

# State Announces Vaccination Arbitration Decision For IDOC, IDJJ Employees

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**SPRINGFIELD** — Building on efforts to protect state employees and people in the State's care or custody from the threat of COVID-19, Governor JB Pritzker today announced that the Arbitrator in the State's Vaccine Mandate Interest Arbitration determined that the State can and should require vaccinations for Illinois Department of Correction (IDOC) guards and Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) staff.

This decision will ensure employees in State Correctional Centers and Juvenile Justice facilities are protected with the COVID-19 vaccines. Employees subject to this decision will be required to get their first shot by January 31, 2022, unless they are approved for a religious or medical exemption.

“The recent surge of cases brought on by the Omicron variant has brought a serious threat to our state, and I’m glad that this ruling will protect nearly 10,000 state workers and all of the people at these facilities,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “Protecting the health and safety of workers and residents across the state remains a top priority for my administration and I look forward to continued discussions with our labor partners as we move forward with the task of keeping our employees and residents of our congregate facilities safe.”

Vaccination is the key to ending the COVID-19 pandemic. All Illinois residents over the age of 5 are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine at no cost and proof of immigration status is not required to receive the vaccine.

The administration has taken extensive measures to make the COVID-19 vaccine equitable and accessible. Governor JB Pritzker recently directed the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) to enhance its partnerships with local health department mass vaccination operations throughout the state to help meet the growing demand for the COVID-19 vaccine booster.

Individuals can visit <http://www.vaccines.gov> to find a nearby location to receive a vaccine or booster dose. Testing locations can be found at <https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/testing.html>, including information on the days and hours for free Community-based Testing Sites.