

Press Releases Published on Tuesday, December 10, 2024

HHS extends federal authority consistent with APhA request for pharmacy personnel to independently administer vaccines and test to treat services through 2029

WASHINGTON, DC — The American Pharmacists Association (APhA) released the following statement regarding the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) response to APhA's request to issue a [twelfth amendment](#) to the declaration under the federal Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act for medical countermeasures.

"Today's necessary actions by HHS will continue to [save lives and lower health care costs](#), particularly in rural and underserved areas where the local pharmacy may be the only health care provider for miles," said Michael D. Hogue, PharmD, FAPhA, FNAP, FFIP, executive vice president and CEO of APhA. "As a vital part of our nation's health care infrastructure, pharmacy teams serve as the front line of defense against infectious disease. APhA applauds HHS for extending these federal authorities until [legislation](#) is passed by the U.S. Congress to make them permanent."

Key changes finalized in the amendment include:

- **Extends PREP Act coverage and authority for COVID-19 and seasonal influenza vaccines and COVID-19 tests.** PREP Act immunity from liability is extended through December 31, 2029, to pharmacists to order and administer and pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer COVID-19 and seasonal influenza vaccines (three and over), and COVID-19 tests.

Since 2020, licensed pharmacists in all 50 states have been able to utilize federal PREP Act authority to provide vaccination, and testing and treatment services, specifically to children ages 3 to 18 years, where they previously had not been permitted in certain states. Several states have taken action ([see map](#)) to make these federal PREP Act authorities permanent.