

# Public Health

There continue to be many who are concerned about the use of vaccine mandates to turn the tide on the exponentially expanding COVID-19 viral pandemic.

Preventing **COVID** viral infection is a much better strategy than passively allowing **COVID** coronavirus infection to spread through the population. *Prevention of **COVID** infection can be accomplished with a high degree of success by using the available vaccines. If an infection does occur *after **COVID** vaccination, the infection is much less likely to result in hospitalization or death.**

Please understand that the **COVID-19** pandemic is a **Public Health** issue: Since the **COVID-19** virus, especially the new *delta* variant, is highly contagious, the issue extends beyond the personal decision of "*that's what I want to do*" into the public domain of *protecting other people from being infected by a viral pathogen* that one individual may be carrying and spreading to other individuals.

As an example of an infected (and infectious) person who was not allowed to "do what she wanted to do", Mary Mallon was an asymptomatic carrier (in her gallbladder) of *Salmonella typhi*, which is infectious and causes typhoid fever. She chose and preferred to continue to work in her job as a cook (and to continue to spread typhoid fever to others who could become sick and die). She was not permitted to do so, however, because of the public health implications of this.



Mary Mallon, also called Typhoid Mary THE NEW YORK AMERICAN

The **COVID-19** pandemic is a public health issue in addition to being a "*personal choice*", "*freedom*", "*my decision*" issue. For example, a nurse who works with patients in a hospital with a high likelihood of spreading **COVID-19** to her patients is a public health issue.

Viral infections, such as measles, mumps, polio, smallpox, rubella, etc. have been suppressed within the population by vaccination. That is how it's done. *Treating* a viral infection such as **COVID-19**, *once a person has been infected*, is much more difficult, and *often requires expensive and prolonged hospitalization*, which *overwhelms the healthcare system* - again, a public health issue.