



For Local 8 Members at Crisis Connections

December 8, 2021

Vaccination Mandate at Crisis Connections

Crisis Connections is requiring all employees to become fully vaccinated against COVID-19 unless a medical or religious exemption/accommodation has been requested and approved.

We understand that some may find the vaccination mandate to be invasive or divisive but employers can legally require vaccinations so long as they comply with other necessary laws that allow for exemption such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, RCW 49.60, and EEOC guidelines. This precedent is also established in various court opinions (*Jacobson v. Massachusetts* - a 1905 case heard by SCOTUS and more recently *Klassen, et al. v. Trustees of Indiana University* - a 2021 case heard by 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals).

In fact, during the time since CC launched their plan to make receiving the vaccine a condition of employment as a result of Governor Inslee's Proclamation 21-14, the Washington State Department of Health informed CC that all employees and agencies that are licensed through the DOH must meet the Governor's vaccine mandate, including those employees who do not provide direct services.

As a result, OPEIU LOCAL 8 enacted our legal right to bargain over the impacts and implementation of the new policy. Our role was to advocate for as much transparency, fairness, and flexibility as possible.

Please carefully review the [linked MOU](#) for further details on what was negotiated.

However, we'd like to call special attention to this provision: As negotiated, CC will provide employees with up to **four hours of paid leave per vaccine dose**, if you obtain the vaccine during your work shift. **Reasonable travel costs will be reimbursed.** If you previously used paid leave (sick, vacation, comp) to receive your vaccine, you can have that time credited back to your account. In order to do this, you must **submit proof of vaccination to HR by December 17, 2021.** Documentation should include the date you received the vaccine dose which coincides with the paid time off request.

Contact Tara Powell, Union Representative, with any questions or concerns at tara@opeiu8.org.

