

PETER GIBSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

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Dear Constituents .

Thank you for your email about COVID-status certification and vaccine passports.

I appreciate the arguments against the use of COVID-status certification, but I believe that certification can be a valuable tool in helping to manage the spread of Covid-19.

I welcome the fact that the Government has been working with organisations to encourage voluntary use of the NHS COVID Pass. The NHS COVID Pass provides a way for individuals to prove vaccination status, natural immunity from Covid-19 or a negative test result. Over 200 events and venues have already used the NHS COVID Pass as a condition of entry including at Premier League matches, Reading and Leeds Festivals and the BBC Proms.

Considering the latest data, mandatory use of the NHS COVID Pass will not be introduced at this point – as the Prime Minister has confirmed – but I do not believe that it would be sensible to rule out mandatory use in the future. The Government has said that it would introduce mandatory vaccine-only COVID-status certification, as one of a range of Plan B measures, if the data suggests that action is required to prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS. Unlike last winter when businesses were required to close, this approach would allow businesses to remain fully open while protecting our health service.

I appreciate your concerns about liberties and the use of Covid-status certification but the Government has been clear that it is not mandating the use of certification in any setting at this point. It is instead encouraging use of the NHS Covid Pass in certain venues. I want to take back our freedoms, as we all do, and I believe that use of the NHS COVID Pass in higher risk settings is a socially responsible approach.

Mandatory use of the NHS COVID Pass would also only apply in certain settings, such as nightclubs and other venues where large crowds gather. The Government would seek to provide businesses with at least one week's notice before imposing mandatory certification and exemptions from the NHS COVID Pass would apply to people who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, to those on COVID vaccine trials and to those under the age of 18.

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This is about protecting people in those settings where the virus is most likely to spread, and I believe that double vaccination is the best possible way to do this. Vaccines reduce the risk of infection and, as a result, onward transmission.

We all want this country to be able to enjoy the fruits of our massive vaccination campaign. But to do that we must all remain cautious, and we must continue to get vaccinated.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to contact me and if I can ever be any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

Yours Sincerely
Peter Gibson

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