



September 19, 2021

**VIA E-MAIL AND FIRST-CLASS MAIL**

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary of Homeland Security  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20016

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I appreciate your commitment to ensuring the health and safety of CBP/DHS employees and recognize the efforts you and your team have made to help protect employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. On Sept. 9, 2021, President Biden signed Executive Order 14043 requiring all federal employees covered under Title 5 of the United States Code to receive the COVID-19 vaccine with exceptions only as required by law. In issuing this Executive Order, President Biden stated:

I have determined that ensuring the health and safety of the Federal workforce and the efficiency of the civil service requires immediate action to protect the Federal workforce and individuals interacting with the Federal workforce.

While our frontline CBP employees are now required to be vaccinated, they still face an enhanced risk of contracting COVID-19 in the performance of their duties. Despite an unprecedented global pandemic, those traveling through our ports of entry have no such vaccine requirement. This poses a serious threat to the health and safety of CBP employees. As their employer, I believe DHS can do better by these critical frontline employees. I ask you to use the authority of your office to expand the vaccine requirement to anyone traveling through our nation's ports of entry. This is a necessary step to protect CBP employees and further the intent of Executive Order 14043.

On a daily basis, CBP Officers and other frontline employees process tens of thousands of international travelers, crews on cargo ships, migrants and asylum seekers. They have been on the front lines throughout the pandemic and that has taken a deadly toll. The risk these employees face is reflected in CBP's current statistics: 11,030 positive COVID-19 cases and 43 deaths from COVID-19.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/coronavirus>

Just this month, the DHS Office of Inspector General reported that 157 employees tested positive for COVID-19 from March to April 2021 along the southwest border<sup>2</sup>. The IG stressed that DHS leadership must commit to strengthening “COVID-19 preventative measures. Without stronger measures in place, DHS is putting its workforce, support staff, communities, and migrants at greater risk for contracting the virus.”

There are a number of countries that have imposed vaccine requirements for entry, including Canada, our neighbor to the north, and many European countries. Their customs and immigration employees are safer for it. It is time we did the same for our country’s frontline workforce.

I ask that you take prompt action to address the safety of CBP employees and thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony M. Reardon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

Anthony M. Reardon  
National President

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/2021-09/OIG-21-60-Sep21.pdf>