



Eric Bunn Sr.
National Secretary-Treasurer

Dr. Everett B. Kelley
National President

Jeremy A. Lannan
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November 9, 2021

Honorable Shalanda Young
Acting Director
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC 20503

Honorable Kiran Ahuja
Director
U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Washington, DC 20415

Mr. Jeff Zients
White House Coronavirus
Response Coordinator
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Directors Young and Ahuja and Mr. Zients:

On behalf of the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO (AFGE), representing over 700,000 federal and District of Columbia employees, I write you to urgently request full harmonization of Covid-19 vaccination deadlines between federal employees and contractors.

As you know, the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force has issued and amended varying deadlines for federal contractors to be in compliance with vaccine mandates, now set at January 4, 2022. In contrast, federal employees who in many cases work side-by-side with contractors, have been held to a firm deadline of November 22, 2021. This double standard has caused confusion and distress among federal employees due to disparate treatment and incongruent deadlines for people who perform the government's work in the same settings.

It is inexcusable that contractors are being given the entire holiday season to meet the mandates, while federal employees continue to be subject to the November 22 deadline. The effect upon morale of federal employees being subject to possible discipline at this time of year cannot be overstated. Transportation Security Officers at the Transportation Security Administration are especially affected and dismayed by the seemingly more favorable (post-holiday) deadlines offered to contractors. Corrections Officers at the Bureau of Prisons are understandably chagrined by the fact that inmates face no mandate while they must comply by November 22 or face termination.

While we share the administration's goal of beating the pandemic and appreciate the vital role of vaccination in this effort, setting different compliance deadlines for employees vis-à-vis contractors is both harmful to morale and substantively unjustified. Federal workers should be able to complete the holiday season without the threat of discipline looming over them. AFGE also expects the holidays will be an excellent time for federal employees to contemplate these important decisions, and the New Year to be a time of renewal and commitment to the important work we face in the coming year.

Thank you for your consideration. Please respond to this urgent request as soon as you can.

Sincerely,


Everett B. Kelley
President

