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Supreme Court Blocks Biden's Vaccine-or-Testing Mandate in Rebuke to Administration, Allows Them for Healthcare Workers

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A Virgin Islander gets vaccinated on St. Croix at one of the island's vaccination centers.
By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

Virgin Islands businesses such as Home Depot, Plaza Extra East and other big firms will not have to mandate vaccination or weekly testing for their employees, following a Thursday ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court that blocked the Biden administration's vaccine-or-test mandate for large employers. The ruling dealt a blow to the administration, though many observers had seen Mr. Biden's action as too aggressive and probably unconstitutional.

The high court, however, allowed the vaccine mandate for healthcare workers, which doesn't include a testing option, clearing a path for the administration to commence implementation of the rules. It will affect some 10 million employees in the medical field working for facilities that participate in Medicare and Medicaid.

The administration's vaccine mandate requirements were issued by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). If the mandate was allowed to take effect, it would have covered roughly 84 million workers across the U.S. and its territories. The mandate would have applied to employers with 100 or more employees. And companies subject to the requirements would have had to ascertain that employees who are not vaccinated are tested weekly.

The mandate also came with hefty fines, with companies facing penalties of up to \$13,600 per violation, if it wasn't blocked by the Supreme Court. "Today's ruling protects our individual rights and states' rights to pursue the solutions that work best for their citizens," said Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost (via the Wall Street Journal), who led a coalition of Republican-leaning states that challenged the OSHA rule.

Governor Albert Bryan, who [stated in the past](#) that he was prepared to implement the mandate locally had it been allowed by the Supreme Court, offered no comment.

The Supreme Court's six conservative judges, in an unsigned opinion, said the Biden administration likely didn't have the authority to unilaterally impose vaccine mandates calling on employers to ensure their workers are vaccinated or test weekly for Covid-19. Three of the court's liberal judges dissented.

Allowing the mandate for healthcare workers to take effect were Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Brett Kavanaugh, who joined the three liberal judges to form a 5-4 majority.