



Written by [Jessica Marie Baumgartner](#) on April 14, 2021

## “No Vaccine = No Entry” for Buffalo Bills Fans

For months now, concerns over vaccines and vaccine passports have been center-stage in the politicization of the COVID-19 pandemic. With New York’s [Excelsior Pass](#) currently in use, Buffalo Bills games at Highmark Stadium will only be accessible to those who have received a COVID [vaccine](#). This new requirement will also include KeyBank Center, the home arena of the Buffalo Sabres NHL team, and may serve to further alienate fans at a time when sports events are becoming less entertaining and more divisive.



AP Images

Erie County executive Mark Poloncarz (a Democrat) plainly said, “there is no God-given right to attend a football game.” His statement reflects the argument that private businesses can require individuals to prove they have been vaccinated before allowing entry, but this is in direct violation of HIPAA laws that protect an individual’s right to medical privacy, including privacy regarding his medical records.

When questioned in an April 13 press conference on being able fill the stadium if fans stay away out of reluctance to get the vaccine, Poloncarz said, “I want to see that stadium full, I know the Bills want to see that stadium full. We want to return fans back to the stadium. That’s why the county supports returning all fans to the stadium and [hockey] arena for this fall.... We know there’s a way to do it. We know there’s a way to ensure it. That’s that all fans and staff are fully vaccinated.” Poloncarz indicated that the city plans to use the Excelsior Pass to make this a reality.

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While the Biden administration has indicated that it will not consider a federal vaccine passport mandate, each state is handling the tracking and administering of vaccines differently. As it stands, Democrat-led states are more inclined to require vaccines and vaccine passports, whiel Republican-led, conservative states are beginning to legislate against vaccine mandates. Florida most recently ended vaccine-only seating for Miami Heat home games. This is due to an executive order signed by Governor Ron DeSantis declaring that “businesses in Florida are prohibited from requiring patrons or customers to provide any documentation certifying COVID-19 vaccination or post-transmission recovery to gain access to, entry upon, or service from the business.”

Local politics — whether conservative or liberal — seem to be the determining factor as to how medical records and individual rights are considered when it comes to sports.



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