



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on April 11, 2022

## NYC Council Bill to Demand That Mayor Rehire Unvaxxed City Workers

The New York City Council will be introducing a resolution calling on Mayor Eric Adams to rehire city employees who were fired for noncompliance with the city's Covid-19 vaccination mandate. The resolution would also demand that private businesses rehire employees who were fired for refusing to get a Covid shot.

A nonbinding bipartisan resolution is planned to be introduced on Thursday by City Council Minority Leader Joseph Borelli (R-South Shore), according to Staten Island's [SILive](#)



AP Images  
NYC Mayor Eric Adams

Per the outlet, about 1,430 city employees were terminated on February 11 for failing to get vaccinated against Covid. That number will most likely increase in the near future, as thousands of medical and religious exemption requests have not yet been processed. According to Reuters, 64 percent of the terminated workers served in the city's education department.

"City workers served on the front lines during the pandemic, and by getting vaccinated, they are, once again, showing how they are willing to do the right thing to protect themselves and all New Yorkers," Mayor Adams [said](#) back in February, when the vaccination deadline was approaching. "Our goal was always to vaccinate, not terminate, and city workers stepped up and met the goal placed before them."

According to the mayor's office, as many as [95 percent](#) of the municipal workforce met the mandate's requirements.

In a statement to SI Life, Borelli said that the central message of the resolution will be that "it's unfair that thousands of city workers remain unemployed while professional athletes and other performers are able to work because Adams made them exempt from the mandate."

"There has to be equity," Borelli [told](#) the *New York Post*. "If we're willing to tolerate risks for athletes and performers, we must tolerate the same risks for all members of our workforce — be it the private sector or public."

On March 24, Adams signed Executive Order 62, which exempted performers and professional athletes from the city's Covid vaccine mandate for private-sector workers.

Announcing the measure, Adams said it was needed "because this city has to function." He noted the exception would help the city's economy, which has struggled to recover from pandemic-related



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policies.

According to media reports, the mayor granted the exemption after being pressured by the city's basketball team, the [Brooklyn Nets](#), and baseball teams, the [Mets and Yankees](#). The teams lobbied for the change, arguing it was unfair that the city allowed unvaccinated athletes from elsewhere to play in city venues while mandating shots for home teams.

According to *The New York Times* [report](#), Steven Cohen, the owner of the Mets, has paid \$10,000 per month to a lobbying firm to influence the mayor on several issues, including Covid protocols. Adams, a well-known Mets fan, denied the sports teams' lobbying efforts had anything to do with his decision.

At the same time, [answering](#) the question about whether he would rehire unvaccinated city workers, Adams said, "Not at this time." The mayor implied those people did not understand what the city was "coming through" and, by refusing the shot, did not do "the right thing."

"Performers, athletes — mostly rich people — don't have to show proof of vaccination to do their jobs in New York City, and I'm pressing back on that: how come not for the little guy? How come not for teachers, firefighters, police officers, so many of us that are on unpaid leave or lost our jobs," said Michael Kane, a public-school teacher from Wantagh.

Numerous unions in New York were outraged by the mayor's double-standard decision, [reported](#) *Newsday*.

Municipal labor unions said the exemption for professional athletes and performers provided legal grounds for pending litigation challenging the mandate, referring to a [lawsuit](#) filed by ex-Yankee Stadium employee Virginia Alleyne against Mayor Adams. In addition to that, a group of 68 Raleigh police officers, firefighters, and other city employees [filed](#) a similar lawsuit, calling the mandate "discriminatory."

According to *Newsday*:

"If the mandate isn't necessary for famous people, then it's not necessary for the cops who are protecting our city," said Patrick J. Lynch, president of the Police Benevolent Association, the union representing the rank-and-file.

Alison Gendar, a spokeswoman for the United Federation of Teachers, said in an email: "If the rules are going to be suspended, particularly for people with influence, then the UFT and other city unions are ready to discuss how exceptions could be applied to city workers."

And Benny Boscio, president of the Correction Officers' Benevolent Association, the city's biggest union for correction officers, said: "Terminating our members based on a policy that no longer exists for most New Yorkers is both disparate treatment and counterproductive."

"What is the rationale for exempting basketball players from the city's private sector vaccine mandate but not the ushers or janitors in the arena?" [tweeted](#) Borelli at that time. "There must be a compelling public interest for subverting the equal application of our laws."

New York City Council Speaker Adrienne E. Adams (D-Queens) [said](#) she had "serious concerns" about the mayor's approach to the vaccine mandate.

"This exemption sends the wrong message that higher-paid workers and celebrities are being valued as more important than our devoted civil servants, which I reject," she stated.



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In the meantime, Adams tested positive for Covid on Sunday, and will be isolating.

“Thankfully, I’m vaccinated and boosted so symptoms are minimal,” he [tweeted](#).





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