



# MEMORANDUM

Date: September 1, 2021

To: The Honorable Chair and Members  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator

Re: Information as requested by Supervisor Rex Scott, District 1

Supervisor Scott asked for information regarding the total number and type of health care workers that might be impacted should the Board of Supervisors require that these individuals working in Pima County be vaccinated. A response to his inquiry is provided below

The proposed Board Action originally discussed but not approved at the August 10 meeting directs the County Administrator and staff to use the County's public health authority to mandate vaccination for "all health care workers in Pima County licensed by the State of Arizona and their direct support staff."

Absent a specific definition, we turned to the "Professions and Occupations" title of the Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) to look for a definition of the workers to be covered by the proposed Board Action. The A.R.S. identifies 27 separate categories and defines a "health professional" as "a person who is certified or licensed pursuant to chapter 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15, 15.1, 16, 17, 18, 19, 19.1, 21, 25, 28, 29, 33, 34, 35, 39, 41 or 42 of this title, title 36, chapter 4, article 6, title 36, chapter 6, article 72 or title 36, chapter 17." A.R.S. § 32-3201. Those chapters identify the following professional categories: Podiatrists; Chiropractors; Dentists; professionals regulated by the Medical Board; Naturopaths; Nurses; Dispensing Opticians; Optometrists; Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons; Pharmacists; Physical Therapists; Psychologists; Veterinarians; Physician Assistants; Radiologic Technologists; Homeopathic Physicians; Behavioral Health Professionals; Occupational Therapists; Respiratory Care; Acupuncturists; Athletic Trainers; Massage Therapists; Nursing Care; Midwives; and Hearing aid dispensers, Audiologists, and Speech-language pathologists.

Each of these groups has its own unique statewide licensing entity and, therefore, a comprehensive listing of the individuals covered by this potential action is not available from the State. Unless specifically excluded, we believe that the proposed mandate would be applicable to all the above categories.

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Since there is not a single repository of all licensed/certified medical providers available from the State or their health care "support staff", staff was directed to estimate these. The Health Department has no regulatory authority over health care providers and a very narrow regulatory role (food safety) in health care facilities so we are left to derive estimates from publically available data. One source is the Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey. This survey puts the number of health care providers in Pima County at 21,014 and another 20,017 support staff.

More granular estimates of the health care provider population were provided by the University of Arizona Center for Rural Health. (Attachment) Their numbers come from their unique access to the State licensing data bases as well as the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES). Their analysis suggests that the health provider count be revised upwards to 23,187.

A further consideration is the relatively short time frame for action given the Governor and Legislature's joint action. As part of the budgetary process the Legislature passed and the Governor signed legislation that specifically precludes counties from issuing such mandates after September 29. Given this time constraint, implementation of a Resolution requiring vaccination of public health workers in Pima County would rely on public messaging to the impacted categories of workers. This could direct them to a self-attestation portal which then could be cross-walked manually against the state data. It would be difficult at best to determine the identities of those not providing such information and there would be no legal consequences of such non-compliance.

A variety of large health care sector entities in Pima County have already developed and are implementing plans to require COVID-19 vaccination of their work force. In general, and outside of the health care section, employer mandates are also valuable to stimulate vaccination uptake among a segment of the population. However, individual public and private sector employers are in the best position to create and enforce such requirements in such a way that minimizes the impact on service delivery.

CHH/dym

Attachment

c: Jan Lesher, Chief Deputy County Administrator  
Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator for Public Works  
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer,  
Health and Community Services  
Terry Cullen, Public Health Director, Health Department

### Estimates of the Health Care Workforce in Pima County

The US Census, American Community Survey 2019 5-year estimates for Pima County provides a count of people in “Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations”<sup>1</sup> of 29,016, and in “Healthcare support occupations”<sup>2</sup> of 16,918.<sup>3</sup> Adding these groups together provides an estimate of **45,934** people in the healthcare workforce in Pima County. This data does not account for licensure status.

For licensed healthcare professions, the following tables present estimated counts of **a selected sub-set** of health workforce professionals in Pima County.<sup>4</sup> Both tables should be considered snapshot in time data of the health care workforce. They are estimates because health professionals may maintain an active license but may not be actively working in a clinical practice. Together, these counts total **23,187** for these licensed health care professions.

**Table 1. Select Health Care Professionals in Pima County**

Source: Arizona state health professional licensing boards<sup>5</sup>.

Professional Group	Count	Data Year
Behavior Analyst	45	Jan 2020
Counselor	804	Dec 2019
Marriage and Family Therapist	77	Dec 2019
Nurses	16,585	Mar 2020
<i>Nurse – Advanced Practice</i>	1,412	
<i>Nurse - Assistant</i>	3,127	
<i>Nurse – Practical Nurse</i>	1,555	
<i>Nurse – Registered Nurse</i>	10,491	
Physician	3,228	Jan 2019
Physician Assistant	209	Jan 2019
Psychologist	283	Sept 2019
Social Worker	914	Dec 2019
Substance Abuse Counselor	159	Dec 2019
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,304</b>	

**Table 2. Other Health Care Professionals in Pima County**

Source: National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES) from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

Professional Group	Count	Data Year
Occupational Therapists	211	March 2020
Physical Therapist	566	March 2020
Respiratory Therapists	106	March 2020
<b>Total</b>	<b>883</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes290000.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Health Care Support Occupations <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes310000.htm>

<sup>3</sup> US Census. 2021. American Community Survey 2019, 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from:

[https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?\\_t=Occupation&g=0500000US04019&tid=ACSTSY2019.S2401&hidePreview=true](https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?_t=Occupation&g=0500000US04019&tid=ACSTSY2019.S2401&hidePreview=true)

<sup>4</sup> Not included in these tables are professions like Audiologists, Dentists, Dental Hygienists, EMTs, Paramedics, Personal Care Aides, Pharmacists, Phlebotomists, Podiatrists, Radiology Technician, Speech Pathologists etc.

<sup>5</sup> The Arizona Medical Boards (Arizona Medical Board, Arizona Board of Osteopathic Examiners, Arizona Regulatory board of Physician Assistants), The Arizona Board of Behavioral Health Examiners, the Arizona Board of Psychologist Examiners, and the Arizona State Board of Nursing.