

## All of Maine Will Suffer When Healthcare Workers are Fired

Unfortunately, Maine's healthcare workers have been hit hard by [the recent federal court ruling](#) surrounding the state's COVID-19 vaccine mandates, but worse is to come when our healthcare system is understaffed as a result.

**To recap:** Last week, US District Court Judge Jon Levy denied a motion filed by the Liberty Counsel on behalf of thousands of healthcare workers in the state of Maine. Liberty Counsel filed suit to [challenge the vaccine mandate issued in August](#) by Governor Janet Mills. The mandate required all healthcare workers in the state to be vaccinated against COVID-19 by October 1 but does not provide an exemption for religious believers. Liberty Counsel sued, arguing that the mandate violates the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other federal laws. Judge Levy's ruling rejected Liberty Counsel's request that the court pause the enforcement of the mandate while the case makes its way through the federal courts.

**The court's decision has placed the livelihoods of thousands of Maine healthcare workers at immediate risk.** The federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [publicly states](#) that employers "must provide a reasonable accommodation" for religious concerns in the workplace under Title VII, including vaccine requirements, unless doing so would pose an undue hardship to their business's operations. However, Governor Mills' mandate ignores Title VII and takes the power to make accommodations away from employers. **Because of this, thousands of healthcare workers around the state are facing immediate termination.** If and when Liberty Counsel prevails on behalf of its clients, nothing will replace the months or years of lost time faced by these workers.

**The people of Maine will also suffer because of this ruling.** Many of the workers affected by this order have been on the job since the first days of the pandemic. They already know how to be safe in the workplace. But, thanks to this order, thousands of those same talented and safe workers will be forced out at a time **when healthcare systems are already stretched to their limits.**

**Unfortunately, [recent research has shown](#) that there is a direct connection between reductions in medical staffing, particularly nurses, and increases in medical errors and avoidable patient deaths.**

This is a time where all people should come together to pull through the pandemic. However, at a time when public trust is strained to a breaking point, Governor Mills' order stokes further division by pitting the vaccinated and the unvaccinated against one another.

Americans should not be forced to choose between their jobs and their beliefs, yet in Maine, that is the only choice for many healthcare workers.

Please continue to pray for all workers in the state of Maine facing these mandates and struggling with how to move forward. Cover their families with prayer, that they may be inspired with God's wisdom.

*"Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him."* – James 1:12

Together in Christ,



Mike McClellan, Policy Director