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JetBlue says nearly all staff will be vaccinated before mandate deadline

Airline's staff required to meet a Jan. 4 deadline

By **Julia Musto** | **FOXBusiness**

Doctor warns 'long COVID' is 'very serious': Patients have symptoms that 'won't go away'

Dr. Matt McCarthy describes seeing a 'disturbingly large' percentage of patients with lingering COVID-19 symptoms.

[JetBlue Airways](#) said Tuesday that nearly all of its staff will be [vaccinated](#) against [COVID-19](#).

The vast majority of crewmembers were already fully vaccinated or have started vaccinations, the airline told FOX Business in a statement.

PILOTS ARE IN DEMAND AGAIN, AS STRAINED AIRLINES GO ON A HIRING SPREE

"Out of 21,000 crewmembers, only about 300 have said they do not plan to get vaccinated. A limited number of crewmembers have indicated interest in a religious or medical accommodation and we will work through these individually to review and evaluate each of those crewmember's situations. It will take some time to work through these applications and we expect that process will continue even after January 4," JetBlue said.

The federal COVID-19 vaccine mandate deadline is Jan. 4, 2022.

JetBlue said the federal government's goal to get more people vaccinated was to prevent serious illness and death and help get the [industry](#) "back to normal."

Fort Lauderdale, United States - February 17, 2016: A Jetblue Airways Airbus A320 with the registration N595JB taking off from Fort Lauderdale Airport (FLL) in the United States. (Credit: iStock)

"The government has said they do not want people to lose their jobs because of the mandate, and we certainly do not want any of our incredible crewmembers to leave the airline. Consistent with that, we do not plan to separate anyone from the company on Jan. 5, and our first step after Jan. 4 is to reach out to the small number of unvaccinated crewmembers and discuss with them their concerns and review options," JetBlue added.

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Conversely, employees of [United Airlines](#) – the [first to comply with regulations](#) – will face termination if unvaccinated. While only a couple of hundred employees have refused, approximately 2,000 are seeking exemptions.

All of this comes ahead of what is expected to be a busy [holiday travel season](#).

Stock Symbol	JBLU
Stock Name	JETBLUE AIRWAYS CORP.
Stock Price	7.67
Stock Change	-0.31
Change %	-3.88%
Stock Symbol	UAL
Stock Name	UNITED AIRLINES HOLDINGS INC.
Stock Price	43.02
Stock Change	-1.40
Change %	-3.15%

JetBlue said it would be ready for customers.

"We have hired many new crewmembers this year in anticipation of a very busy holiday peak season and we will be ready to get our customers where they need to go during the holidays," the airline said.

Vaccine mandate 'disrupting' airline industry: Travel expert

Travel expert Mark Murphy discusses the vaccine mandate for airline employees, holiday travel as flight cancellations spike and rental car prices.

"We are confident that we will be able to fly our holiday schedule this season given the small number of crewmembers who said they will not get vaccinated and the care we will put into working with each of those crewmembers individually," it said.

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While a previously announced requirement for federal contractors to make sure their workers are vaccinated was scheduled to take effect on Dec. 8, [the Biden administration delayed the measure](#) to match requirements on other large employers and [health care providers](#).

The government rules have received some pushback – including protests – and more than a dozen states have already sued to block the mandate on contractors.

The Associated Press contributed to this report

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