

Want a medical exemption for the COVID-19 vaccine? Good luck with that.

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Michael Schmidt spoke with *CBS News* about COVID-19 exemptions for employees. Exemptions from vaccine requirements for certain workers have long been guaranteed by law. Today, however, more companies are being tasked with interpreting such requests. "It's no different from a process standpoint than it was pre-pandemic. The only real difference is most companies are starting to see a greater number of accommodation requests on the disability side with vaccine policies," said Michael. "Just because someone requests a medical accommodation, that does not give employers carte blanche to ask about every condition in an unlimited way," he said. "But it may not be so obvious what the connection is and you [the employer] may be entitled to more information." He said he has engaged with companies that have granted employees accommodations to vaccine mandates on medical grounds. Chin-Hong of UCSF, on the other hand, isn't aware of any successful challenges to the vaccine mandate within his own institution. Though few exemptions are likely to be granted, it's clear that each request must be assessed individually. "From an employer's standpoint, the takeaway is you have got to treat every case individually and separately," he said. "You cannot have blanket rules and procedures. You need to take everyone on an individualized basis."

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