

January 25, 2022

Dear Councilmembers:

I have lived in Montgomery County for several decades. I was born here.

I oppose the vaccine passport for Montgomery County, and so does nearly everyone who gave oral and written testimony over the past week – both individuals and business leaders. It is clear that this is neither wanted nor needed by the people who live and work in this county.

Furthermore, over the past week new data has come forward which calls into question the need for any mandates whatsoever – mask or vaccine mandates or passports. The UK, which is a few weeks ahead of us, has cancelled all mandates and restrictions because the Omicron wave has passed and infection and hospitalization rates have dropped. The efficacy of boosters is being called into question in Israel. We can expect the same thing to happen here within several days, and already we see signs of this happening.

Given the above, there is no current, urgent **need** to impose vaccine passports, and you should vote to oppose and postpone any such decision to a future point, if any, where current circumstances support such a measure. Do not do this now, when all data points to the likely imminent non-emergency pandemic situation.

Should you impose a vaccine passport requirement, just because of momentum or just to be “on the safe side?” No. This is a very extreme, harsh measure that will have devastating consequences for individuals, particularly children whose mental health has been severely strained – and for businesses barely hanging on, with challenges of hiring and retaining a sufficient workforce. Montgomery County has been a very welcoming place, and a vaccine passport is in direct opposition of inclusivity. The damage to our social fabric would be devastating.

Your stated goal is to increase vaccinations. Is that a worthy goal, or just a metric? If that is really your goal, then the likelihood of achieving it is slim to none. Do you understand and respect the legitimate reasons of the remaining 5% unvaccinated? The few people who remain unvaccinated have already made their decisions; many of them are medically contraindicated from receiving this vaccination. Others have sincerely held religious beliefs, protected by our Constitution. So, your goal will not only not be met, but will only create cruel division among our friends and neighbors in this County.

I believe you know this already. So what is the unstated goal? The only good reason could be something to do with public health, as though the unvaccinated pose such a grave risk to the vaccinated, that they must be shut out of society. But we know this is not true. If there were data supporting this (there is not) and if there were such an emergency that called for separating people (there is none at this time), then you would not have come up with such complicated rules to do with implementation: that restaurants and gyms are dangerous, but grocery stores and houses of worship are safe. None of this makes any scientific sense; a few of you mentioned arbitrary reasons to do with places where people have difficulty wearing masks. However, the CDC has recently made it clear that the cloth masks are ineffective anyway, and the N95 masks are not much better. We also know that this infection is airborne and escapes masks and is not passed through droplets.

I believe you also must know that it is unlawful to mandate an experimental medical procedure. While vaccines can and do save lives, we are protected by law to have fully informed consent without coercion for participation in medical experiments, which these vaccines are. No long-term safety trials have been completed. They are still all emergency use authorization (EUA), which is not the same as FDA approval; there is no manufacturer liability for any injury caused by these vaccines. As you know, there are currently no FDA-approved COVID vaccines available in the United States; only EUA vaccines. At this point, you also have to be aware of the vast numbers of vaccine injuries and deaths in the government VAERS system, which tends to be underreported. All reports in the system have been verified. A vaccine passport system is a form of coercion to force people to participate in a medical experiment in order to fully participate in society, and is thus unlawful, like it or not.

The data on which public health policy is being based is also misleading; as we all know, the CDC counts people as “unvaccinated” up until 14 days after their second dose of the vaccine. We also know that the immune system is suppressed within the first 14 days after the vaccine, as well as the majority of short-term adverse vaccine reactions happening within that two-week window. This makes it clear that the data upon which we are basing public health policy is massively flawed. We cannot state with honesty that “unvaccinated” (i.e., no COVID shots whatsoever) people are filling up the hospitals. It is logical to assume that there are large numbers of people who are within two weeks after their second dose who are being counted among that group.

We also all know that asymptomatic spread is rare or negligible, and that vaccinated people can become infected and spread COVID, and there are no reliable studies indicating that the unvaccinated pose any threat to the vaccinated. Whether or not the COVID vaccines reduce symptoms and severity, the fact remains that vaccinated and boosted individuals can infect others. A passport makes zero sense from a health standpoint. It only divides people.

Two years ago, we didn't know any of this. Many of us were fearful for very good reasons. But now, we have a lot more data and there is so much encouraging news coming from other countries that cases and hospitalizations have dramatically decreased; this is not the time for a vaccine passport, now that it appears the Omicron wave has peaked. Nor is this an appropriate tool for promoting public health. It will do way more harm than good. In fact, it won't do anything beneficial, except give an irrational sense of safety to those who are still caught up in the earlier fears that many of us had. The harm is vast: an entire group of people, including children, will be cut out of fully participating in society without any solid scientific basis.

I strongly urge you to vote against the well-intentioned but misguided vaccine passport.