



Executive Order

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Governor's Office

Executive Order 2025-02 – Protecting Pennsylvanians' Health and Freedom by Ensuring Access to Safe and Effective Vaccines

Date: October 1, 2025

A blue ink signature of Josh Shapiro, the Governor of Pennsylvania.

By Direction of:
Josh Shapiro, Governor

- WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania recognizes that safe and effective vaccines are integral to preserving both individual and public health by reducing the spread of potentially deadly diseases, lowering healthcare costs, and protecting vulnerable populations; and
- WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is firmly committed to ensuring that its residents have regular, easy access to safe and effective vaccines as well as clear guidance on vaccine recommendations from medical experts; and
- WHEREAS, recent changes in federal vaccine policy—in particular, actions by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) that are inconsistent with established medical consensus and evidence-based guidance—have created confusion and risk undermining decades of public health progress; and
- WHEREAS, national medical associations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), have continued their decades-long practice of providing rigorous, evidence-based vaccine guidance to protect infants, children, adolescents, adults, and pregnant women; and
- WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is home to companies and institutions that are national leaders in vaccine research, development, and manufacturing, and the Commonwealth manufactures more than one-half of all vaccines administered in the United States; and
- WHEREAS, the resurgence of vaccine-preventable diseases underscores the consequences of declining vaccination rates, including, for example, that measles cases in the United States have passed a 30-year high, and that in Pennsylvania measles infections rose from zero in 2022 to nine in 2023 to at least 16 cases in 2025 (to date); and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvanians should be guided by science and facts when making healthcare decisions, so providing them clear, consistent information to make informed choices about available vaccines is a priority for this Administration.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Josh Shapiro, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of this Commonwealth, do hereby order and direct as follows:

1. Safeguarding Vaccine Access for All Families.

The Department of Health shall develop plans to create and manage a Pennsylvania-based program that ensures that children in the Commonwealth who are eligible for the federally supported Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program retain access to necessary vaccines without cost sharing, in the event that ACIP removes vaccines for certain diseases from the VFC program. The program shall include measures to capitalize on Pennsylvania's state health centers and Pennsylvania's national leadership in vaccine research, development, and manufacturing. The Department of Health shall collaborate with AAP and other leading medical associations to ensure that the program relies on accurate guidance regarding vaccines for children.

2. Updating State Policies to Ensure Evidence-Based Vaccine Guidance.

All Commonwealth agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction shall ensure, to the maximum extent feasible, that state regulations, guidance, website materials, and public communications relating to vaccines are consistent with evidence-based recommendations endorsed by the nation's leading medical associations, including, but not limited to, AAP, AAFP, and ACOG. If necessary, agencies shall update such regulations, guidance, website materials, or public communications to ensure consistency with evidence-based recommendations made by the nation's leading medical associations, pursuant to guidance from the Department of Health.

3. Ensuring Pennsylvanians Have Convenient Access to Accurate, Reliable Information about Vaccines.

The Department of Health shall create a central website that will provide accurate, evidence-based information about vaccines, including information from leading medical associations that the Department of Health considers appropriate, for the public, healthcare professionals, pharmacies, and other relevant communities.

4. Working with Local, State, and National Leaders to Protect Vaccine Access.

The Department of Health shall:

- a.** Convene an advisory vaccine education workgroup to be chaired by the Secretary of Health, which shall meet on at least a quarterly basis and shall include representatives from relevant state agencies and external stakeholders – including primary care physicians, obstetricians, parents, pharmacists, public health experts, local leaders, and community representatives – to provide input and recommendations on protecting vaccine access and promoting uptake. Members of the advisory workgroup will not receive compensation for their service.

- b.** Collaborate with Pennsylvania’s county and municipal health departments to ensure consistency in vaccination policies and guidance across the Commonwealth.
- c.** Collaborate and coordinate with other states and jurisdictions, including through the Northeast Public Health Collaborative, to protect vaccine access and promote consistent, scientifically informed vaccination policies and guidance.

5. Providing Accurate Guidance for Medical Professionals.

The Department of State’s Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs and the State Boards of Medicine, Osteopathic Medicine, and Nursing shall continue to evaluate, as necessary, the need for communications or policy statements to the Commonwealth’s licensed healthcare professionals regarding vaccination schedules, consistent with the letters of support adopted by those boards on September 24 and 25, 2025.

6. Protecting Pennsylvanians Who Rely on Medical Assistance (Medicaid).

The Department of Human Services shall take all necessary steps, in accordance with the law, to ensure that the Pennsylvania Medicaid program covers, without cost sharing, all vaccines recommended by AAP, AAFP, or ACOG, in addition to those recommended by ACIP.

7. Guaranteeing Insurance Coverage for Vaccines.

The Pennsylvania Insurance Department (PID) shall, to the fullest extent of its regulatory authority, require that all health insurers operating under PID’s authority continue to provide coverage for evidence-based vaccine recommendations endorsed by the country’s leading national medical associations, including, but not limited to, AAP, AAFP, and ACOG, without imposing cost sharing, prior authorization, or other barriers, consistent with the Department of Health’s guidance and the goals of this Executive Order. PID shall monitor compliance and take appropriate action within the scope of its authority to see to it that insurers do not reduce vaccine coverage as a result of changes in federal recommendation status.

8. Protecting Older Pennsylvanians.

The Department of Aging shall utilize the Pharmaceutical Assistance Contract for the Elderly (PACE) program and any other relevant programs to ensure older adults have access to recommended vaccines. The Department of Aging shall also direct all Area Agencies on Aging and affiliated service providers to disseminate accurate, up-to-date information on adult immunizations consistent with the Department of Health’s guidance. This outreach should emphasize the safety and efficacy of vaccines and encourage older Pennsylvanians and their caregivers to follow medical guidance.

9. Safeguarding the Health of Pennsylvania’s Students and Children in Child Care.

The Department of Health, in consultation with the Departments of Education and Human Services, shall review all school and child care vaccination requirements and guidelines to ensure they consider evidence-based vaccine recommendations endorsed by the country’s leading national medical associations. The Departments shall also work together to communicate to parents and guardians that the Commonwealth’s school-entry vaccine requirements and pediatric immunization recommendations remain in effect as a vital tool to protect children’s health and safety in educational and child care settings.

10. Reporting.

The Departments of Health and Human Services and PID shall report to the Governor within sixty days on their efforts to implement this Executive Order.

11. Cooperation by State Agencies.

All agencies under the Governor’s jurisdiction shall cooperate fully with and provide assistance and support to the above-listed agencies, as needed, regarding the implementation of this Executive Order.

12. Implementation.

This Executive Order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law. This Executive Order is not intended to and does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the Commonwealth, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other persons.

13. Effective Date.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until amended or rescinded by the Governor.