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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

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A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - COVID-19 VACCINATION NOT REQUIRED  
FOR ACCESS TO STATE OR PRIVATE BUSINESSES ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Place, Chippendale, and Quattrocchi

Date Introduced: February 02, 2022

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 23 of the General Laws entitled "HEALTH AND SAFETY" is hereby  
2 amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 97

4 COVID-19 VACCINATION NOT REQUIRED FOR ACCESS TO STATE OR PRIVATE

5 BUSINESSES ACT

6 **23-97-1. Findings.**

7 The general assembly finds:

8 (1) That on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization designated the novel  
9 coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak as a public health emergency of international concern.

10 (2) On March 9, 2020, the governor of the State of Rhode Island issued a declaration of  
11 emergency and over the course of several months issued numerous continuations of that declaration  
12 of emergency.

13 (3) The declaration of emergency ordered the closure of businesses, parks, and even private  
14 businesses, with the result of restricting the populace's freedoms.

15 (4) The legislature finds that the re-opening of businesses is vital to the state's economy  
16 and that access to said businesses, and public buildings, is paramount to a free society and the re-  
17 normalization of human interaction.

18 (5) The legislature further finds that every citizen of the State of Rhode Island is protected

1 and has the right to confidentiality of their health care records pursuant to chapter 37.3 of title 5.

2 (6) Additionally, each and every citizen is protected by the United States Constitution and  
3 the Constitution of Rhode Island to make their own health care decisions. Decisions that have been  
4 upheld and reaffirmed by our United States Supreme Court and the supreme court of the State of  
5 Rhode Island.

6 **23-97-2. Access to public buildings and private enterprises not to be denied.**

7 (a) Neither the state, nor any of its agencies, nor any city or town or any political  
8 subdivisions, nor any organization that receives funding, tax incentives or subsidies from the state,  
9 its agencies or political subdivisions, shall require proof of a COVID-19 vaccination before  
10 allowing entry of any individual into their building, business, or on their premises, whether inside  
11 or outside, or for any other purpose unless such requirements for other vaccines were in common  
12 practice prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the vaccine has received full approval for use from  
13 the FDA.

14 (b) The director of the department of business regulation and the licensing authorities of  
15 the several cities and towns are hereby authorized to deny or revoke any business operating license  
16 to any business violating this chapter.

17 (c) Nothing contained herein prevents a person denied access to any public building or  
18 private business covered under this section from seeking civil damages and injunctive relief against  
19 any public or private business that violates this chapter.

20 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - COVID-19 VACCINATION NOT REQUIRED  
FOR ACCESS TO STATE OR PRIVATE BUSINESSES ACT

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1           This act would prohibit state, municipal agencies and any political subdivisions thereof and  
2 private businesses from requiring proof of a COVID-19 vaccine before permitting any individual  
3 from entering the building or business unless that business precluded access due to other vaccines  
4 in common practice prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and such vaccines have received approval  
5 for use from the FDA. Licensing authorities would be permitted to deny and/or revoke business  
6 operating licenses of violators.

7           This act would take effect upon passage.

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