

Poll: Half of U.S. Military Families Do Not Want COVID-19 Vaccine

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A survey conducted in December 2020 by the Blue Star Families, a non-profit military advocacy organization, found that 53 percent of U.S. military families do not want to get the experimental COVID-19 vaccines being distributed under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) granted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).¹

The survey included a total of 674 respondents representing active-duty families, of which 33 percent said that they would get a COVID-19 vaccine approved by the FDA should it become available for free.² Of the of 53 percent of military families who responded to the survey indicating that they would not get the vaccine, nearly three-quarters cited a distrust of the development process or timeline.³

Kathy Roth-Douquet, CEO of Blue Star Families said that:

*What we've seen is that military families are expressing a lot of concern about the vaccine. We're seeing that people don't have a sense of trust about the vaccine. They have strong concerns about the development process and timeline.*⁴

One military spouse wrote in the comments section of the

survey that, “I am looking for long term placebo controlled studies. I do not want my family, or service members to be guinea pigs.”⁵ About 14 percent of the survey respondents said they remain undecided on whether they would take get the COVID-19 vaccine, with most respondents saying they would like more information of side effects to make that decision.⁶

Jennifer Akin, a Blue Star Families researcher said that Blue Star Families survey is not a scientific poll; however, the results provide a baseline for observing acceptance or reluctance over time.⁷

Most Deployed Troops and National Security Personnel are Declining COVID-19 Vaccines

According to the Pentagon, U.S. troops deployed overseas and those charged with critical national security missions are declining to get vaccinated for COVID-19.⁸ Some 320,000 service members and civilian personnel have been vaccinated, leaving a significant amount of the 769,000 doses available to Department of Defense (DoD) unused.⁹

Pentagon officials said as long as the COVID-19 vaccines are classified as EUA by the FDA and not fully licensed, the DoD cannot mandate service members to take the vaccine.¹⁰ Air Force Brigadier General Paul Friedrichs said that even those personnel responsible for manning America’s nuclear weapons are refusing to get the vaccine. Air Force Global Strike Command spokeswoman Chief Master Sergeant Jill M. LaVoie added:

Because we believe that the COVID-19 vaccine is the important next step to fortifying our forces, we are encouraging our Airmen receive the vaccination but this is a personal decision for each of our Strikers to make.¹¹

LaVoie added, "Our medical professionals will continue to educate our personnel on the vaccination so that they can best make that decision for themselves."¹²