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Judge dismisses firefighters' challenge to vaccine mandate



Outside court, Attorney Joseph Penza and RI State Association of Firefighters President Joseph Andriole spoke with reporters, as did Attorney Vincent Ragosta (right), representing three communities. Photos by Steve Klamkin WPRO News

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — A Rhode Island judge on Tuesday dismissed a legal challenge by firefighters to block a state requirement for health care workers to get a coronavirus vaccine by Oct. 1 or risk losing their licenses.

The Rhode Island Association of Firefighters argued that the state Department of Health's mandate violated state law that requires the negotiation of terms and conditions of employment, and violated the firefighters' collective bargaining rights, The Providence Journal reported.

They sought an injunction barring enforcement of the rule.

The health care worker vaccine mandate applies to emergency medical technicians, and many firefighters are EMTs licensed through the health department.

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