

WORD ON THE STREET

NAVIGATING COVID-19 CONVERSATIONS

WHAT ARE OUR NAVIGATORS HEARING?

"Why is the government telling me what to do with my body and making me get a vaccine I don't want?"

WHAT TO KNOW:

The COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. They are our most important tool for ending this terrible pandemic. Vaccine mandates help protect the public by reducing the spread of COVID-19, and by preventing serious illness and death. This is not the first time vaccine mandates have been created. Many other vaccines have been required to attend school and to work in certain jobs, long before COVID-19. To learn more about vaccine mandates, [click here](#).



Here are the current mandates that are helpful to know about as New Yorkers:

"Key to NYC": This policy calls for many indoor businesses (including restaurants, gyms & theaters) to require employees and customers to provide proof of vaccination, or face a fine.

NYC Mandate for Educators: All NYC Department of Education staff must be vaccinated unless they have an approved exemption.

NYS Mandate for Healthcare Workers: New York State requires all healthcare workers be vaccinated. This includes a health system's entire workforce, regardless of job.

Executive Order for Federal Employees: All federal employees must be fully vaccinated by November 22.

What are you hearing? Share the 'word on the street' from your perspective by filling out [this form](#).

SENSITIVE CONVERSATIONS

Having sensitive conversations is as important as ever. While we may see vaccination rates go up because of mandates, a lot of people may feel frustrated and as if their personal choice was taken from them. Some folks may still choose not to vaccinated, and could lose their jobs. It remains critical that we stay open and respectful. Here's a helpful motivational interviewing (MI) tip:



R

Resist telling them what to do:

- Avoid trying to convince or tell someone what their decision should be
- Don't try to fix

U

Understand their motivation:

- Take the time to try to understand what their values are.
- Identify what motivates them, as well as what barriers they're coming up against.

L

Listen with empathy:

- Take the time to listen as much as (if not more than) you talk
- Let them inform the conversation; you can provide guidance and information, but their final answer should always come from them

E

Empower them:

- Get them to share what they're thinking, even as that thinking changes in the moment
- Ensure you provide a clear understanding of the vaccine, including how it was developed and approved

Source: Rosengren DB. Building motivational interviewing skills: a practitioner workbook. New York, NY: The Guilford Press; 2009: 30-88.

HELPFUL TIP IN ACTION

You might say:

"I hear that you still have concerns, and that the mandates are making you feel even more uneasy. Can you tell me a little bit more about your worries?"





FROM UNSURE TO VACCINATED: STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Source: Employer vaccine mandates convert some workers, but not all (AP News, September 28, 2021): [Read here.](#)

As vaccine mandates roll out, many people who are currently unvaccinated are asked to make a difficult decision: do I get the vaccine or do I look for another job? In this article from the AP news, reporters share perspectives from both sides.

They highlight one employee who, when faced with the mandate, decided to get the vaccine. She had waited until recently because of her concerns about having a bad reaction. Now, she's glad to be vaccinated. However, the writers also discuss that many remain unsure about the vaccine and don't want a mandate to make their decision for them.

WHAT WE'RE READING / LISTENING TO:

- What are the best approaches to engage the vaccine-hesitant now? (Quartz, August 9, 2021) [Read here.](#)
- Vaccination Mandates Are an American Tradition. So Is the Backlash. (The New York Times, September 9, 2021) [Read here.](#)
- Lots Of People Say They'll Quit Over Vaccine Mandates, But Research Shows Few Do. (NPR, September 29, 2021) [Read here.](#)
- Faced with losing their jobs, even the most hesitant are getting vaccinated. (NPR, October 7, 2021) [Read here.](#)
- The political fight over vaccine mandates deepens despite their effectiveness (NPR, October 17, 2021) [Read here.](#)



NAVIGATOR SHOUT OUT



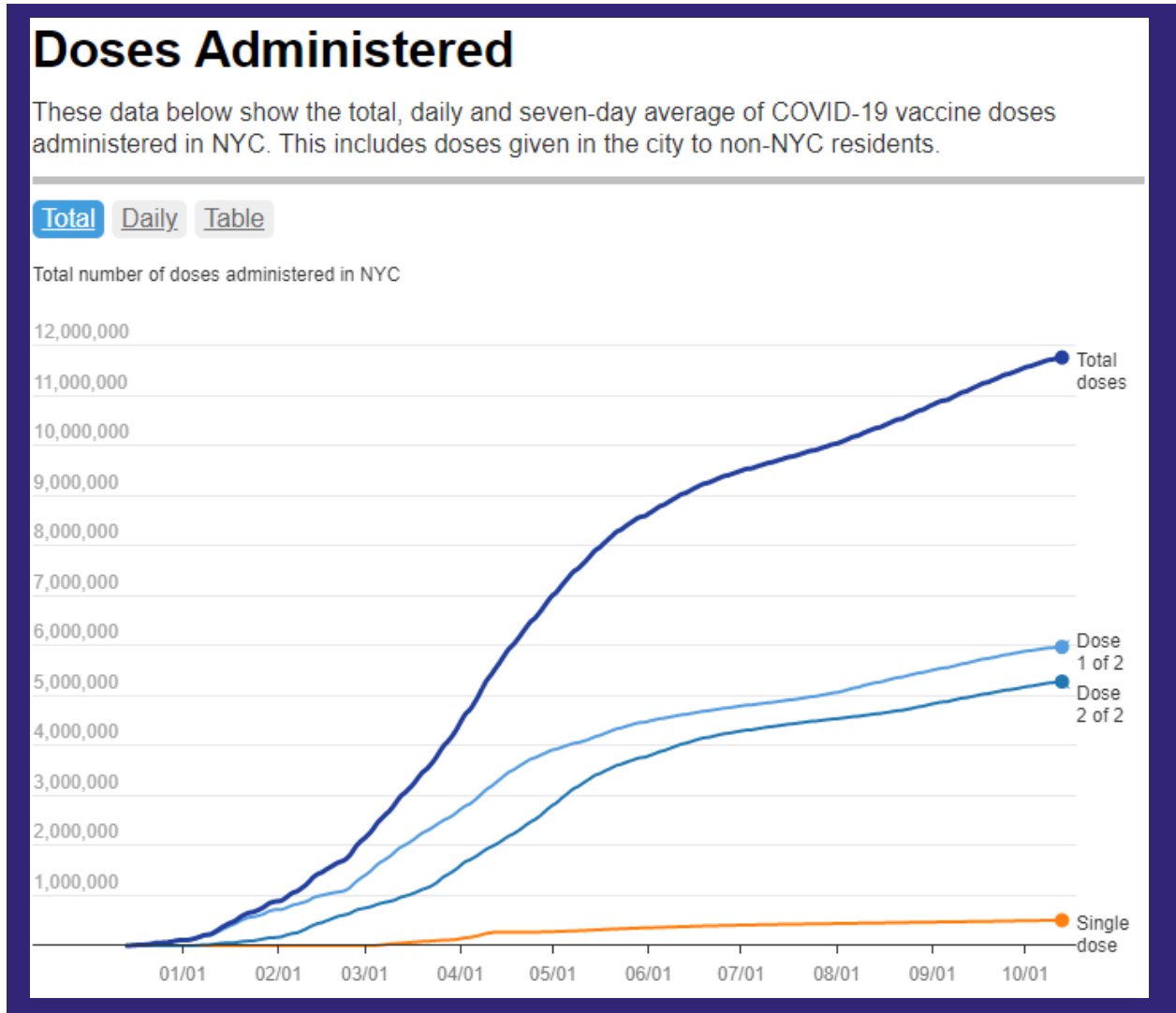
My name is Christina Green. I am the Director of the NYC Health Justice Network and am part of the Bureau of Health Promotions of Justice for impacted populations. Being formerly incarcerated myself, I work every day to help the justice impacted community. I specialize in working with persons who have specialized needs including substance misuse, human trafficking, and mental health needs.



Our navigators and community healthcare workers are working hard every day to make a big impact on NYC's public health.

We want to highlight you! To share your bio and photo, or to nominate a colleague, complete [this form!](#)

NYC DATA SNAPSHOT



Source: NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. (2021). Covid-19: Vaccine Data. COVID-19: Latest Data - NYC Health. Retrieved October 14, 2021, from <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data-vaccines.page#dosestrend>

Since the Key to NYC mandate began (September 13th), we've seen the vaccination rate rise by **9% overall**. For people age 18-34, the increase was **13%**.

Source: [Vax Rate Increased Since 'Key to NYC' Mandate Went Into Effect Last Month: de Blasio](#)
NBC New York