

Florida governor issues order banning 'vaccine passports'

3 April 2021



In this March 5, 2021 file photo, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis speaks to the media as he visited the drive-thru COVID-19 vaccination site at On Top of the World in Ocala, Fla., Repealing statewide mask mandates and criticizing the Biden administration's unemployment-based formula for distributing billions in federal aid has put Republican governors and their approach to handling the coronavirus pandemic back in the spotlight. (Alan Youngblood/Ocala Star-Banner via AP)

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis issued an executive order Friday banning businesses from requiring customers to show proof they have been vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to get service.

The Republican governor had previously announced his intent to issue an order banning so-called "vaccine passports." His action also barred any government agency in Florida from issuing such documentation for the purpose of providing proof of vaccinations.

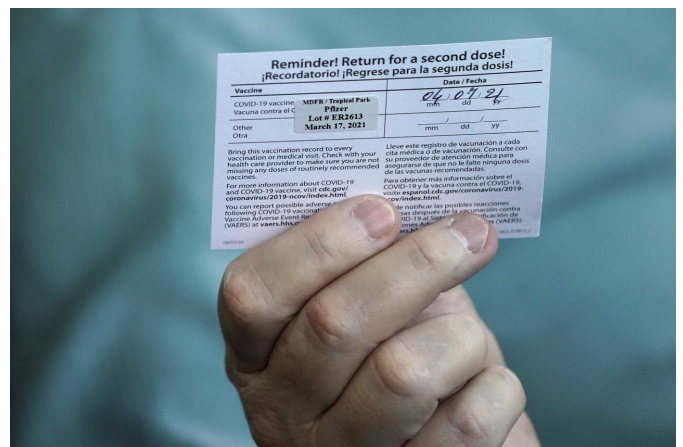
In his executive order, DeSantis asserts that "vaccination passports reduce individual freedom and will harm patient privacy."

Effective immediately, Florida businesses are barred from requiring patrons to provide documentation certifying COVID-19 vaccination to enter a [business](#) or to get served.

But the order does not preclude businesses such as restaurants and [retail stores](#) from screening protocols and other measures recommended by state and federal health officials.

As of this week, more than 2 million Floridians have been infected by the virus, and nearly 33,500 have died.

The governor's order scrapped a plan by a private university near Fort Lauderdale that would have required students and staff to be vaccinated for COVID-19 when they returned for the fall semester. Nova Southeastern University had announced earlier Friday that vaccinations would be mandatory by Aug. 1.



Juan Carlos Guerrero, 62 holds his second shot reminder card as he speaks to a healthcare worker after having received a dose of the Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine, Wednesday, March 17, 2021, at the Miami-Dade County Tropical Park vaccination site in Miami. (AP Photo/Wilfredo Lee)

Nova President George L. Hanbury II said in a statement hours later that the school had planned for universal vaccination "to protect the health and safety of our students and staff," but that it will comply with DeSantis' order.

"We will continue to follow all state and federal laws as they evolve," Hanbury said.

The university has 6,314 [undergraduate students](#) and 14,574 advanced degree students at its main campus in Davie, and across campuses in Fort Myers, Jacksonville, Miami, Miramar, Orlando, Palm Beach Gardens, Tampa and Puerto Rico.

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APA citation: Florida governor issues order banning 'vaccine passports' (2021, April 3) retrieved 16 August 2022 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-04-florida-governor-issues-vaccine-passports.html>

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