



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Real Estate Industry Group and Building Service Workers' Union Reach Agreement on Rules for COVID-19 Vaccine Mandates and Extending Recall Rights for Commercial Cleaners**

*A Memorandum of Agreement Between RAB and SEIU 32BJ Outlines How Mandates May Be Implemented with Protections for Workers*

**New York** -- The Realty Advisory Board on Labor Relations (RAB), the multi-employer association representing the city's real estate industry, and SEIU 32BJ, the union representing 85,000 building service workers in the city, today issued a comprehensive Memorandum of Agreement covering rules for implementing COVID-19 vaccine requirements for staff working in most city buildings.

The agreement, which would cover thousands of commercial and residential properties in the city, sets the process and safeguards which must be followed in the event a site or an employer intends to implement a COVID-19 vaccine mandate.

"Vaccinations are the best way to stop the spread of COVID-19 and we are proud to once again partner with 32BJ on an agreement that keeps New York safe and moving forward," said **Howard Rothschild, President of the Realty Advisory Board on Labor Relations**. "The rules we've set forth for vaccine mandates will protect employees, tenants, residents and visitors at thousands of commercial and residential buildings across the city."

"As the spread of COVID-19, especially the Delta variant, continues to affect how our city's commercial and residential buildings operate, we are glad to once again partner with employers in the RAB to lay out with clarity how we can proceed in the coming months to keep

all New Yorkers safe, and building service workers safe, while we keep our city moving," said **SEIU 32BJ President Kyle Bragg**. "Our workers have proudly and steadfastly served on the front lines of the pandemic for almost two years, and will continue to do so no matter what comes. It was important to provide guidance and protections for the people who service our city's buildings as they navigate the vaccination process."

The agreement requires employers that wish to impose a mandate to collect employees' vaccination status information, giving employees a week to respond to the request for information on vaccination status. It also states that if and when employers seek to mandate vaccination, employees will have at least four weeks' notice to get their first shot before the mandate goes into effect.

In addition, the agreement stipulates that employees who are not vaccinated by the time a mandate goes into effect, and have no pending vaccination appointments or an approved religious or medical exemption, will have the choice of one of the following; an unpaid leave of absence for up to four months, a furlough for up to six months, or separation from employment. Employees who are placed on leave may return to work if they are vaccinated within the four months, and employees who opt for the six month furlough will be eligible for recall if the mandate at their worksite is lifted or they become vaccinated.

As well, the agreement covers: an extension of recall rights for employees in commercial properties who have been laid off, from October 1, 2021, through March 1, 2022; continuing collaboration between the employers and the union to provide education and information on vaccination access; continuing protections related to use of PPE.

The full text of the MOA can be found [here](#).

The RAB and SEIU 32BJ have come together on several agreements throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to address work conditions and worker protections, for example on the use of PPE. The latest of these agreements in July covered how employers can gather information on vaccination status, rules and procedures around COVID-19 testing, and the process to negotiate mandate requests at some locations.

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#### **About The Realty Advisory Board on Labor Relations, Inc., (RAB)**

The Realty Advisory Board on Labor Relations (RAB) was formed in 1933 as an organization through which employers in the building service industry could bargain with unions. The RAB represents building owners in one of the most unionized industries in New York City and its building service workers are among one of the highest paid in the country.

#### **About 32BJ Service Employees International Union (SEIU)**

With 175,000 members in 12 states and Washington, DC, including 85,000 in New York, SEIU 32BJ is the largest property services union in the country.