

Employers Contend with Conflicts over Masks, Vaccinations

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David Barron spoke with *SHRM* about how the CDC's recent guidance on masks has encouraged some vaccinated employees to go maskless in the workplace. The CDC's new guidelines allowing vaccinated workers to remove masks "has created a two-tiered system in many workplaces," said David. At organizations that let vaccinated workers remove masks, there will be conflicts as some nonvaccinated workers also may want to remove their masks and test employers' ability or desire to enforce the rules, he said. "Vaccinated workers may also feel anxious or uncomfortable removing masks around nonvaccinated workers, which could create arguments and division in the workplace," he said. "Companies should make sure to emphasize the importance of respecting co-workers' views on masking and avoid teasing or differential treatment of employees based on mask wearing." Some employees, even if vaccinated, may want to wear masks well into the future, or even permanently, when around co-workers or in large groups, he said.

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