



**Submitted Testimony of CAHCF/CCAL and LeadingAge Connecticut
to the Public Health Committee's Informational Hearing on the Continuation of Emergency
Declarations and Limited Executive Orders**

February 8, 2022

Regarding EO 14B, The Long-Term Care Employee Booster Mandate

**Request for an Extension of the Compliance Deadline Due to Concern that Long-Term Care
Employees May Face Losing Their Jobs**

On behalf of LeadingAge Connecticut and the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities /Connecticut Center for Assisted Living, we write to share our concern with the deadline of February 11 in Executive Order 14B, and seek an extension of the deadline for booster vaccine compliance. While we and our long-term care facility members wholeheartedly share in the interest to ensure the safety of all staff and residents through vaccination, our members are unfortunately being met with more resistance for the booster vaccine than was the case in the original rounds of vaccination. The most recently published data in the long-term care facility staff booster compliance report shows only 40 percent of eligible staff have received the booster. This is compared to the 100% compliance with the initial primary vaccine regimen. We are hopeful that with an extension of time, we can increase the number of employees who will agree to receive the booster shot and we can avoid excessive job loss.

Our Associations and members have for months been directing significant effort and resources to provide vaccination clinics and promote the importance of the booster vaccine; however, the progress is slower than anticipated. With the deadline fast approaching, we are concerned about a staffing cliff, with an abrupt staffing shortage resulting from the inability to convince greater numbers of staff to receive the booster vaccine prior to February 11. This would be concerning in a normal labor market, but during the current staffing crisis, the level of concern is much greater. For instance, and as an example, despite significant effort, one LeadingAge Connecticut member that had been a leader in the previous vaccination effort, currently projects they may lose 50-75 staff come February 11. We are hearing the same from CAHCF /CCAL member facilities who tell us that the February 11, 2022 staffing losses will only magnify the existing staff vacancies that providers are unable to fill and may significantly impact the ability to provide resident care.

Given this, **we respectfully urge your consideration of an extension to the February 11 deadline to at least April 1**, which would require an amendment to the Governor's staff booster mandate when the state legislature addresses this issue this week. We request immediate attention be placed on this concern to avoid significant long-term care staff layoffs during a period of unprecedented staffing shortages.

Respectfully submitted,

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Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities/Connecticut Center for Assisted Living

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