

11 of 15 NYC restaurants not enforcing vaccine mandate

Will Feuer



SoHo's Mercer Kitchen was one of only 4 restaurants included in the investigation that asked to see proof of vaccination. Michael Sofronski

Most of the 15 Manhattan restaurants visited by undercover sleuths this week were not enforcing Mayor Bill de Blasio's city-wide [COVID-19 vaccine mandate](#) for people dining inside, according to a new investigation.

Only four of the 15 restaurants asked reporters for ID along with proof of vaccination before seating them inside,

according to a [segment from Inside Edition](#).

At an Upper East Side location of the BurgerFi chain, the restaurant let a producer for the show order and eat inside without showing proof of vaccination — even though the eatery had small signs at each table that read “show me your vax.”

When confronted the following day about the lax enforcement, a manager of the store said, “I’m shocked right now, not gonna lie. I’m shocked because I know that I’ve definitely been asking everyone.”

BurgerFi is now investigating the matter, a representative for the company told The Post.

“After learning about the incident, we immediately began an investigation, and will continue to work with all BurgerFi locations to ensure all proper steps are taken to abide by vaccination dining regulations and policies appropriate to each restaurant location,” the spokesperson said.

Hummus Kitchen, an Upper East Side Mediterranean restaurant, also didn’t ask to see proof of vaccination and matching ID when visited by an Inside Edition producer.

Among the four restaurants that did cooperate with the order was SoHo’s Mercer Kitchen, where a hostess asked to see a vaccine card at the door.



BurgerFi on the Upper East Side allowed a producer to eat inside without needing to show proof of vaccination.

Christian Johnston

“Unfortunately, if we don’t have proof, we can’t seat you inside. It’s New York law,” the hostess said.

The city’s vaccine mandate, dubbed the “Key to NYC,” went into effect last month, requiring New Yorkers who want to dine inside restaurants, work out at a gym or attend an indoor concert to [show proof they’ve gotten at least one of their shots](#).

After a roughly one-month grace period, enforcement of the order on businesses [went into effect on Sept. 13](#).



Despite the city-wide mandate requiring eateries to check the vaccination status of inside diners, 11 out of 15 restaurants followed through with the mandate.

Robert Miller

So far, the city has conducted about 5,500 total inspections and issued about 2,200 warnings, according to data from City Hall.

Authorities are continuing to be lax about enforcement, doling out warnings rather than monetary fines, as businesses continue to adjust to the requirement, a city hall official said.

“The truth is that most businesses are already up to speed and doing this right, some need to work on having a written

implementation plan or hanging up their poster or something like that, and everyone's gonna get to the right place soon because businesses want to keep staff and patrons safe from the virus," the official said.

But the order has been met with some backlash, including a [lawsuit from the Big Apple's major municipal unions](#).

"If you want to participate in our society fully, you've got to get vaccinated. It's time," de Blasio has said of the mandate.

De Blasio has said the city could issue \$1,000 for a first offense and \$2,000 for a second to indoor businesses that fail to ensure their venues are off-limits to those who remain unvaccinated.