



STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU 'ĀINA O HAWAII

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

KENNETH S. FINK, M.D., MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

WCHA ALIGNS WITH AAP ON VACCINATION RECOMMENDATIONS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HONOLULU — The West Coast Health Alliance (WCHA) continues to recommend vaccination in alignment with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Recommended Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule.

On Jan. 5, 2026, the Acting Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention signed a [decision memorandum](#) to revise the Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule and significantly reduce the number of vaccinations routinely recommended for all U.S. children. This decision did not follow established procedure for vaccine policy recommendations and threatens an increase in vaccine-preventable diseases in children nationwide. Children getting sick from the diseases prevented by recommended immunizations leads to missed school for children, missed work for parents and even hospitalization and death in some children.

The current [American Academy of Pediatrics Recommended Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule](#) is based on [established vaccine safety and effectiveness evidence](#).

AAP recommendations consider:

- When children are most vulnerable to diseases;
- When vaccines work best with children's immune systems;
- The safety of vaccinations being recommended;
- The risk of diseases in the United States;
- Our current access to healthcare and immunizations: and
- Cost effectiveness of implementing national recommendations for a particular vaccination.

While the first three concerns are similar across countries, the last three concerns may differ considerably between countries. The AAP recommended immunization schedule serves as a starting point for discussions between families and their providers, as it always has. Parents should continue to make informed decisions about the vaccines that their children receive based on discussions with their child's healthcare provider.

Prior to 2025, AAP had endorsed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, based on the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), which followed a rigorous review of data on risk of disease and safety of vaccination in the United States. Changes in the newly released recommended immunization schedule are not based on changes in vaccine safety and effectiveness data. The changes were based on a comparison of the number of routine vaccinations recommended in the United States versus select other countries. It did not consider the different conditions in each country. These changes were also not vetted by experts from medical and public health organizations, healthcare providers, or the public before they were published.

We do not expect these changes to affect insurance coverage for vaccines this plan year. All child and adolescent immunizations recommended as of Dec. 31, 2025 will remain available and covered by public and private insurers. However, the changes create confusion and will put more children at risk of preventable diseases.

The West Coast Health Alliance will continue to review available vaccine science and ensure continued access to recommended vaccines. Each state is examining the impact of these federal changes on vaccine access in our respective states. WCHA and AAP continue to support these longstanding recommendations including informed parental decisions for the best protection of their children.

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Media contact:

Kristen Wong

Information Specialist

Hawai'i State Department of Health

Phone: 808-953-9616

Email: kristen.wong@doh.hawaii.gov