

New York Employees Will Receive Paid Time Off for COVID-19 Vaccination

On Friday, March 12, 2021, Governor Cuomo signed a new law that will allow employees in New York State to take up to four hours off from work, with pay, to get vaccinated for COVID-19.

The new leave entitlement will affect both public and private employers. The law adds section 159-c to the New York Civil Service Law, and section 196-c to the New York Labor Law. Under both provisions, employees may take a paid leave of absence, not to exceed four hours, to be vaccinated for COVID-19. The law explicitly states that the four-hour allotment applies *per vaccine injection*. An employee may receive additional time pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or as otherwise authorized by the employer. Significantly, the period of leave may not be charged against any other leave to which the employee is entitled, including New York State Sick Leave.

The law also prohibits employers from discriminating or retaliating against any employee for requesting or obtaining a leave of absence to be vaccinated for COVID-19.

The new leave entitlement will take effect immediately and expire on Dec. 31, 2022. For assistance in understanding how this new requirement could affect your business, please contact the Bond attorney with whom you are regularly in contact.

