



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

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Governor Shapiro Signs Executive Order Safeguarding Pennsylvanians' Access to Vaccines and Protecting Families' Freedom to Make Their Own Health Care Decisions

As RFK Jr. and the Trump Administration continue to sow confusion and chaos around vaccines, Governor Shapiro is directing his Administration to protect vaccine access, update regulations where necessary, and provide clear, evidence-based guidance to Pennsylvanians.

Executive Order [2025-02](#) ensures children, families, and seniors have continued access to safe, effective vaccines and directs state agencies to align with leading medical experts to safeguard Pennsylvanians' health.



Philadelphia, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** signed **Executive Order [2025-02](#)** at **Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)** to safeguard vaccine access for Pennsylvanians and protect families’ freedom to make their own health care decisions. The Governor [delivered remarks](#) and was joined by **Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) Secretary Dr. Debra Bogen**, **CHOP CEO Madeline Bell**, **CHOP President Dr. Joseph Mitchell**, **Co-Director of CHOP’s Vaccine Education Center Charlotte Moser**, and other advocates, clinicians, and health care professionals for the announcement.

The Executive Order directs the Pennsylvania Department of Health to establish a state-based safety net to protect children’s access to vaccines, requires all state agencies to align policies with trusted medical experts, launches a central online vaccine portal, and creates a Vaccine Education Workgroup to strengthen public communication and combat misinformation. It also ensures continued coverage of recommended vaccines for all Pennsylvanians through Medicaid and private insurance, and directs the Department of Aging and the Department of Education to support older adults and schools in following evidence-based guidance.

“As the federal government continues to create chaos and confusion, my Administration is stepping up to preserve access to vaccines, provide Pennsylvanians with clear, evidence-based guidance, and protect the freedom to make decisions over your own health care,” said **Governor Shapiro**. “As a dad to four kids, I want the best, most accurate information to inform the decisions we make for our kids and freedom to make decisions that are best for them, in consultation with our doctors. I believe every Pennsylvanian deserves the same and this Executive Order directs Commonwealth agencies to take immediate action to ensure families can still get their kids vaccinated, seniors can stay protected as they age, and science and facts – not politics – guide health care decisions here in Pennsylvania.”

“I applaud Governor Shapiro for taking decisive action with this executive order to help ensure that all children in Pennsylvania can get the vaccines they need to prevent diseases, while giving health care providers and families the reliable, evidence-based information they rely on to make informed decisions,” said **Secretary Dr. Bogen**. “Over more than three decades as a pediatrician, I have seen vaccines prevent diseases and keep people healthy so they can attend childcare, school and work. The Department will work quickly to implement this Executive Order and further ensure Pennsylvanians have the knowledge and freedom to make the best health care decisions for themselves and their families.”

“Vaccines are one of the most important tools we have to protect children’s health,” said **CHOP CEO Madeline Bell**. “CHOP has long been a leader in vaccine development and education, providing trusted information through our Vaccine Education Center to families and physicians worldwide. We are pleased that Governor Shapiro shares our commitment to helping families learn more about vaccine safety and access, and am grateful to him for everything he is doing to support pediatric healthcare.”

“The potential benefits from vaccines have only grown over time, and CHOP and the Commonwealth have continued to lead the way,” said **Co-Director of CHOP’s Vaccine Education Center Charlotte Moser**. “The pathogens that cause infectious diseases are an enemy that doesn’t care about our politics, our beliefs, our fears, or even state lines. We stand at the ready to help fortify the Commonwealth’s access to vaccines that protect our children, our families, and our communities.”

“I am profoundly grateful that here in Pennsylvania, we have made it clear that we will help families like mine keep our children safe,” said **Diana Montoya-Williams, MD, Neonatologist, CHOP**. “Vaccines are one of modern medicine’s greatest miracles. They are love made visible in a bottle. They are hope for healthy futures.”

With Federal Chaos and Confusion, Pennsylvania Takes Action to Protect Vaccine Access and Personal Freedom

In August, the Trump Administration disrupted COVID vaccine access across Pennsylvania, forcing major pharmacies to halt vaccinations — even for seniors and people with underlying conditions. Governor Shapiro acted immediately, asking that the

State Board of Pharmacy convene to address disruptions in vaccine access. The Board subsequently [voted](#) to permit pharmacists to follow guidance from the **American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)**, **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)**, **American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)**, and **U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA)**, instead of waiting on politically-influenced recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP).

In September, ACIP created more confusion by reversing long-standing recommendations on the Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Varicella (MMRV) vaccine for children under 4. To ensure parents still had clear, evidence-based guidance, the **Pennsylvania Department of Health** expanded the list of trusted authorities that health care providers could rely on and issued [new immunization guidance](#) — which the [State Board of Medicine](#), [State Board of Nursing](#), and [State Board of Osteopathic Medicine](#) quickly endorsed — ensuring doctors, primary care physicians, pharmacists, nurses, and more have the clear, evidence-based information needed to protect themselves and their patients.

Also, to prevent new financial barriers, the **Pennsylvania Insurance Department** secured commitments from insurers to continue covering all previously recommended vaccines through at least 2026.

Governor Shapiro's Executive Order 2025-02: Protecting Pennsylvanians' Health and Freedom by Ensuring Access to Safe and Effective Vaccines

The Executive Order 2025-02 ensures Pennsylvanians retain access to safe, effective vaccines and have clear, trusted medical guidance by:

- **Creating a Pennsylvania-based safety net for children:** Directing DOH to establish a state-level program to guarantee children eligible for the federal Vaccines for Children (VFC) program maintain access to all recommended vaccines without cost sharing, even if ACIP removes vaccines from the federal list.
- **Requiring state agencies to align with trusted medical experts:** Ensuring Pennsylvania regulations, guidance, and communications reflect recommendations from the AAP, AAFP, ACOG, and FDA — not politically influenced ACIP decisions.
- **Launching a central vaccine portal:** Creating a one-stop online resource at pa.gov/vaccines with evidence-based information for families, providers, and the public.

- **Establishing a Vaccine Education Workgroup:** Convening pediatricians, family physicians, obstetricians, pharmacists, parents, public health leaders, and community representatives to strengthen public communication and combat misinformation.
- **Protecting Pennsylvanians of all ages:** Ensuring insurers and Medicaid cover all recommended vaccines with no cost-sharing or new barriers; directing the **Department of Aging** to use its programs to expand older adults' vaccine access; and ensuring school-entry vaccination requirements remain consistent with trusted medical associations.
- **Strengthening Pennsylvania's public health leadership:** Coordinating with local health departments and regional partners to maintain consistent, evidence-based vaccine guidance across the Commonwealth and the Northeast.

With today's action, Governor Shapiro is cutting through federal chaos and aligning Pennsylvania's health providers, insurers, and schools around clear, consistent, and science-based standards. The Executive Order ensures that every Pennsylvanian has access to safe, effective vaccines and the freedom to make informed health care decisions with their doctors — not politicians.

Read more about **Executive Order [2025-02](#)**, Protecting Pennsylvanians' Health and Freedom by Ensuring Access to Safe and Effective Vaccines.

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