

Spotlight on a Gold Member



A COOPERATIVE GALLERY Placerville, California



Gold Country Artists gallery, founded in 1992, and located in historic downtown Placerville, California, is home to more than 40 award-winning artists. With two stories of the finest jewelry, paintings, photography, and more under one roof, it's no surprise that the gallery was awarded 2020's Best Art Gallery and Best Fine Jewelry Store by the readers of the Mountain Democrat and Style Magazine.

Visitors to the gallery are awed by the variety of artwork inspired by the forests, mountains, and waterways of El Dorado, the Sierra Nevada

mountains, and Lake Tahoe, often finding photographs and paintings that are lovely reminders of that beauty. Many of the gallery's artists are advocates for nature and the animal world and their profound love and respect is reflected in their work.

Imagine your business, home, or the home of someone you love graced with one of the gorgeous works of art that can be found at Gold Country Artists Gallery. Or for a special someone, perhaps a hand-crafted necklace, bracelet, or earrings designed by one of the

gallery's extraordinary jewelry artists. Gift certificates are also available.

With a constantly rotating selection and a stunning variety of work available, Gold Country Artists Gallery offers fine art at reasonable prices, with literally thousands of choices for gift-giving, or for your own home or business. The gallery at 379 Main Street in Placerville is open daily from noon to 5 o'clock. For more information call the gallery at (530) 642-2944, or visit goldcountryartistsgallery.com, and join us on Facebook and Instagram.

COVID-19 Vaccine: Can It Be Required?

In a recent episode of The Workplace podcast, CalChamber Executive Vice President and General Counsel Erika Frank and employment law expert Jennifer Shaw discuss what employers need to consider before mandating that their employees get the COVID-19 vaccine.

Problems with Mandating the Vaccine

While it is tempting to require that all employees take the COVID-19 vaccine in order to show up for work, Shaw cautions that there are a number of problems which employers must consider.

First, there will be some employees who will have a legitimate reason why they cannot get the vaccine — either for religious reasons or due to medical conditions. These situations will require that the employer commence the interactive process and maintain proper documentation. All of this takes a lot of time, and if half of an employer's workforce asks for a reasonable accommodation, it can be a tremendous undertaking, Shaw explains.

Second, if an employee were

to have a reaction to the vaccine, the employer may be liable for workers' compensation claims because the vaccine was required in order to show up to work.

Third, mandating the vaccine holds morale implications. Some employees may hold strong reservations and opinions regarding the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine and vaccines in general.

"Do you want to create the morale issue that you're going to have by forcing unwilling people to get the vaccine? Now, obviously a mandatory vaccine program doesn't mean you're going to drag them down to the vaccine station kicking and screaming, but they have to choose between the vaccine and a job — that's really what we're asking them to choose when we are talking about a mandatory vaccine program. So, there are morale implications, there are employee relations implications," she says.

The last issue to consider is how the vaccine would be administered. Is the employer going to do it? If so, there are all sorts of medical documentation that will be required, so the

employer would need to bring in a third party, which increases costs, Shaw explains.

Currently, there is no mandate that employers provide COVID-19 vaccines, and California is still following a hierarchy as to who can receive the vaccine first. So, while this conversation may be a bit early, these are still important things to consider, Shaw says.

Vaccine Not 'Medical Exam'

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has stated that administration of the COVID-19 vaccine does not constitute a "medical exam," Frank says.

This opens up the ability for any employer to develop a mandated program provided they deal with the reasonable accommodation issues mentioned earlier, Shaw explains. While the EEOC is giving employers the green light, it also is requiring that a protocol be put in place, with required documentation and employee communication.

"So, it's not something like 'Oh, I think I'll just run my team down to CVS and get them a

mandated COVID-19 vaccine.' It just doesn't work that way," she says.

Employers should, however, encourage their employees to get the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available to them, similar to how employees are encouraged to get the flu vaccine during cold and flu season, Frank says.

If an employer, however, is thinking about making the COVID-19 vaccine a part of an incentive program, they should keep in mind that not all employees will be able to get the vaccine due to religious or medical reasons, Shaw points out. So, if an employer offers \$25 to employees who get the vaccine, the employer should also offer the \$25 to employees who cannot get the vaccine due to a legitimate health or religious reason.

As of this podcast recording, state agencies have yet to release guidance on COVID-19 vaccines in the workplace, so this is an evolving issue, Frank tells listeners.

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Family owned and operated by El Dorado County locals who have a passion for coffee and serving others.

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Get Out and Play

SNOWSHOE HIKE THROUGH THE WOODS

February 20 @ 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Sunday, February 20th 9am - 2pm

(date is snow and weather dependent)

This beginner-friendly 2-to-3-mile snowshoe hike through the woods will go through a popular winter recreational area. New ARC volunteer Luis Vidal will go over snowshoeing basics and general backcountry awareness. Luis also works in forestry and will share about the ecology of the area during the winter. Children 12+ welcome with adult supervision. Well-behaved dog on-leash and with proper gear welcome. Contact ARC to sign up, and for meeting location (Foresthill area). Suggested Donation: \$10/members, \$15/non-members. julie@ARConservancy.org or (530) 621-1224.

<https://www.arconservancy.org/event/snowshoe-hike-through-the-woods/>

California SNO-PARKs:

There are 19 SNO-PARK sites throughout the Sierra Nevada. Each has a distinctive brown highway sign identifying its location. At each SNO-PARK, visitors have access to snow-cleared parking lots and sanitation facilities.

The sites can accommodate self-guided activities such as snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and general snow play. Snow conditions determine accessibility and opportunities available at each location.

SNO-PARKs are open seasonally between November 1 and May 30. Visitors must display a parking permit for each vehicle parked at a SNO-PARK.

Day use permits may be purchased for \$5.00 or a season permit for \$25.00 from various vendors throughout California and Nevada. Check the website for a current list of where you can purchase a permit, or call the OHMVR Division at (916) 324-4442.

http://ohv.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1233

Visit El Dorado:

Snow Sports

From world-class skiing and riding to thrilling backcountry snowmobiling, sleigh rides to snow play, choose your winter adventure in El Dorado County. Whether you crave the steep and deep, perfect corduroy, or off-the-beaten path exploration, you'll find it here.

<https://visit-eldorado.com/snow-sports/>