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A nurse prepares a Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 vaccination as part of a vaccine drive by the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians in Arleta, Los Angeles on Aug. 23, 2021. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

AMERICA

19 Governors, 2 AGs Resist Biden's Vaccine Mandates

By [Mimi Nguyen Ly](#) | September 10, 2021 Updated: September 10, 2021

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More than a dozen [governors](#) and two attorneys general late on Sept. 9 issued statements defying the Biden administration's impending [vaccine mandates](#) for federal workers and private-sector workers.

President Joe Biden earlier in the day [signed an executive order](#) to require all federal workers to be vaccinated against COVID-19, the disease caused by the [CCP \(Chinese Communist Party\) virus](#). There would be no option to opt out via COVID-19 testing. The mandate also applies to government contractors and their employees.

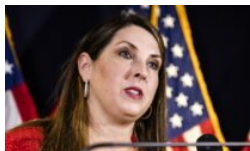
The president later [announced](#) he would direct the Department of Labor to create a rule to have companies with over 100 employees mandate vaccinations or weekly testing, a move that affects more than 80 million workers in the private sector.

At least 19 governors and two attorneys general immediately issued statements disagreeing with the administration's move, with several vowing to defy it.

They include the governors of Arizona, Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Missouri, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, and Wyoming.

They were joined by at least two state attorneys general as of that night—Sean Reyes from [Utah](#) and Todd Rokita from [Indiana](#).

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Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson, the chair of the National Governors Association, said in a [statement](#): “I fully support continued efforts to increase vaccination rates across our nation, but the federal government mandates on private businesses are not the right answer.

“I have been consistent in freedom of businesses to require their employees to be vaccinated, and I have opposed the government from saying businesses cannot exercise that freedom. The same principle should protect the private sector from government overreach that requires them to vaccinate all employees.”

Multiple Republican governors, including for Arizona, Georgia, and South Dakota, hinted or announced that they would seek legal avenues to resist the mandates.

“The COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective tools to prevent the disease, but getting the vaccine is and should be a choice,” Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey said in a [statement](#). “These mandates are outrageous. They will never stand up in court. We must and will push back.”

Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp [wrote](#) on Twitter, “I will pursue every legal option available to the state of Georgia to stop this blatantly unlawful overreach by the Biden administration.”

South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem wrote [on Twitter](#), “South Dakota will stand up to defend freedom. @JoeBiden see you in court.” She later shared [another Twitter post](#) saying her legal team is prepared to stand up to the Biden administration’s mandates.

The Biden administration didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment.

President Joe Biden speaks about combating the coronavirus pandemic at the White House on Sept. 9, 2021. (Kevin Dietsch/Getty Images)

Biden earlier in the day commented on the issue of vaccine mandates in schools, [saying](#), “If these governors won’t help us beat the pandemic, I’ll use my power as president to get them out of the way.”

Biden said the matter of getting more shots into arms “is not about freedom or personal choice. It’s about protecting yourself and those around you—the people you work with, the people you care about, the people you love.”

Statements from the remaining governors and attorneys general as of late Sept. 9 are as follows:

- [Alabama](#) Gov. Kay Ivey (in part): “I support the science and encourage folks taking the vaccine. However, I am absolutely against a government mandate on the vaccine, which is why I signed the vaccine passport ban into law here in Alabama. This is not the role of the government.”
- [Alaska](#) Gov. Mike Dunleavy: “This is ridiculous and unenforceable. If there was ever a case for the 25th Amendment...”
- [Florida](#) Gov. Ron DeSantis (at a press conference): “I do not believe that people should lose their jobs over this issue, and we will fight that. If they try to do that through a rule like the Department of Labor, I don’t think they have the legal authority to do that, but we obviously would want to support protections for people who are just trying to earn a living.”
- [Idaho](#) Gov. Brad Little: “Today’s actions from President Biden amount to government overreach. Government should stay out of decisions involving employers and their employees as much as possible. I’ve advocated for and championed fewer government regulations and mandates on business.”
- [Iowa](#) Gov. Kim Reynolds: “President Biden is taking dangerous and unprecedented steps to insert the federal government even further into our lives while dismissing the ability of Iowans and Americans to make healthcare decisions for themselves. Biden’s plan will only worsen our workforce shortage and further limit our economic recovery. As I’ve said all along, I believe and trust in Iowans to make the best health decisions for themselves and their families. It’s time for President Biden to do the same. Enough is enough.”
- [Missouri](#) Gov. Mike Parson (in part): “Vaccination protects us from serious illness, but the decision to get vaccinated is a private health care decision that should remain as such. My administration will always fight back against federal power grabs and government overreach that threatens to limit our freedoms.”

- **Mississippi** Gov. Tate Reeves: “The President has no authority to require that Americans inject themselves because of their employment at a private business. The vaccine itself is life-saving, but this unconstitutional move is terrifying. This is still America, and we still believe in freedom from tyrants.”
- **Montana** Gov. Greg Gianforte: “President Biden’s vaccination mandate is unlawful and un-American. We are committed to protecting Montanans’ freedoms and liberties against this gross federal overreach.”
- **Nebraska** Gov. Pete Ricketts: “President Biden’s announcement is a stunning violation of personal freedom and abuse of the federal government’s power. This plan isn’t about public health—this is about government control and taking away personal liberties.”
- **North Dakota** Gov. Doug Burgum: “President Biden’s misguided plan steers our country down a dangerous path away from states’ rights and the freedom of private businesses to make their own decisions on vaccinations. We stand opposed to this blatant federal overreach.”
- **Oklahoma** Gov. Kevin Stitt: “It is not the government’s role to dictate to private businesses what to do. Once again President Biden is demonstrating his complete disregard for individual freedoms and states’ rights. As long as I am governor, there will be no government vaccine mandates in Oklahoma. My administration will continue to defend Oklahoma values and fight back against the Biden administration’s federal overreach.”
- **South Carolina** Gov. Henry McMaster: “The American Dream has turned into a nightmare under President Biden and the radical Democrats. They have declared war against capitalism, thumbed their noses at the Constitution, and empowered our enemies abroad. Rest assured, we will fight them to the gates of hell to protect the liberty and livelihood of every South Carolinian.”
- **Tennessee** Gov. Bill Lee: “‘This is not about freedom’ is a phrase that should never come out of a U.S. President’s mouth. For a fight that requires working together, a lot of cynical and divisive edicts came out of the White House today pitting the vaccinated against the unvaccinated, businesses against employees, and the federal government against states.”
- **Texas** Gov. Greg Abbott: “Biden’s vaccine mandate is an assault on private businesses. I issued an Executive Order protecting Texans’ right to choose whether they get the COVID vaccine & added it to the special session agenda. Texas is already working to halt this power grab.”

- [Wyoming](#) Gov. Mark Gordon (in part): “I have asked the Attorney General to stand prepared to take all actions to oppose this administration’s unconstitutional overreach of executive power. It has no place in America. Not now, and not ever.”



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