

Vaccinations in the Workplace: a higher expectation than one may think

There is currently no legislation requiring employees within the UK to have the COVID-19 vaccine. However, a recent Acas survey found that approximately 22% of employers intend to require their new staff to have the COVID-19 vaccination, and 21% would require their existing staff to be vaccinated too.

20 May 2022

There is currently no legislation requiring employees within the UK to have the COVID-19 vaccine. However, a recent Acas survey found that approximately 22% of employers intend to require their new staff to have the COVID-19 vaccination, and 21% would require their existing staff to be vaccinated too.

Interestingly, these figures represent a considerable increase when compared with our own workplace survey in December 2021 ([Employment & Workforce Survey 2021: Vaccinations in the workplace](#)). It would be interesting to understand the respondents' rationale for making vaccination a requirement of employment.

Acas' guidance on the matter remains the same, in stating that it is better to support staff to get the vaccine rather than requiring them to be vaccinated. ([Supporting staff to get vaccinated: Getting the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine for work - Acas](#))

Where employers do require that employees and future employees are vaccinated, they need to take heed that they may be opening themselves up to future complaints down the line. Staff and applicants could argue that they are being discriminated against on religious and/or health grounds, or because they are pregnant and do not want to be vaccinated. Where staff have been dismissed as a result of refusing to be vaccinated, this may lead to claims of unfair dismissal.

Contact

Mark Hickson

Head of Business Development

onlineteaminbox@brownejacobson.com

+44 (0)370 270 6000

Related expertise

Commercial law

Employment