

## Trump Pauses Federal Health Agencies' Communications, Announces Withdrawal From the WHO

As of Jan. 22, the Trump administration has suspended external communications and public appearances from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) until at least Feb. 1. The HHS issued a memo to the heads of all federal health agencies stating that they should refrain from issuing any guidance, regulation notice or grant announcement until it has been approved by a presidential appointee.

**“This is a short pause to allow the new team to set up a process for review and prioritization. There are exceptions for announcements that HHS divisions believe are mission critical, but they will be made on a case-by-case basis.”**

- Benjamin Haynes, director of media relations, CDC's Office of Communication, in a statement

The pause impacts 13 HHS operating divisions, including the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The freeze applies to public communications, such as health advisories, weekly

scientific reports, website updates and social media posts. Exceptions will be made for public communications that are considered critical health and safety matters.

### Withdrawal From the WHO

Related to public health, Trump also signed an executive order to [withdraw](#) the United States from the World Health Organization (WHO), citing several reasons, including “mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic” and “failure to adopt urgently needed reforms.” Leaving the WHO would mean the CDC wouldn't have access to the agency's global data. This action provides a one-year withdrawal notice. According to the United Nations, this means that the U.S. withdrawal would take effect in January 2026.

### Employer Takeaways

A short pause in public messaging is common as new administrations get set up. As such, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., President Donald Trump's nominee to lead the HHS, stands for his confirmation hearing on Jan. 29.

Consumer advocacy groups and public health officials expressed concern about the communications freeze, especially if it extends beyond this month. Americans depend on timely information from the FDA, CDC, NIH and other federal agencies to stay informed about health and safety issues. For example, the CDC was set to release its seasonal flu report and a bird flu report amid the H5N1 outbreak, but they've been put on hold by the communications freeze. Furthermore, health insurers could be impacted, as they collect data from these agencies. However, based on the timeline provided by the administration, the public can likely expect communications to resume within two weeks.

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