



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on June 14, 2021

## “Work Somewhere Else”: Judge Tosses COVID-19 Vaccination Suit From Houston Hospital Workers

In the first federal ruling on vaccine mandates, a Houston judge has dismissed a lawsuit by hospital employees who declined the COVID-19 shot — a decision that could have a ripple effect across the nation.

The case involved the Houston Methodist Health System network, which became the first hospital in America to [require](#) all employees to get a COVID-19 vaccine. Currently, it oversees eight hospitals and has more than 26,000 employees. Houston Methodist gave workers a deadline of June 7 to get the vaccine. Employees who refused would be suspended and even fired.



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As a result, 117 employees have joined a [lawsuit](#) in Montgomery County that alleged the hospital was “illegally requiring its employees to be injected with an experimental COVID-19 mRNA gene modification injection or be fired.” The lawsuit stated that the hospital was forcing its employees to be “human guinea pigs” as a condition for continued employment.

On June 6, 178 employees who refused to be vaccinated with jobs only approved for emergency use were [suspended](#) from their positions.

U.S. District Judge Lynn N. Hughes [ruled](#) Saturday that federal law does not prevent employers from issuing such a mandate.

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Hughes wrote that the claim that the currently available vaccines are experimental and dangerous is “false and also irrelevant.” The judge noted that Texas law “only protects employees from being terminated for refusing to commit an act carrying criminal penalties to the worker,” and that receiving a COVID-19 vaccine “is not an illegal act.”

“This is not coercion. Methodist is trying to do their business of saving lives without giving them the COVID-19 virus. It is a choice made to keep staff, patients and their families safer. Bridges [the lead plaintiff] can freely choose to accept or refuse a COVID-19 vaccine; however, if she refuses, she will simply need to work somewhere else,” reads the ruling.

Hughes observed that the hospital’s requirement does not violate federal law or public policy, and took issue with the lawsuit comparing the requirement to get vaccinated with Nazi medical experiments during the Holocaust.

“Equating the injection requirement to medical experimentation in concentration camps is reprehensible,” Hughes wrote. “Nazi doctors conducted medical experiments on victims that caused pain, mutilation, permanent disability, and in many cases, death.” Some would argue that this is precisely what COVID injections do to many people, as short-term side effects of the vaccines already



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[include](#) severe pain, different types of blood issues such as bleeding, miscarriages, and [myocarditis](#), and death.

Houston Methodist said it is pleased and reassured by the dismissal of the “frivolous lawsuit.”

CEO Dr. Marc Boom released a statement [saying](#), “We can now put this behind us and continue our focus on unparalleled safety, quality, service and innovation. All our employees have now met the requirements of the vaccine policy and I couldn’t be prouder of them.”

Jared Woodfill, a Houston lawyer representing Bridges and the other clients, [promised](#) an appeal.

“All of my clients continue to be committed to fighting this unjust policy,” Woodfill said in a statement. “What is shocking is that many of my clients were on the front line treating COVID-positive patients at Texas Methodist Hospital during the height of the pandemic. As a result, many of them contracted COVID-19. As a thank you for their service and sacrifice, Methodist Hospital awards them a pink slip and sentences them to bankruptcy.”

As of Monday, nearly 25,000 employees had been fully inoculated against COVID-19. Two employees who worked in management [chose](#) to leave rather than receive the vaccine.

On June 2, Indiana University Health [announced](#) that it would require its 36,000 employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19 by September “as a condition of employment,” and called the mandate a “safe and effective way to protect patients” and protect the community — and sparked [protests](#) from the workers and locals.

Hundreds of colleges and universities are [requiring](#) vaccinations for the coming school year. Many nursing homes, hot spots early in the pandemic, also are requiring inoculation from the coronavirus.

The [FDA guidance](#) on “Emergency Use Authorization of Medical Products and Related Authorities” explicitly states that people “have the option to accept or refuse the EUA product.” Until all three COVID-19 jabs get full approval, the informed consent of the recipient is necessary.

However, [according](#) to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), state and local mandates are subject to state and local laws.

Also, the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission (EEOC), a federal government agency that protects workers from discrimination, issued a new [guidance](#) on May 28, that, ironically, promotes discrimination against workers who refuse to get an experimental gene injection. The guidance allows employers to legally require COVID-19 shots to reenter a physical workplace as long as they follow requirements to find alternative arrangements for employees unable to get vaccinated for medical reasons or religious beliefs.



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