

MTN announces a mandatory Covid-19 vaccination policy for staff

MTN has announced that it will be implementing a mandatory vaccination policy for its staff from January 2022. The company said in a statement that the move is part of its commitment to protect the health and safety of its people and workplaces, as well as contribute towards the rate of Covid-19 vaccinations across its markets.



A worker walks past an outlet of South Africa's MTN Group in Johannesburg, South Africa, 23 February 2016. Reuters/Siphiwe Sibek/File Photo

“The science is clear. Vaccination against Covid-19 reduces rates of serious infections, hospitalisation, and death. As an employer, we have a responsibility to ensure that our workplaces are guided by the highest standards of health and safety, and that has informed our decision to make Covid-19 vaccination mandatory for our staff,” said MTN Group president and chief executive officer Ralph Mupita.

“Our new Covid-19 policy recognises that some of our markets don’t have adequate access to vaccines. It also recognises some low-risk roles that will be accommodated with full-time work-from-home or alternate arrangements, but this will be a small population within our workforce,” he added.

Both the World Health Organization and the Africa Centres for Disease Control advocate for vaccines – saying that they are an important measure to protect people. The global rollout of vaccinations since 2020 has clearly contributed to the containment and management of the virus in many countries.



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Tracy van der Colff and Tiisetso Rabolao 18 Nov 2021



“Vaccine equity continues to be a major issue for African countries. As MTN, we add our voice to the calls for more vaccines to be made available to African countries, as herd immunity will only happen when the whole globe has reached a sufficient level of Covid-19 vaccination,” said Mupita.

“The latest travel bans on African countries by developed nations are not based on science, are unjust and add to the lack of support for Africa that is much needed for an effective global response to the pandemic. African countries are being punished for the very transparency that’s actually needed to successfully combat the impact on lives and livelihoods of the Covid-19 virus,” he added.



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The latest data shows that across the continent, only 7% of Africans have been fully vaccinated. This compares with a global population vaccination rate of 55%. “The fight against Covid-19 needs a global, comprehensive and equitable allocation of vaccines,” he added.

MTN Group’s new vaccine policy is a measure to meet MTN’s legal obligations in regard to providing a safe workplace and shall be subject to risk assessment and local laws that apply to the MTN Group and our operating companies and subsidiaries.

It also recognises the right of employees to apply to be exempted from the policy and/or refuse vaccination on certain clearly defined grounds. For those staff who are not exempt from vaccinations either through risk assessment or agreed exclusions but still refuse vaccination, MTN will not be obliged to continue the employment contract.

The new mandatory vaccination policy follows the group’s \$25m donation to the African Union’s Covid-19 vaccination programme.

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