

In [a strong endorsement for](#) stricter government vaccine mandates, the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church reiterated in a pre-COVID-19 2019 resolution, “That The Episcopal Church has long maintained that we are guided by faith and reason, and that scientific evidence helps us to better understand God’s creation, our place in it, and ways to alleviate suffering and pain.”

Additional language from that resolution offers excellent guidance for taking vaccines.

“The proper and responsible use of vaccines is a duty not only to our own selves and families but to our communities. Choosing to not vaccinate, when it is medically safe, threatens the lives of others.”

“The Executive Council expresses its grave concern and sorrow for the recent rise in easily preventable diseases due to anti-vaccination movements which have harmed thousands of children and adults.”

“The Executive Council condemns the continued and intentional spreading of fraudulent research that suggested vaccines might cause harm. The spread of this misinformation has resulted in significant harm to children and families.”

“The Executive Council recognizes no claim of theological or religious exemption from vaccination for our members and reiterates the spirit of General Convention policies that Episcopalians should seek the counsel of experienced medical professionals, scientific research, and epidemiological evidence.”

Finally, Executive Council also urges, “all religious leaders to support evidence-based measures that ensure the strongest protections for our communities.” And they instruct all of our congregations and dioceses, “to partner with medical professionals to counter false information, and to become educated about programs in their communities that can provide vaccinations and immunizations at reduced or no cost to those in need.”

On misinformation: Some may be bought into misinformation around the vaccine or vaccines in general. Since the beginning of the pandemic, misinformation has been a problem. As the World Health Organization says, misinformation costs lives. Explore their resource on managing the “COVID-19 Infodemic” [here](#). Go a step beyond,

and [explore our own Episcopal Church resource on misinformation](#), being updated regularly.

On trust: It is also true that at various points in history the government has violated public trust, especially in communities of color, through abuse of new and sometimes experimental medicine. [Acknowledging that history is important](#), as is emphasizing that the COVID-19 vaccine roll out, aimed at the entire global population, is not such an instance, and does have widespread backing of private and public entities ensuring its safety. Building and leveraging trust, especially through close relationships with your community, is one of the best approaches.

Lead by example: One way to combat vaccine hesitancy is to showcase church leaders receiving their vaccine. Create media (photos, a quick social media post, local news stories, etc.) when a church or community leader receives their vaccine and encourage others to do the same. Do avoid, however, posting any private information about individuals, including any images of a vaccination card itself.

Source: Dio of MO i-Seek newsletter dated Feb 24, 2021
which linked to <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/office-government-relations/covid-vaccine-toolkit/#10-actions-to-help-everyone-get-vaccinated>