

Forcing or coercing someone in any way to take a vaccine or any medication violates the Nuremberg Code established in 1947 after the terrible acts that took place by the Nazi regime. The first of its ten points begins as follows:

“The voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential. This means that the person involved should have legal capacity to give consent; should be so situated as to be able to exercise **free power of choice, without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, overreaching, or other ulterior form of constraint or coercion**; and should have sufficient knowledge and comprehension of the elements of the subject matter involved as to enable him to make an understanding and enlightened decision.”

This code of ethics must be upheld in any civilized country. The COVID-19 vaccines were not tested for long-term effects and thus were and are experimental. Each person should choose whether to take the vaccine or not. Future vaccines may have similar experimental natures or may be carefully tested. Regardless, each person must have the right to accept or refuse the vaccine without any coercion, or penalty.

***Medical or religious discrimination:*** People decline COVID-19 vaccines for medical reasons or sincerely held ethical, moral, or religious beliefs. The valued and valuable ethical and legal traditions of the United States and Maryland are clear that it not acceptable to discriminate on the basis of medical condition/disability or on the basis of religion/religious belief.

***Weakening of medical privacy:*** Doctor/medical practitioner-patient confidentiality is legally protected and essential for a myriad of reasons, and the privacy & protection of medical records is also important. The COVID-19 passports and other COVID requirements erode or remove these legal protections.

***Future implications:*** COVID passports set the groundwork for a two-tiered society, in which persons who have received vaccinations may live normal lives (including work, schooling, right to assembly, and access to various services) and persons who have not received vaccinations are denied those rights. Do we want to live in such a society? Recall history, our worst moments and our greatest achievements! Does it not always go badly when one group is dehumanized and denied rights based on a physical or religious characteristic? Are we not proudest of those movements which restore those rights?

***Right to bodily integrity:*** Everyone has the right to bodily integrity, which includes the right to decline medical interventions. There is some serious philosophical inconsistency among the legislation under consideration this session. Bills to expand access to abortion and to enshrine abortion in Maryland law are under debate, underpinned by a ‘my body, my choice’ argument. Persons who wish to decline COVID vaccines are not being offered the same respect for ‘my body, my choice’! You can’t have it both ways! (The correct way of looking at this is: A woman has the right to bodily integrity and autonomy over her own body. The developing baby in her womb is someone else’s body. Everyone has the right to maintain bodily integrity by declining medical interventions to which they do not give informed consent apart from coercion.)

***Potential for Misuse of the MyIR Mobile app:*** Like any app, this one is subject to technological failure and hacking. Let’s use caution before mandating it. Additionally, while it is currently being used and proposed to track vaccination records, its use could easily be expanded to illegal and unjust overreaching surveillance of American citizens by the government and the development of a Communist-style social credit system. Please review the work of Reggie Littlejohn to learn more about this.

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