”

The current beast of burden for nearly everything liberal is the ostensible “crisis” of COVID-19. And that poor, tired beast is now carrying the weight of creating a world with fewer police officers to get in the way of social change by arresting criminals.

By putting in place a vaccine mandate that threatens the jobs of 75 percent of police and firefighters in Phoenix, Mayor Gallego and her accomplices in the city council nearly guarantee a mass exodus of cops, even as they put on a dog and pony show of “increasing” funding to 90 percent of what it was when their city’s population was 18 percent less than it is now.

Appearing to recognize her indefensible position, Mayor Gallego literally fled the press when asked about the get-vaxxed-or-get-fired mandate. Nicole Grigg, reporter for Phoenix ABC affiliate, ABC15, tweeted:

NEW: the mayor of the 5th largest city in the US won’t answer questions about a vaccine mandate just put in place with the

@CityofPhoenixAZ

@MayorGallego

would not answer a single ? about the mandate that was announced on Thursday.

All employees must be vaccinated by 1/18/22

Not every member of the Phoenix City Council favors this naked attempt to defund and abolish the police. Phoenix City Councilman Sal DiCiccio called it a “witch hunt against our public safety” and said the argument — made by Mayor Gallego and other proponents of the mandate — that the mandate is required since the city is a “federal contractor” is “a bunch of BS.”



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One thing is certain. If this baseless mandate succeeds in its apparent goal of allowing the city to fire vast numbers of seasoned police officers, crime will run rampant in Phoenix. And that appears to be exactly what Mayor Gallego and her cohorts are after. Because you can't build a new world until you first tear down the old one.





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