

# BELL NUNNALLY PARTNER ALANA ACKELS ON MARKETWATCH REVIEWS ISSUE OF UI ELIGIBILITY FOR WORKERS FIRED AFTER REFUSING COVID-19 VACCINE

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**Bell Nunnally Partner Alana K. Ackels is quoted in the *MarketWatch* article “If your employer fires you because you won’t get the COVID vaccine, don’t expect to collect unemployment.” The piece explores whether workers who refuse an employer-mandated vaccine, such as the ones for COVID-19, can collect unemployment insurance (UI) benefits after being terminated.**

The author notes that in most states an employee has to attest/prove for UI benefit eligibility that they are out for work through no fault of their own. Ackels commented, “This often means that they are let go due to a lack of work....Typically, an employee who is terminated for failing to comply with company policies is not eligible for unemployment benefits, which would include refusing to comply with a company's COVID-19 prevention policies, masking requirements or vaccine requirements.”

Ackels added the caveat that individual states determine UI benefit “eligibility requirements such that, depending on the circumstances, employees fired for refusing to get the COVID-19 vaccine could be eligible for unemployment benefits.” The article notes that in Texas a broad eligibility policy is not in place at present, with the Texas Workforce Commissioner making determinations on a case-by-case basis.

The piece ends with Ackels cautioning, “Businesses concerned about being charged for unemployment benefits should check the latest guidance from their state unemployment commissions to confirm whether an employee fired for refusing the vaccine would be eligible for benefits.”

To read the full article, please click [here](#).

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