

Cos. Should Brace For Workers' Vaccine Safety Concerns

Media Mentions

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A Gallup Inc. survey released in August indicates that more than one in three Americans, specifically 35 percent, intend to decline any COVID-19 vaccine that ultimately is approved by the US Food and Drug Administration — even if offered free of cost.

That high percentage appears to be based upon the influence of a movement that opposes vaccinations, as well as concerns about the fact that the vaccine may have been fast-tracked for approval and will be brand new and, therefore, lack a long track record of safe use.

In fact, since that Gallup survey was conducted, worries for many about the safety of the vaccine have only increased based upon the fear that the vaccine approval process may be rushed for political reasons.

A major concern with this large percentage of Americans who intend to forgo the vaccine is that the effectiveness rate of any vaccine is likely to be something materially below 100 percent, according to experts such as Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious diseases expert.

For instance, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the annual flu vaccine is typically somewhere between 40 percent and 60 percent effective. Therefore, those individuals rejecting the COVID-19 vaccine will increase the risk even for those who get the vaccine — given the fact that no one will be completely protected.

All of this places employers, who are obligated to provide a workplace free from serious recognized hazards, in an especially difficult position. Undoubtedly many employees not only will want to have the vaccine, but also, to protect themselves more effectively, will want all of their co-workers to have the vaccine as well.

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When employees ultimately realize that a significant number of their colleagues have no intention of receiving the vaccine, employers should brace themselves for workplace health and safety concerns and employee conflict.

This reality has led some businesses to ask whether they will be able to require employees receive the vaccine as a condition of employment.

Click below to read the entire *Law360* article.