March 20, 2026

"AMGA Immunizations Brief"—brought to you by the Rise to Immunize® (RIZE) campaign—delivers vaccine news and updates relevant to healthcare leaders. This brief provides concise, actionable information to help you stay informed and guide patient care in an evolving immunization landscape.

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At a Glance

- A federal judge blocked changes to federal vaccine policy, including the reconstitution of ACIP membership and revisions to the childhood immunization schedule.
- This week's scheduled ACIP meeting was postponed for the second time.
- The FDA's vaccine panel recommended the flu virus strains that should be included in vaccines for the 2026-27 respiratory season.
- The FDA launched a new adverse event reporting system that will encompass all FDA-regulated products, including the vaccine system VAERS.

Detailed Brief

A federal judge blocked changes to federal vaccine policy, including the reconstitution of ACIP membership and revisions to the childhood immunization schedule.

- A federal judge granted a preliminary injunction to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and co-plaintiffs in their lawsuit challenging federal vaccine policy changes made under Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.
- The judge concluded that the plaintiffs are likely to succeed in showing that the reconstitution of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP's) membership and changes to the childhood immunization schedule violate the *Administrative Procedure Act*, which governs how federal agencies develop, issue, and enforce regulations.
- Based on these findings, the Court stayed several actions while litigation proceeds, including:
  - The appointment of the 13 new ACIP members at issue in the case,
  - All votes taken by ACIP since its reconstitution, and
  - Implementation of the January memo revising the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) recommended childhood immunization schedule.
- ACIP's votes—including those to change the recommendation for hepatitis B vaccination at birth, to remove the broad recommendation for COVID-19 vaccines, and to remove thimerosal

from flu vaccines—likely violate Federal Advisory Committee Act and have been blocked.
- Finally, the injunction restores the 2025 childhood immunization schedule for the time being. The 2026 schedule reduced the number of recommended routine childhood immunizations from 17 to 11.

This week's scheduled ACIP meeting was postponed for the second time.

- The *American Academy of Pediatrics et al. v. Kennedy et al.* ruling noted the "ACIP as currently constituted cannot meet" as the validity of current membership appointments are in question.

The FDA's vaccine panel recommended the flu virus strains that should be included in vaccines for the 2026-27 respiratory season.

- The panel voted unanimously to recommend a trivalent vaccine targeting two influenza A viruses (H1N1 and H3N2) and one influenza B virus (Victoria lineage).
- The recommendation updates the H3N2 component to include a newer variant known as subclade K, which emerged late last year and is now one of the dominant strains circulating globally.
- This update follows a season in which the flu vaccine was less well matched to circulating viruses, and the season's vaccines had lower effectiveness as a result.

The FDA launched a new adverse event reporting system that will encompass all FDA-regulated products, including the vaccine system VAERS.

- The Adverse Event Monitoring System (AEMS) will replace four databases: the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS); the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Adverse Event Reporting System (FAERS) for drugs, biologics, cosmetic products, and color additives; and the Adverse Event Reporting System (AERS), which includes two databases for animal drugs and animal foods.
- AEMS and the legacy databases are passive reporting systems, which rely on unverified reports from individuals, and the existence of a report does not establish causation.
