

# Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

## Vaccine Status: How Companies are Handling the Return to Offices

As omicron cases begin to subside, many are thinking once again about returning to the workplace. Companies are each evaluating what, if any, vaccine policy to have in place for employees. **Cablefax** surveyed some of our industry's companies and asked what protocols they have in place at the moment. Here's what we found:

**AMC Networks:** The company is requiring vaccinations for those in the office, but dealing with exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

**AT&T:** Most management employees were required to be vaccinated by Oct. 11, 2021. CWA-represented employees as well as those repped by IBEW Mobility, Alascom IBEW Local 1547 and Alascom Teamsters Local 959 labor contracts were required to be vaccinated by Feb. 1.

**Breezeline (Atlantic Broadband):** Breezeline is strongly recommending all colleagues whose work requires them to be regularly present in-person either at customer locations or company facilities be vaccinated for COVID-19.

**Cable One:** The Cable One family of brands is not mandating, but strongly encouraging associates to get vaccinated. Those below the manager level receive a \$100 incentive in their paycheck for doing so. Additionally, associates do not have to use sick or vacation time if they have to leave work

to get the vaccine.

**Charter:** The operator is continuing to follow local and state order requirements and strongly encouraging employees to get vaccinated.

**Comcast:** There are some locations, like Comcast's Philadelphia office-based campus where employees must be vaccinated to come into the office. However, there isn't a company-wide vaccination requirement at this time. Comcast has pledged to continue to monitor legal and regulatory requirements and will make adjustments to protocols based on science and medical guidance.

**Cox Communications:** As of Feb. 1, Cox is requiring all employees and contractors to be vaccinated as permitted by applicable law, unless they have received an approved medical or religious exemption. Employees who are granted an accommodation, but who need to work on Cox property or a customer location, will be required to comply with Cox's masking and testing protocols. Cox said it will continue to follow CDC guidelines as well as state and federal regulations, as necessary.

**Discovery, Inc.:** Discovery has mandated the vaccine as a condition of employment where legally possible in the U.S., with limited exemptions for medical and religious reasons.

**Fox Corporation:** Fox does not have a vaccine mandate, though we're told that more than 90% of employees are vaccinated. Daily testing is required for all unvaccinated employees.

We asked the Most Powerful Women what female empowerment book they think every woman should read.

They had a ton of recommendations. Here are a few of the books on their shelves.

Visit [CablefaxWomen.com](https://www.cablefax.com) for complete Q&As and more book recommendations.



**Nexstar:** With operations in 116 different markets, Nexstar is asking individual television stations and media businesses to follow the local, state, and federal guidelines applicable in their particular market.

**Paramount (ViacomCBS):** The company is requiring vaccines for all U.S. employees.

**TEGNA:** Requires all employees to be fully vaccinated (as defined by the CDC) against the coronavirus.

**T-Mobile:** T-Mobile has given employees until April 2 to be fully vaccinated, saying they will face termination if they do not. Employees are expected to have had their first dose by Feb. 21. Field technicians and store employees are not subject to the mandate, according to reports.

**WOW!:** WOW! remains in a remote work environment for non-essential employees and voluntarily, but strongly, encourages all employees to be vaccinated. While not currently required, starting in January of this year, the company asked all employees to voluntarily upload photos of their vaccination cards and vaccination status. Customer-facing employees are required to wear PPE in accordance with CDC guidelines. WOW! continues to evaluate its policies and will update them as needed to comply with future mandates and/or changes in CDC guidelines.

#### ROSENWORCEL TALKS ALARMAGEDDON, MAPS

With **AT&T** set to shut down its 3G network on Tuesday, the security alarm system is sounding the, er, alarm. The industry has asked the **FCC** to delay the move, saying there are many products that still rely on the old standard. On Friday, FCC Chair *Jessica Rosenworcel* downplayed the notion that there will be problems. “We’ve ... been coordinating with our colleagues at the Department of Justice, and we have worked with AT&T specifically to make sure that there are roaming practices available for Internet of Things devices so that devices other than strictly your phones will continue to work after the shutdown,” she told reporters. “I think we’ve made terrific progress. And I think I think we are on course for this transition to take place with limited disruption.” **T-Mobile** is set to shutdown its 3G service this summer, and **Verizon** has set Dec. 31 as its shutoff date. Rosenworcel reminded everyone that this isn’t unprecedented, citing the shutdown of 2G networks. “These kinds of transitions happen from time to time as we need to reuse our scarce resources, which are our airwaves, and make sure that they’re modern and can take advantage of the newest technology,” she said. – While Hill expectations are that the **FCC**’s broadband maps should become available this summer, the agency’s chief said the timing hinges on **GAO** approval. GAO has 100 days to review the FCC’s award for the contract, which ends on March 1. “It’s my hope that they give us the sign off on that date,” she said. Meanwhile, it doesn’t sound like

Rosenworcel believes the **FAA** Administrator’s resignation next month will have much impact on the FAA and wireless carriers reaching a permanent solution to ease concerns over possible interference from using C-band frequencies for 5G. “I’ve long been optimistic that our 5G deployment can safely coexist with aviation technologies. In fact, already, within the lower portion of the C-band, we have had deployments that reach more than 100 million consumers. And the FAA has been able to clear 90% of the United States commercial fleet,” she said.

#### FTC ISSUES REFUNDS FOR DECEPTIVE ANTENNAS

The **FTC** is refunding customers who bought indoor TV antennas and signal amplifiers that were marketed online with misleading claims that the products would allow them to cancel their cable service and still receive those channels for free. Products sold online fell under the TV Scout, SkyWire, SkyLink and Tilt TV brand names. A March 2021 complaint stated **Wellco, Inc.** as well as its CEO *George Moscone* violated the FTC Act with the deceptive performance claims as well as with the creation of web pages that looked like objective news reports, among other things. More than 40,000 people are receiving refunds of \$14.14, totaling up to more than \$580,000.

#### MOFFETT NATHANSON DOWNGRADES ALTICE USA

**MoffettNathanson** slashed **Altice USA** to “Neutral” with a price target of \$15. It came one day after the firm issued a report keeping it at “Buy” and \$33, suggesting the company’s problems were fixable but would take time. “Wrong. Wrong story. Wrong time. Wrong call (on our part) to have stuck around too long. Just... wrong. There’s a time for highly levered fix-it stories. This isn’t that time,” Friday’s new research note declared. “With interest rates rising and risk appetites falling, Altice USA’s ‘just be patient’ message is uniquely ill-suited to the times. Frankly, we’re frustrated with ourselves for having done a poor job ‘reading the room.’ Altice USA is the wrong stock for the times.” **MoffettNathanson** analysts do continue to think Altice can be fixed, particularly through legacy Suddenlink, but said they were off the mark in their estimation of the market’s willingness to wait for it to happen.

#### FCC EXAMINES RURAL HEALTH PROGRAM REFORMS

The **FCC** adopted an FNPRM Friday during its open meeting that seeks comment on proposed reforms to the Rural Health Care Program, an initiative offering funding to health care providers for broadband services. Through its two subprograms, the Healthcare Connect Fund Program and the Telecommunications Program, the RHC Program supports broadband connectivity to eligible providers and subsidies for the difference between urban and rural rates for telecommunications services. The Commission is seeking comment on multiple potential changes to the programs including options for determining support in the Telecom Program and revisions to forms to improve consistency of data,

a proposal to reform RHC funding cap rules and a proposal to simplify invoicing between the Telecom Program and the Healthcare Connect Fund Program to better protect against waste, fraud and abuse. Other actions taken during the meeting include the approval of an order requiring **Aureon Network Services** to provide data needed to determine refunds to be offered for the illegal rates the company charged for transmitting telecommunications traffic. A \$45 million fine was also proposed against **Interstate Brokers of America**, a company that allegedly made more than 514,000 unlawful robocalls to sell health insurance.

**RATINGS**

**Fox News** again emerged as the big winner in primetime and total day last week, scoring 2.382 million viewers and 1.498 million viewers in the respective time slots. But it had some new company in the winner circle. The Winter Olympics helped **USA Network** take the second primetime slot with 1.533 million, followed by **MSNBC** with 1.025 million, **INSP** with 933,000 and **Hallmark Channel** with 895,000. Across total day, USA stayed in the second spot with 948,000 viewers. MSNBC took third with 621,000, **HGTV** came in fourth with 517,000 and Hallmark rounded out the top five with 500,000 viewers. Tuesday's season finale of "Vencer el Pasado" on **Univision** averaged 2.1 million total viewers P2+, 829,000 A18-49 and 309,000 A18-34. It delivered double-digit audience growth compared to its premiere telecast among all three demographics, scoring 33% growth in total viewers P2+, 38% for A18-49 and 28% for A18-34.

**PROGRAMMING**

"Martin" will run a 30th anniversary reunion special on **BET+** to reflect on the show's origin and development. Hosted by **Affion Crockett**, the special will premiere later this year. – "Ghost Adventures" will return March 10 on **discovery+** with eight new episodes. The crew investigates various locations like the childhood home of author **John Steinbeck** and the Los Angeles Police Museum.

**EDITOR'S NOTE**

**Cablefax Daily** will not publish on Monday in observance of Presidents' Day.

**CABLEFAX DASHBOARD**

**Twitter Hits**

Shirley Bloomfield @sbloomfield15

What are the best treats this V-day? #broadband conversation hearts from the folks at @rgilbertdxtelnt #FiberHomes.com, of course! So excited about our #SmartRuralCommunities partnership to highlight #fiber connected real estate in rural markets! #FiberDelivers for sure



Jim Maiella @jimmaiella

"Simply put, we are not trying to be something for everyone. We are instead trying to be everything to someone." AMC Networks' CEO Matt Blank on the company's targeted streaming strategy, on Q4 earnings call reporting record company revenue and 9 million streaming subscribers.

davidshpardson @davidshpardson

.@BrendanCarrFCC is using a @cspan mug during today's meeting. I can confirm @cspan makes a solid mug



**Research**

(Source: [Identity Theft Resource Center's 2021 Annual Data Breach Report](#))

- > The overall number of data compromises in 2021 (1,862) was up more than 68% compared to 2020.
- > Data events that involved sensitive information were up slightly compared to 2020 (83% vs. 80%), but were still well below the high of 95% set in 2017.
- > The actual number of victims dropped 5% as identity criminals focused more on specific data types rather than the mass acquisition of data.

**Up Ahead**

**FEB 28-MARCH 3:** [Mobile World Congress Barcelona](#)

**MARCH 3:** [FCC Digital Health Symposium](#), Virtual

**MARCH 3-4:** [NCTC IdeaXchange](#), Nashville

**MARCH 11:** [The FAXIES 2022 Entry Deadline](#)

**MARCH 20-23:** [WICT Network Senior Executive Summit](#), Stanford University

**Quotable**

"I'll take a second and talk about the Roku TV program. It's been hugely successful for us. This is the program where we designed the reference designs for televisions and then we work with manufacturing and brand partners to build and sell those TVs, and then we work with the retailers to help merchandise them as well... In terms of us making our own TV, there are rumors around that. We don't speculate on rumors. I'll just point out that the Roku TV program is a big area of investment for us... we're successful not just because we have a great purpose-built operating system for TV, but we also are a great partner for manufacturers of TVs. We offer a full-stack solution and are really very helpful for them in growing their smart TV market share."

– Roku CEO Anthony Wood on the company's 4Q21 earnings call