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MTN is the latest company in South Africa to issue a vaccine mandate. Picture: Kim Ludbrook / EPA

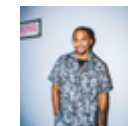
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Society walks tight rope on

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MTN Group will impose mandatory vaccinations for its employees from January

By Reuters  Dec 6, 2021



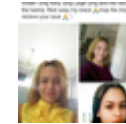
JOHANNESBURG - Africa's biggest telecoms service provider MTN Group said on Monday that it would be enforcing mandatory Covid-19 vaccinations for its employees from January, the latest company in South Africa to issue a vaccine mandate.

Many South African companies have opted for mandatory vaccination to ensure a safe workplace environment, but that has opened them up to potential legal challenges.

MTN's move follows President Cyril Ramaphosa's announcement last month that the government was considering making Covid-19 shots compulsory for citizens to access certain places and activities.

Business lobby groups have supported the move although one of them, Business Unity SA, said without providing specific details that it was expecting legal challenges and was seeking legal opinion to help companies enforce the vaccine mandates.

South Africa's biggest trade union federation, Cosatu, last month said that its position regarding compulsory vaccination had "evolved", and it now supported



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South Africa is experiencing a surge in coronavirus infections driven by the new variant Omicron, first detected in the country.

This has prompted a widespread demand for vaccination in the country and the continent where the pace of inoculation has been one of the slowest in the world.

"MTN Group's new vaccine policy is a measure to meet MTN's legal obligations in regard to providing a safe workplace," MTN said in a statement.

"It (vaccine mandate) also recognises the right of employees to apply to be exempted from the policy and/or refuse vaccination on certain clearly defined grounds," it said, adding that staff who do not have a valid reason for not getting vaccinated will be laid off.

REUTERS

VACCINES

4TH WAVE

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