

Communication from Public

Name: David Juarez
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Council File No: 21-0878
Comments for Public Posting: Please see letter attached.



September 22, 2021

Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N Spring St,
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: File: 21-0878 – Vaccine Mandate to Enter Indoor Spaces

Dear Los Angeles City Councilmembers,

On behalf of the California Restaurant Association (CRA), and the thousands of restaurants in the City of Los Angeles, I am writing to provide input in response to Council File: 21-0878 which would require individuals to show proof of at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccination in order to enter indoor spaces such as restaurants.

From the beginning of vaccination distribution, the CRA and its members have been strong advocates of wide distribution of COVID-19 vaccinations. We fought vigorously to keep our workforce towards the front of the line for vaccine eligibility- and have worked since to maximize the number of vaccines distributed within the restaurant workforce.

We worked directly with the state, county, and the city on the vaccine rollout - offering our services, expertise, and outreach capabilities to increase access to the vaccine.

We certainly share your concerns with the increased spread of the Delta Variant and are alarmed at the number of people who remain unvaccinated outside of our workforce.

However, as the city begins to draft an ordinance to mandate proof of vaccinations to enter indoor spaces, it is imperative that you consider the following:

- **Outdoor dining and drive-thrus need to be exempt, as other regions have recognized that these instances provide environments for enhanced air circulation.**
- **Customers entering a restaurant to pick up an order, but not to dine-in must be exempt as face coverings can provide sufficient protection.**
- **What will happen at food courts in malls and airports that don't have direct entrances and exits?**
- **How will medical and religious exemptions be accommodated and approved?**
- **What constitutes a proof of vaccination? What about the legitimacy of documents?**
- **The conditions for private events should be between the provider and the contract holder.**
- **What protections will be put in place for our team-members who are bound to face some level of hostility in the confrontational environment this proposed ordinance will create?**

Our members have expressed concerns with requiring businesses to conduct vaccine checks of the public. This is a massive shift of public health responsibilities from local health departments onto the

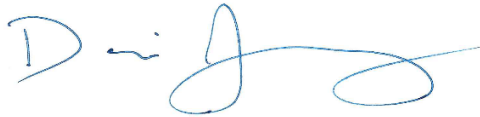
restaurant operators. Enforcing mask mandates has been an enormous challenge for restaurant staff, and often has led to unnecessary conflict between employees and patrons.

Deputizing restaurant team-members to take on public health responsibilities and enforcement is of grave concern to us. Demanding proof of vaccination from our guests will certainly cause much more of an emotional stir. It is without question that the mandate you are considering ratifying today will force restaurants to incur additional labor costs at a time when the supply is low, and we can least afford it. This is due to the fact that this new public health duty and transfer of responsibility to restaurants will take additional labor and require specialized training of staff to manage the conflicts that this mandate will certainly create.

Enforcement of such a mandate should not fall on the restaurant staff. If the City chooses to follow through with this massive shift of public health duties on the City's restaurants, the City has a moral obligation to provide relief funds to off-set the added specialized labor that will be needed to enforce such mandate.

We respectfully request that any vaccine mandate on restaurants consider the issues raised in this letter and appreciate your time and consideration of our position, expertise, and experience with vaccine mandates already in place.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Juarez', with a stylized, flowing script.

David Juarez
Director of Local Government Affairs
California Restaurant Association