



**PRESS RELEASE from
LIBERTY JUSTICE CENTER**

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Judge grants temporary restraining order in case vaccine mandate case; Riverside nurses can't be fired for refusing COVID vaccine

KANKAKEE, Ill. (Oct 25, 2021) — A group of nurses for Riverside Healthcare won an important victory today after a Kankakee County judge said their hospital system cannot fire them yet for refusing to get the COVID vaccine. The nurses were facing termination on Oct. 31 until today's action by Judge Nancy Nicholson.

The nurses filed a lawsuit earlier this month after the healthcare system announced a blanket rejection of any and all exemption requests, in violation of the Illinois Health Care Right of Conscience Act and Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker's executive order. They appeared in court today with their attorneys at the Liberty Justice Center, a national nonprofit law firm.

"Today's ruling marks an important step toward victory for these nurses – and it sends a signal to all Americans about the importance of fighting for your rights," said **Daniel Suhr, managing attorney at the Liberty Justice Center**. "Employers and government officials should take note that forcing people to violate their conscience not only is wrong, it's illegal. No one should be forced to choose between keeping their job and sacrificing their beliefs."

The Temporary Restraining Order will be in place until Nov. 19 when the judge will hold a hearing on the Motion for Preliminary Injunction to offer ongoing protection.

***Panozzo v. Riverside Healthcare* was filed October 13, 2021, in Circuit Court for the Twenty-First Circuit in Kankakee County, Illinois. Case filings are available here:**

<https://libertyjusticecenter.org/media/illinois-nurses>

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The Liberty Justice Center is a nonprofit, public-interest litigation center that fights to protect fundamental constitutional rights. The Liberty Justice Center is best known for its 2018 U.S. Supreme Court victory in *Janus v. AFSCME*. Learn more about the Liberty Justice Center at [LibertyJusticeCenter.org](https://libertyjusticecenter.org).