

UCLA Doctor ‘Willing to Lose Everything’ Escorted from Work for Refusing COVID Vaccine

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An anesthesiologist at UCLA Health in California who has not shied away from airing his suspicions about COVID-19 vaccines was escorted out of his workplace this week for refusing to get vaccinated in defiance of a statewide and employer mandate.

Dr. Christopher Rake is seen in a video appearing to record himself as another man escorts him out of the UCLA Medical Plaza in Westwood on Monday.

“This is what happens when you stand up for freedom and when you show up to work, willing to work, despite being unvaccinated, and this is the price you have to pay sometimes,” Rake is heard saying in the video posted Tuesday by The Beverly Hills Courier staff writer Samuel Braslow. “But what they don’t realize is that I’m willing to go lose everything — job, paycheck, freedom, even my life for this cause.”

Rake concludes his video with a message for viewers: “Be well. United we stand, divided we fall.”

UCLA anesthesiologist Dr. Chris Rake, a COVID-19 vaccine mandate opponent, was escorted out of the UCLA medical plaza yesterday and placed on unpaid administrative leave for refusing to get vaccinated or request an exemption.

“I’m willing to go lose everything...even my life.” pic.twitter.com/7AxUX4uyeF

— Samuel Braslow (@SamBraslow) [October 6, 2021](#)

UCLA Health, which includes several hospitals in the Los Angeles region, requires all active employees working in-person to be vaccinated against COVID-19 or receive an exemption in accordance with University of California policy and a state public health order issued on Aug. 5.

The order states all health care workers in California are required to have received their second shot of the two-dose Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or the one-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine, by Sept. 30.

“Those out of compliance are subject to progressive discipline, including restricting access to work sites and being placed on leave,” a UCLA spokesperson said in a statement to McClatchy News.

All UCLA Health employees are also required to show records of vaccination or “laboratory evidence of immunity” for measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, hepatitis B and Tdap.

Public health officials have repeatedly urged Americans to get vaccinated against COVID-19, saying the shots are safe and greatly reduce the risk of spreading the virus, hospitalization and death.

As of Oct. 7, Rake’s profile remains active on the health system’s website.

On Aug. 29, Rake attended an anti-vaccination rally in Santa Monica, according to the Los Angeles Times, and told an excited crowd that “they want to force a vaccination or medication or treatment into my body that I don’t want. So they’re telling me, ‘Take the jab or we take your job.’ And I’m here to say ‘no. That’s not OK.’”

These comments do not represent the views of UCLA Health. Unvaccinated people are more likely to contract COVID-19 & we encourage employees to be vaccinated. We adhere to the state public health order requiring health care workers to be vaccinated or undergo regular testing.

— UCLA Health (@UCLAHealth) [August 31, 2021](#)

UCLA took to Twitter two days later to respond:

“These comments do not represent the views of UCLA Health. Unvaccinated people are more likely to contract COVID-19 & we encourage employees to be vaccinated. We adhere to the state public health order requiring health care workers to be vaccinated or undergo regular testing.”

Other UCLA faculty and staff have expressed their frustrations over Rake’s comments.

“I think it’s mind boggling that a physician at a world-class institution would go to such a rally and use their name as a physician to directly contradict public health,” Dr. Anna Yap, an emergency medicine resident physician at UCLA, told the Daily Bruin, the university’s student newspaper.

Dr. Nina Shapiro, a professor of head and neck surgery at UCLA’s School of Medicine, also shared her concerns with the paper.

“We as a health care community ... were some of the earliest in the country to have access to [the vaccine],” Shapiro told the Daily Bruin. “To twist that into a negative - especially when you know one of the main reasons why we are in this disastrous delta [variant-driven surge] is due to slow vaccine acceptance in the community - and spewing this misinformation is frankly deadly.”

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Featured image: Dr. Christopher Rake, an anesthesiologist at UCLA Health, took a video of himself as he was being escorted out of his workplace for refusing to get a COVID-19 vaccine despite a state mandate for health care workers. A VIDEO POSTED BY THE BEVERLY HILLS COURIER STAFF WRITER SAMUEL BRASLOW

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