

Federal Judge Blocks Immunization Schedule Changes, Stays ACIP Member Appointments

BOSTON, March 16, 2026 - A coalition of leading medical professional societies and public health organizations today announced that the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts has issued a preliminary injunction to stay Secretary Kennedy's appointments to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), as the appointments were likely made in violation of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). Judge Brian Murphy also stayed all votes taken by the now-stayed ACIP.

The injunction further stays the heavily revised vaccine schedule issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on January 5, overturns the May 2025 Secretarial Directive on COVID-19 vaccine recommendations, and reverses the downgraded Hepatitis B vaccine recommendations made at the December 2025 ACIP meeting.

Plaintiffs—the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, American College of Physicians, Infectious Diseases Society of America, Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Massachusetts Public Health Alliance, and Jane Does 1, 2 and 3—requested the court issue an injunction after HHS announced significant changes to the national pediatric immunization schedule in January.

The underlying lawsuit, *AAP et. al. v Kennedy et. al.*, challenges recent directives and actions by HHS that plaintiffs intend to prove circumvented longstanding, evidence-based procedures traditionally used to develop national vaccine guidance. These actions undermine public health, disrupt clinical practice, and erode confidence in immunization policy.

The Court has already ruled that the larger case may proceed and has denied the government's motion to dismiss.

Plaintiff and Attorney Statements

Statement from Richard Hughes IV, Epstein Becker Green, Attorney for Plaintiffs:

"This ruling is a momentous step toward restoring science-based vaccine policymaking. The judge recognized that the actions of Secretary Kennedy and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices are not grounded in science and that they are destructive. We are thrilled that the court has discarded the baseless vaccine schedule changes made by Secretary Kennedy and is blocking the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices from doing further damage to vaccine policy."

Andrew P. Racine, MD, PhD, FAAP, President, American Academy of Pediatrics

"Today's ruling is an historic and welcomed outcome for children, families, pediatricians and communities across the United States. For many years the American Academy of Pediatrics, in collaboration with partners in the federal government, recommended a schedule of immunizations to promote children's health and development. Today's ruling marks an important step toward restoring scientific decision-making that is at the heart of that partnership. Protecting the health and safety of America's children is what prompted the AAP to petition the court for this decision from the outset and that goal will remain our guiding principle."

Georges C. Benjamin, MD, CEO, American Public Health Association

"This injunction underscores the need for using science in public health decision-making and using a process that engages qualified experts when it comes to recommending interventions that impact human health," says CEO of the American Public Health Association Georges C. Benjamin, MD. He adds, "Trust occurs when we engage the public in a transparent process, not one where decisions are made behind closed doors by unqualified individuals and presented in a disingenuous way."

Ronald G. Nahass, MD, MHCM, FIDSA, President, IDSA:

"Today's court ruling is an important step toward protecting Americans' access to life-saving vaccines. Infectious diseases doctors remain hopeful that adherence to a scientifically valid process in determining vaccine policy ultimately will be restored. Secretary Kennedy has caused needless confusion and distrust in vaccine guidance and unless stopped, his actions will continue to result in preventable disease outbreaks."

Jason M. Goldman, MD, MACP, President, ACP:

"Today's ruling is a win for public health and reaffirms that national vaccine policy should be guided by rigorous, evidence-based science, not politics," said Jason M. Goldman, MD, MACP, president of ACP. "Vaccines are critical to maintaining public health and recommendations about their use must be based on the best available data. Scientific consensus and overwhelming evidence demonstrate that vaccines are safe and effective. We are encouraged by today's injunction and hope that it will mean a return to a transparent and evidence-driven process that safeguards the health of all communities and the best interests of our patients."

Sindhu K. Srinivas, MD, MSCE, Immediate Past President, SMFM:

"We welcome today's court decision, which blocks ACIP and the CDC from making further non-evidence-based changes to established vaccine recommendations and restores the recommendations in place prior to January 5, 2026. As maternal-fetal medicine specialists caring for high-risk pregnancies, our highest priority is protecting pregnant patients, their infants, and families from vaccine-preventable illness and death—guided by rigorous science, transparent evidence, and clinical best practices."

Carlene Pavlos, Executive Director Massachusetts Public Health Alliance

"The Massachusetts Public Health Alliance is grateful for the judge's careful consideration of the issues at stake and his decision to issue a preliminary injunction to pause the implementation of a childhood vaccination schedule that could undermine years of progress in saving our nation's children from illness, suffering, and even death. We are equally grateful for his decision to enjoin the illegally constituted Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices from meeting until this case can be resolved. However, this is not the end. The continuing assaults by the federal administration on vaccine policy and infrastructure have not abated since we and our sister plaintiffs originally filed this complaint and there is no reason to believe they will stop as we move forward. But we are all in this because we know that people's health and lives are at risk and we are committed to promoting public health and we will continue to fight over the long road ahead."

Brenda Anders Pring, President, Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

"The MCAAP applauds Judge Murphy's quick decision, giving Massachusetts pediatricians the opportunity to celebrate rare good news for child and adolescent health. We will continue to stand up for our patients by practicing science-based medicine to counteract this administration's relentless efforts to undermine vaccines and vaccine policy."