

# SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Board of Directors **DATE:** September 8, 2023

**FROM:** President Li  
Vice President Foley

**SUBJECT:** Vaccination Policy Update

Dear Fellow BART Directors:

The San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District ("BART") adopted a COVID-19 vaccination requirement for all employees, Board members, contractors, and consultants effective December 13, 2021, with exceptions for those employees who qualified for a Reasonable Accommodation or Religious Exemption. The COVID-19 vaccination requirement was reasonable and necessary at the time to keep BART's employees and riders safe during an unprecedented public health emergency.

As public health emergencies at the local, state, and federal level have expired or have been lifted, it is our recommendation that the Board amend the COVID-19 vaccine mandate at BART. This recommendation is based on an extensive review of multiple factors, including public health considerations, operational feasibility, and the evolving nature of the pandemic. The following points outline the rationale for recommending the policy amendment:

- 1. Evolving Public Health Landscape:** The COVID-19 pandemic has been characterized by rapidly changing circumstances, including the emergence of new variants and shifts in public health recommendations. The removal of the vaccine mandate allows BART to adapt its approach to the evolving situation and align its policies with the most current scientific evidence.
- 2. Operational Efficiency:** The implementation and enforcement of the vaccine mandate posed logistical challenges, including vaccine verification, exemptions, and compliance tracking. By removing the mandate, BART will refocus its resources on providing safe and efficient transit service.
- 3. Employee Morale and Trust:** The decision to remove the mandate fosters an environment of trust and mutual respect between BART and its employees. Acknowledging personal choices contributes to higher morale, job satisfaction, and a stronger sense of collaboration.

4. **Ongoing Monitoring:** BART will continue to closely monitor the COVID-19 situation in collaboration with State and Local health authorities. This proactive approach ensures that the organization can swiftly respond to changing circumstances and implement appropriate measures as needed.

We realize that implementation of the COVID vaccine mandate was necessary to protect our employees and our riders in an unprecedented situation the pandemic presented. We also are cognizant that this decision impacted our employees, their families, and our riders. However, adoption of this amendment is necessary to adapt to the current environment in a way that will respect the rights and choices of all stakeholders.

Should you have any further questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out.



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Janice Li  
President



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Mark Foley  
Vice President