

Misc. Administrative Actions



January 2025

- 20th** Inauguration. Donald J. Trump begins his second term as the 47th President of the United States.
- 22nd** HHS initiates a Communication Freeze, meaning that everyone in the Department is prohibited from issuing documents, guidance, or most forms of communication with the public.
- The hold is intended to end February 1 to give time for a Presidential appointee to be confirmed.

February

- 1st** The communications freeze issued on January 21, 2025 is supposed to end this day, but communication with the agency remains paused.
- 28th** HHS issues notice rescinding the Richardson Waiver. This action reduces public impact and democratic participation in rulemaking.
- The Richardson Waiver required notice and comment periods for regulations relating to Medicare and Medicaid

March

- 24th** HHS announces that it plans to close the office focused on Long COVID research.
- 25th** HHS announces a restructuring of the department to follow the Executive order on workforce optimization.
- 27th** HHS announces a restructure to be included in the President's budget request.
- The request includes the reorganization of the Administration for Community Living (ACL) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), elimination of several Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) programs, and reductions-in-force at the CDC and NIH.

April

- 3rd** HHS closes various offices tasked with handling Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. FOIA requests are an important part of government accountability.

August

- 8th** There is a shooting at the CDC headquarters. The shooter was identified as someone who believed he was harmed by the COVID vaccine.

September

- 2nd** RFK Jr. releases an op-ed on his plans to "restore public trust in the CDC."
- In it, he criticizes the Biden administration's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Congressional Actions



January 2025

29-30th U.S. Senate holds confirmation hearings for Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.

May

14th RFK Jr. testifies in front of the House Budget and Senate HELP hearings where he was questioned on staffing cuts, research funding freezes, and his refusal to recommend that children get vaccinated according to the vaccine schedule.

October

30th Casey Means' confirmation hearing for Surgeon General is postponed.

- Means has a history of being anti-vaccine and left her surgical residency due to being "disillusioned" by the practice of medicine.

January 2026

14th In a HELP hearing, Sen. Murray calls for Sec. Kennedy to testify on recent vaccine policies.

February

6th A group of 34 Senators, led by Senator Amy Klobuchar and Senator Bernie Sanders, call on HHS to end the communications freeze in a letter to the Acting Secretary of Health and Human Services, Dorothy Fink.

13th The Senate votes to confirm RFK Jr. as Secretary of HHS. He was confirmed with 52 Senators voting for him and 48 voting against him.

September

4th RFK Jr. testifies in front of the Senate Finance Committee where he is questioned on his decisions as Secretary thus far.

17th Monarez testifies in front of the HELP committee regarding her time at HHS and her removal.

December

9th Democratic members of the Senate HELP Committee issue a letter to Ranking Member Cassidy requesting an oversight hearing of Secretary Kennedy.



Funding



January 2025

27-29th The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a memo freezing all spending on grants and loans government-wide, impacting HHS grants. This results in a disruption of state Medicaid reimbursement portals in all 50 states.

March

26th HHS cancels \$11.4 billion in federal grants to state and community health departments. The grants were allocated during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Another grant of \$1 billion is canceled from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

May

16th A federal district court rules that HHS and RFK Jr. cannot terminate \$11 billion in public health funding. An injunction prevents HHS from implementing the funding terminations

27th NIH announces research grants to be awarded to institutions that research autism.

September

26th NIH awards \$50 million in research grants to 13 beneficiaries as part of the Autism Data Science Initiative

January 2026

15th CDC cancels a study on Hepatitis B vaccines in Guinea-Bissau due to ethical concerns about the study's protocol.

February

7th The National Institute of Health (NIH) caps indirect costs for universities at 15% for research, representing as much as a 75% reduction of funding for some.

April

11th NIH grant reviews resume in limited capacity, demonstrating an end to the communications pause.

August

6th HHS cancels \$500 million in grants on mRNA vaccine research

December

18th HHS announces it will fund a study on the Hepatitis B Vaccine in Guinea-Bissau, raising ethical concerns.



MAHA Commission



February 2025

13th The White House releases the “Establishing the President’s Make America Healthy Again Commission” (MAHA) Executive Order.

The order establishes RFK Jr. as the chair of the commission. The order establishes RFK Jr. as the chair of the commission.

December

5th The White House issues a presidential memo outlining the successes of MAHA thus far and providing a directive to align the U.S. vaccine schedule with allied countries.



May

15th The MAHA Commission Report was published.

22nd The MAHA Commission Report is released with the stated intention of “ending the childhood chronic disease crisis.”

Vaccine Actions & Outbreaks

March 2025

- 2nd** Measles outbreak is reported in Texas. Cases started in January.

RFK Jr. publishes an op-ed stating that getting vaccines is an individual choice despite research supporting the measles vaccine.

May

- 27th** RFK Jr. releases a video announcing that HHS will no longer recommend the COVID vaccine for healthy children or pregnant women.

June

- 25th** RFK Jr. announces that HHS will no longer contribute to GAVI, an organization that provides vaccines for children around the world.

August

- 1st** HHS announces that they are repealing a policy that rewarded hospitals who reported staff vaccination rates.
- 14th** HHS announces that they are reinstating the Task Force on Safer Childhood Vaccines for the first time since 1998.

September

- 17th** CDC releases their priorities, which includes discovering the causes of autism and researching vaccines.

October

- 11th** Whooping cough outbreak begins, the worst outbreak in more than a decade.

November

- 20th** CDC changes language on their website to include a statement that "Vaccines do not cause autism" is not an evidence-based claim.
- 28th** An internal memo from the FDA stated that there were 10 deaths of children due to the COVID vaccine. This claim was later rescinded. No data was shared.

December

- 18th** HHS announces it will fund a study on the Hepatitis B Vaccine in Guinea-Bissau, raising ethical concerns.
- 20th** Secretary Kennedy planned to announce that HHS would adopt the vaccine schedule from Denmark, but the press conference is canceled at the last minute.

January 2026

- 5th** Secretary Kennedy alters the vaccine schedule for children without recommendation by ACIP, dropping the number of recommendations from 17 to 11.
- 15th** CDC cancels a study on Hepatitis B vaccines in Guinea-Bissau due to ethical concerns about the study's protocol.

February 2025

- 20th** RFK Jr. postpones a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).
- The committee makes recommendations to the Director of the CDC regarding vaccines.

July

- 23rd** RFK Jr. signs ACIP's recommendation to remove thimerosal from flu vaccines.

October

- 6th** The CDC endorses the recommendations of ACIP.
- ACIP recommends that children get separate vaccines for chicken pox and measles, and mumps and rubella.
 - They remove the recommendation that adults over 65 receive the Covid vaccine and that adults under 65 talk with their doctor about if they should receive the vaccine.
 - They also call for separated MMR vaccines.
- 22-23rd** HHS indefinitely postpones the October ACIP meeting scheduled for this date.

January 2026

- 13th** Secretary Kennedy appoints two OB-GYNs to ACIP, rebranding the committee as a "watchdog" to investigate if vaccines cause harm.

June

- 9th** RFK Jr. fires all sitting members of the ACIP with the intention of replacing them with new members.
- 12th** RFK Jr. nominates eight new vaccine policy advisors to the ACIP. Most of the nominees have histories of spreading vaccine misinformation.
- 25-26th** CDC holds their June ACIP meeting.
- Vote on removal of thimerosal from flu vaccines.
 - Vote on RSV monoclonal antibody

September

- 15th** ACIP announces the appointment of five new members.
- 18-19th** ACIP holds their September meeting.
- They failed to pass a call for prescription requirements and tabled a vote on the Hepatitis B vaccine votes.
- 19th** ACIP recommends that the vaccination for COVID-19 be determined by individual decision making. They say they cannot provide a blanket recommendation to receive the vaccine.

December

- 4-5th** ACIP holds their December meeting.
- 5th** ACIP votes to switch universal birth dose recommendation to only birth dose for hep B positive mothers and for hep B negative mothers to first dose at two months of age and under shared clinical decision making.
- 16th** A meeting of the Advisory Commission on Childhood Vaccines (ACCV) is announced for December 29, 2025.
- 29th** The ACCV meeting is held to discuss changes to the VICP. Half of the members who previously sat on the committee were removed.

HHS Staffing



February 2025

- 10th** William Stuart Burns becomes a Senior Adviser at the CDC.
- 16th** HHS fires employees, citing Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) efforts and their status as probationary employees. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) were some of the HHS agencies hit hardest.

April

- 1st** HHS begins sending notices of termination to many employees in various agencies within the agency.

July

- 31st** Susan Monarez is sworn in as the CDC director.

October

- 10th** Citing a government shutdown, HHS fires CDC, SAMHSA, and Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR) employees during a mass reduction in force.
- 14th** HHS announces in a court filing that officials accidentally laid off twice as many people as they intended to when issuing October reductions-in-force.
- 982 employees were intended to be laid off, but 1,260 employees received a layoff notice.
- 28th** RFK Jr. fires Steven Hatfill, Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, for claiming that he was the chief medical officer.
- Hatfill has been an ally of RFK Jr. and has supported him on defunding vaccine research

December

- 2nd** Dr. Richard Pazur, head of drug regulation for the FDA, announces his retirement, weeks after taking the position.
- 16th** Former National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) director Jeanne Marrazzo sues Secretary Kennedy for illegally terminating her for being a whistleblower.

March

- 24th** RFK Jr. nominates Susan Monarez as the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) She would be the first CDC Director who is not a medical doctor in more than 70 years.
- 25th** HHS hires David Geier to research the link between immunizations and autism.
- 28th** Peter Marks, a top vaccine official at HHS, resigns stating that it is clear that RFK Jr. does not want to follow science.

June

- 4th** HHS appoints Paula Stannard as the Director for the Office of Civil Rights (OCR).
- 9th** Jim O'Neill is sworn in as the Deputy Secretary of HHS.
- 16th** Dr. Fiona Havers, senior advisor on vaccine policy, resigns from the CDC. She stated that she could no longer continue working at the CDC while the vaccination standards were dismantled.

August

- 26th** RFK Jr. fires Monarez, the CDC director.
- Monarez reports that she was asked to approve ACIP recommendations without review and to fire vaccine-related staff without cause. She was fired after she refused to follow these orders.

November

- 11th** FDA appoints Dr. Richard Pazur, a highly respected veteran of the Department, to lead their drug regulation division.
- 24th** HHS announces five new appointees to "advance MAHA goals."
- 25th** Dr. Ralph Abraham, a vaccine skeptic, is named as CDC's Principal Deputy Director.

Autism Actions

April 2025

- 10th** RFK Jr. claims in a cabinet meeting that they will “know the causes of autism” by September.
- 15th** The Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Report is released, and HHS holds a press conference to discuss its findings.
- It reports a prevalence estimate of 1 in 31 children having Autism at the age of 8.
- 16th** Kennedy holds a press conference where he says harmful statements about autistic community, and how it is “destroying families”
- The press conference received a lot of attention from disability rights communities and public health officials.
- 21st** Bhattacharya says in a presentation at an NIH meeting that they will be creating a registry for national diseases which would include a separate registry for autism.
- The registry would compile private medical records to give researchers more data.
- 25th** HHS walks back the statement regarding a registry saying they are not creating an “autism registry.”
- This is the beginning of the branding of the “Real World Data Platform” which they say will be used to identify the root causes of autism.

May

- 7th** NIH announces partnership with CMS to share Medicare and Medicaid data with one another and build a data platform to research autism.

September

- 5th** A *Wall Street Journal* Exclusive says RFK Jr. and HHS will link autism to prenatal acetaminophen use and folate deficiencies
- 9th** FDA Commissioner Makary tells Press that the autism report “isn't written” and the WSJ reporting is “premature”
- 11th** The CDC announces that it is awarding Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute a grant to research the link between autism and vaccines.
- 17th** CDC releases their priorities, which includes discovering the causes of autism and researching vaccines.
- 19th** Trump announces that he has “something big coming about autism” and reasserts that autism is a concern of his administration.
- 22nd** RFK Jr. announces that HHS is working on a treatment pathway and investing in research regarding autism.
- They announce that the FDA is publishing a label update for leucovorin establishing it as a treatment for children with autism.
 - They also announced that they will issue a physician notice and start a public campaign that acetaminophen causes autism when used during pregnancy.
- 25th** HHS publishes a citizen petition from Informed Consent Network requesting that the FDA pursue regulations to add a warning label to Tylenol products that prenatal use leads to an increased risk of autism.

October

- 9th** RFK Jr. emphasizes in a Cabinet Meeting that Tylenol usage is linked to autism and claimed that the government is “doing the research to make the proof.”
- He also states that there “are two studies that show that children who are circumcised early have double the rate of autism, and it's highly likely it's because they're given Tylenol.”
- 29th** RFK Jr. rolls back a previous claim regarding the connection between acetaminophen and autism and announces in a press conference that there is not sufficient evidence that Tylenol “definitely causes autism.”

November

- 20th** CDC changes language on their website to include a statement that “Vaccines do not cause autism’ is not an evidence-based claim.”

January 2026

- 13th** FDA removes the web page warning individuals about the dangers of some autism treatments.
- 16th** New research is published reinforcing that use of acetaminophen during pregnancy does not lead to Autism.

Public Response



May 2025

15th Disability rights organizations host a roundtable discussing the state of autism services, civil rights, scientific integrity, and representation of disability in federal policy. RFK Jr. was invited to participate, but did not attend.

The roundtable was hosted by:

- Autism Society of America
- Autistic Self Advocacy Network
- Association of University Centers on Disabilities
- Autistic People of Color Fund
- Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network
- American Association of People with Disabilities
- The Arc
- National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities

August

22nd The CDC staff calls on RFK Jr. to stop promoting misinformation about vaccines.

27th The American Public Health Association releases a statement on Monarez's firing and RFK Jr.'s continued attack on public health.

September

22nd Senator Bill Cassidy states that contrary to what RFK Jr. has stated, there is no link between autism and Tylenol.

27th RFK Jr.'s supporters organize a series of rallies to support him against increasing scrutiny from Congress.

30th The American Association of Pediatrics asserts that acetaminophen products are safe for pregnant women and there is no link to Autism.

December

3rd Twelve former FDA commissioners released a statement condemning HHS's actions to dismantle the regulatory scheme for vaccines.

January 2026

16th New research is published reinforcing that use of acetaminophen during pregnancy does not lead to Autism.

September 2025

24th The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issues an open Call for Nominations of individuals to serve as non-federal public members on the next iteration of the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC). Nominations are initially accepted through the deadline of Monday, November 10, 2025.

January 2026

2nd Applications truly close for IACC Nominations



December

4th HHS publishes a notice in the Federal Register that extends the deadline for IACC Nominations to January 2, 2026.

15th Secretary Kennedy appoints three individuals who have historically linked vaccines and autism to the IACC before the deadline for nominations has closed.