



525-535 West Jefferson Street • Springfield, Illinois 62761-0001 • www.dph.illinois.gov

February 6, 2026

Dear Colleagues,

As Director of the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), I am endorsing the recommendation of the Illinois Immunization Advisory Committee (IL-IAC), formally adopting the [American Academy of Pediatrics' \(AAP\) 2026 Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule](#) for Illinois. The recently released schedule, which is based on rigorous scientific review and analysis, has been endorsed by a dozen major national medical associations.

Under the provisions of [Public Act 104-0439](#) (House Bill 767), signed into law by Governor JB Pritzker on December 2, 2025, IDPH is empowered to issue transparent, science-based vaccine guidance through the IL-IAC.

The IL-IAC's endorsement of the AAP's Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule is a result of the federal government once again making vaccine recommendations not based on the full weight of scientific evidence. On January 5, 2026, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced a dramatically altered childhood immunization schedule, downgrading the recommendation for several vaccines despite evidence of their benefit to U.S. children. These new federal guidelines were issued without any new scientific evidence to support such changes and even further bypassed traditional vaccine recommendation processes.

This unprecedented action follows a 2025 trend where the federal government instituted a series of vaccine changes that have been criticized for their lack of transparency and commitment to evidence-based processes. Throughout the year, HHS systematically cut funding for critical mRNA vaccine research and fired career experts at the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). They also unilaterally cut or, without new scientific evidence, changed vaccine guidance for COVID, Hepatitis B, and the MMRV dose.

Every step of the way, Illinois, under the leadership of Governor Pritzker and the Illinois General Assembly, has responded, ensuring that you – our residents and health care providers – received clear, reliable, science-based guidance to protect children from vaccine-preventable illnesses. These actions are another example of the credible, deliberate process that IDPH will employ to ensure Illinoisians receive the best possible information to protect themselves and their loved ones.

IDPH recommends healthcare providers promote and offer immunizations to all children according to the endorsed schedule. The reality is that the schedule remains unchanged from what we have previously recommended. The established science around vaccines have not changed, and although this is a new endorsement, all immunization recommendations are consistent with past guidance and recommendations. The good news remains that no changes have been made to



525-535 West Jefferson Street • Springfield, Illinois 62761-0001 • www.dph.illinois.gov

insurance coverage of these recommended immunizations. Illinois vaccination requirements for schools, childcare facilities, and colleges remain unchanged.

The IL-IAC's endorsement is both an affirmation of previous recommendations but also aims to provide greater clarity, consistency, and stability to our childhood vaccine recommendations for the near future. Illinois, along with other states, has had to respond rapidly to federal vaccine changes and decisions with little to no advanced notice. The IL-IAC's adoption of the AAP 2026 Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule will stand as IDPH's 2026 routine childhood immunization recommendations, only changing with the emergence of newly established scientific evidence.

In the months ahead, the IL-IAC will continue to meet, working in 2026 to both maintain the credibility of Illinois vaccine recommendations and enhance our consistency, clarity, and stability. Each meeting will review new and emerging vaccine evidence and Illinois-specific data while establishing a more routine cadence of the types of information reviewed and decisions made.

The past year has taught us many lessons, allowing IDPH to build a capability to respond to information in credible and transparent ways. However, it is also important for us to establish a pattern of review and recommendations that our residents and health care providers can rely on – understanding not just why decisions are made but when to expect them. We are thankful for the IL-IAC for continuing to lead the way.

Public health is fueled by the power of partnership, and I am thankful to all the partners inside and outside of government that have allowed Illinois residents to receive science-based vaccine information to keep our state healthy and protected. This commitment and dedication to rigorous review and scientific processes will continue to allow us to build brighter futures for our children and their families all across Illinois.

Yours in good health,

Sameer Vohra, MD, JD, MA
Director
Illinois Department of Public Health