

Trump-Appointed Judge Blocks Air Force from Expelling Unvaccinated Service Members and Enforcing Vaccine Mandate

By Jim Hoft

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A federal judge in Ohio blocked the Air Force's plan to expel thousands of unvaccinated service members and enforcing the vaccine requirement against COVID-19 on Thursday.

American Military News reported that Trump-appointed Judge Matthew W. McFarland of Ohio's Southern District granted a **temporary**

restraining order after service members sued the Air Force Secretary to provide religious exemptions to the COVID-19 vaccine mandate.

“McFarland’s ruling grants class status in a class action lawsuit to Airmen, Space Force Guardians, Air National Guardsmen and Air Force Academy and Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) cadets who submitted a religious accommodation request for the vaccine mandate from Sept. 1, 2021, to the present, and who were confirmed by an Air Force Chaplain as having had a sincerely held religious belief, and who either had their requests denied or still-pending accommodations,” the news outlet reported.

“The Court issues a TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER prohibiting Defendants from enforcing the vaccine mandate against any Class Member, to expire 14 days from the entry of this Order,” McFarland wrote in his ruling.

Judge McFarland ordered the Defendants to write a 10-page supplemental brief by July 21, 2022, explaining why he should not extend the temporary restraining order.

Back in April, Judge Matthew McFarland granted an **order to block the military temporarily** from disciplining 18 U.S. Air Force officers, airmen, and reservists, including 11 who currently or recently served at Wright-Patterson in Dayton, until their lawsuit is resolved.

More from **American Military News**:

As of the Air Force’s **latest vaccination statistics** posted Tuesday, 6,803 members were denied religious accommodation requests, while 2,847 requests remain pending, and only 104 were approved. Approximately 2.9%

of the Air Force's entire ranks remain unvaccinated. The service has already kicked out 834 members.

Mat Staver, the founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel – a religious freedom organization that has been supporting the Air Force plaintiffs in their lawsuit – said, “This is a great decision that grants protection for the religious freedom for all Air Force personnel from Joe Biden’s unlawful COVID shot mandate.”

“No service member should be required to choose between service to the country and service to God. Liberty Counsel will be pursuing class-wide protection for the remaining branches of the military,” Staver added.

Daniel Schmid, an attorney for Liberty Counsel, told American Military News that Liberty Counsel is aware of service members within the lawsuit class who have begun to receive their separation packages but that no service members in the class have hit their separation dates and that the judge’s order will pause those separations for now.

Schmid also said McFarland’s decision to grant a temporary restraining order is an indicator that the plaintiffs can expect him to grant a longer preliminary injunction soon that could last for the duration of their lawsuit against the Air Force.

The Gateway Pundit reported earlier this month that the United States Air Force began issuing its first cuts, including a highly-decorated, 19-year veteran Master Sergeant named Nick Kupper.

In an appearance with Tucker Carlson on Wednesday, Kupper blasted Biden’s “illegal” mandates and warned that tens of thousands of other military members are facing the same fate for refusing the vaccine –

Unbelievably, as much as 10% of the entire US military could get the ax, according to Kupper.

Watch the video below:

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Jim Hoft is the founder and editor of The Gateway Pundit, one of the top conservative news outlets in America. Jim was awarded the Reed Irvine Accuracy in Media Award in 2013 and is the proud recipient of the Breitbart Award for Excellence in Online Journalism from the Americans for Prosperity Foundation in May 2016.

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