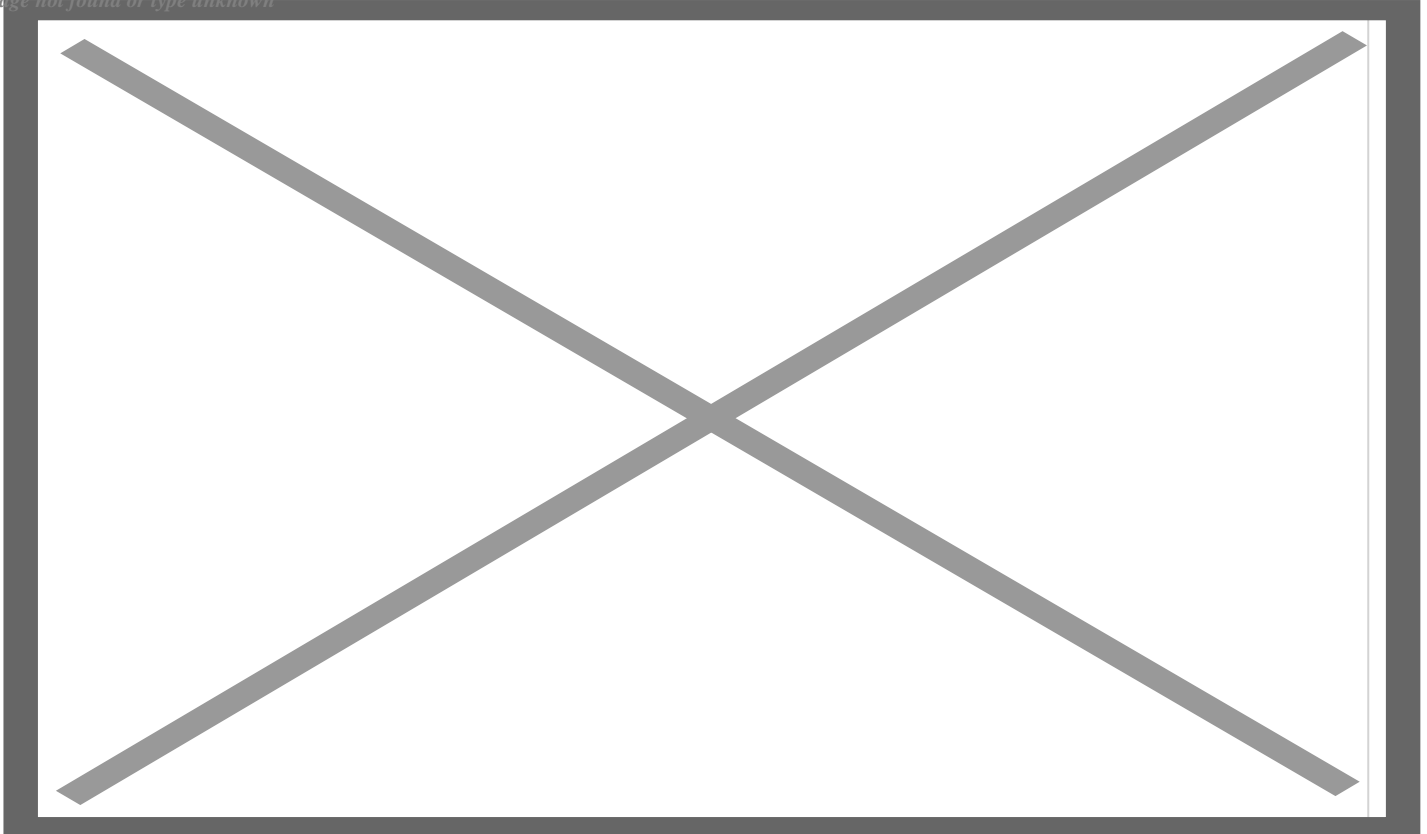


More U.S. Marines purged for refusing COVID jab

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More Marines purged for refusing COVID jab
FILE PHOTO © Carl Court / Getty Images

Washington, January 24 (RHC)-- An additional 45 U.S. Marines have reportedly been kicked out of the service in the past week for refusing to comply with the Pentagon's COVID-19 vaccine mandate, bringing total firings over the jabs to more than 300.

The Marine Corps has taken a tough stand against recalcitrant troops, saying all unvaccinated members who don't have an exemption application or appeal pending are being processed for removal. The latest round of firings brings total discharges over the mandate to 334, according to the U.S. Naval Institute.

There was some confusion over the number of troops discharged last week, after officials "inadvertently counted Marines who had not yet been separated, and Marines who had been separated for other

misconduct,” the USMC spokesman said, according to the Epoch Times.

While more than 600 Marines have been granted administrative or medical exemptions, almost all requests for religious exemptions have been refused. As of last week, only two of 3,212 applications for exemption from the mandate for religious reasons had been approved, the Marines Corps Times reported.

The USMC has been the most aggressive of all military branches in firing members who refuse to get COVID-19 shots. It also has the most job-resistant force, with about 5% of active-duty troops and 13% of reservists still not fully vaccinated.

Active-duty Marines were required to be vaccinated for COVID-19 by November 14, under a Pentagon mandate issued to all branches of the US military in August. Earlier this month, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin tested positive for the virus, but said his symptoms were mild because he was double-vaccinated and boosted, and that the job mandate will remain in effect.

President Joe Biden’s administration continues to face an onslaught of legal challenges to its vaccine mandates. A federal judge in Texas earlier this month ruled in favor of 35 U.S. Navy service members, saying it would be unconstitutional to punish them for seeking a religious exemption to mandatory vaccination.

Last week, the Supreme Court struck down the administration’s order that private-sector employers force their workers to get vaccinated. On Friday, a federal judge in Texas blocked enforcement of the job mandate for federal government employees.

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