

Wizz Air gives flight crews December deadline for COVID jab

Wizz Air is to require all its flights crews to be vaccinated against coronavirus by December, but is yet to clarify if those who refuse face dismissal.

The Hungary-based airline, which serves 11 UK airports including Birmingham and Luton, said the decision was taken on health and safety grounds and to ensure the “smooth” operation of services over the long term.

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It is understood to be the first European carrier to take such measures – following the likes of United in the US, which is facing a backlash over its demand that all employees are jabbed against [COVID-19](#) by October.

It has told those who refuse they face the prospect of losing their job, and [warned a week ago](#) it was to charge unvaccinated staff up to \$200 (£146) extra per month to cover increased health insurance costs.

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Wizz said that in “special cases”, some staff would be allowed to take “regular” antigen or PCR tests instead.

But the company is yet to respond to questions from Sky News on the potential penalties facing pilots or crew who refuse to be vaccinated.

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It also did not explain the circumstances of job exemptions.

Chief executive Jozsef Varadi said: "At Wizz Air, our number one priority is the health and safety of our passengers and employees.

"We have a responsibility to protect crew and passengers on board by mitigating the risks of COVID-19, and vaccines play a vital role in this."



Image:

Wizz Air boss Jozsef Varadi wants to protect the airline's operations from future pandemic disruption

Wizz, which is listed in London, is among airlines looking to fight back from the effects of the pandemic, including travel restrictions and a slump in demand for foreign excursions.

British Airways has taken the position that getting vaccinated is a personal choice for its staff, while easyJet is encouraging its crews to have jabs but not ordering them to do so.

The conciliation service Acas says the only UK law that requires people to have the vaccine applies to all staff in registered care homes in England.

They must be vaccinated, unless medically exempt, from 11 November.