3 major US airlines will not mandate shots for their unvaccinated workers

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(CNN) — The CEOs of Southwest Airlines, American Airlines and Delta Air Lines say they are not requiring unvaccinated employees to receive the shot, breaking with [United Airlines' mandate](#) that workers get vaccinated by October 25 or face getting fired.

In an internal memo obtained by CNN, Southwest Airlines CEO Gary Kelly said the airline will "continue to strongly encourage" that workers get vaccinated, but the airline's stance has not shifted.

"Obviously, I am very concerned about the latest Delta variant, and the effect on the health and Safety of our Employees and our operation, but nothing has changed," Kelly said.

Delta Air Lines CEO Ed Bastian told Good Day New York on Tuesday that 75% of its workforce has already been vaccinated even without a companywide mandate.

Situation for new hires

In May, Delta became the first major carrier to require [that all new hires be vaccinated](#). United Airlines made a similar announcement in June.

"I think there's some additional steps and measures we can take to get the vaccine rates even higher, but what we're seeing is every day is those numbers continue to grow," Bastian said.

Both announcements follow a New York Times podcast interview with American Airlines CEO Doug Parker, who said the airline is giving workers who get vaccinated by the end of this month one extra day of vacation in 2022.

"We certainly encourage it everywhere we can, encourage it for our customers and our employees, but we're not putting mandates in place," said Parker.

In a statement, American Airlines said there was "no update at this time" to its vaccination policy. "We are strongly encouraging our team members to get vaccinated, and we are offering an incentive for those who do."

Top image: Southwest and Delta aircrafts are seen at the San Jose del Cabo International Airport in Baja California state, Mexico, on April 29, 2021. (Daniel Slim/AFP/Getty Images)