



President Biden's COVID-19 Action Plan

Summary

On Thursday, September 9, 2021, President Biden announced a six-pronged, comprehensive national strategy to put the Nation on a path out of the pandemic. The six-pronged strategy focuses on Vaccinating the Unvaccinated, Further Protecting the Vaccinated, Keeping Schools Safely Open, Increasing Testing and Requiring Masking, Protecting Our Economic Recovery, and Improving Care for those with COVID-19.

Areas of Note

Vaccinating the Unvaccinated

Requiring All Employers with 100+ Employees to Ensure their Workers are Vaccinated or Tested Weekly -

President Joe Biden announced that all employers with more than 100 workers will be forced to require coronavirus vaccinations or test employees weekly. The expansive rules will mandate that all employers with more than 100 workers require them to be vaccinated or test for the virus weekly, affecting about 80 million Americans. And the roughly 17 million workers at health facilities that receive federal Medicare or Medicaid also will have to be fully vaccinated. The Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in the coming weeks plans to issue an Emergency Temporary Standard implementing the new requirement. Businesses that don't comply can face fines of up to \$14,000 per violation.

Requiring Vaccination for all Federal Workers and for Millions of Contractors that Do Business with the Federal Government -

Building on the President's announcement in July to strengthen safety requirements for unvaccinated federal workers, the President has signed an Executive Order to take those actions a step further and require all federal executive branch workers to be vaccinated or otherwise subject to weekly testing. The President also signed an Executive Order directing that this standard be extended to employees of contractors that do business with the federal government.

Further Protecting the Vaccinated

Providing Easy Access to Booster Shots for All Eligible Americans - In August, the nation's top health officials released an initial plan for booster shots implementation of this plan depends on authorization of boosters by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and recommendations by the CDC's independent Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). As soon as authorizations are given, the Administration will be prepared to offer booster shots, starting the week of September 20th. Booster shots will be free, and widely available across 80,000 locations – from pharmacies to doctors' offices to health centers.





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Increasing Testing & Requiring Masking

Continuing to Require Masking for Interstate Travel and Double fines - President Biden's Executive Order, Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel, directed applicable agencies to take action to require mask-wearing in airports and on certain modes of public transportation, including on many airplanes, trains, maritime vessels, and intercity bus services. TSA has extended its implementing orders for air and ground travel through January 18th, 2022, and the President's plan will double fines for those who are not in compliance. The President's plan will also ensure that masking requirements remain in place on the other modes of transportation.

Protecting Our Economic Recovery

New Support for Small Businesses Impacted by COVID-19 - The President's plan will strengthen the COVID Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program, which provides long-term, low-cost loans. The improvements will allow more business to get greater and more flexible support from the \$150 billion in loanable funds still available in the program. First, the Small Business Administration (SBA) will increase the maximum amount of funding a small business can borrow through this program from \$500,000 to \$2 million, which can be used to hire and retain employees, purchase inventory and equipment, and pay off higher-interest debt.

Streamlining the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loan Forgiveness Process - The President's plan will make it easier for more than 3.5 million PPP borrowers with loans of \$150,000 or less to get their loans wiped clean. Under the new streamlined approach, SBA sends a pre-completed application form to the borrower who can review, sign, and send back to SBA, which then works with the lender to complete the forgiveness process.

Launching the Community Navigator Program to Connect Small Businesses to the help - The American Rescue Plan invested \$100 million to establish a new SBA Community Navigator program, which will deploy trusted community partners in underserved communities to better connect business owners to federal, state, and local resources. Community Navigators will work with small business owners every step of the way to ensure that they are able to access the help that they need. Under the President's plan, the SBA will complete the competitive review process to select Community Navigators and put them to work in underserved communities this Fall.

