

SENATE PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE
ON INVESTIGATIONS

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION ATTACKS ON SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY

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Summary of Findings

Since January 20, 2025, the Trump Administration has demonstrated that it is determined to attack science itself: thousands of experienced researchers and public health workers have been ousted from their jobs; vaccine opponents have been installed to dictate immunization policy; and important studies into potential life-saving interventions have been indefinitely delayed. In light of these alarming developments, the Minority Staff of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations has conducted a comprehensive review of the known instances in which the Trump Administration has repeatedly undermined scientific institutions, suppressed scientific speech, and otherwise taken actions that threaten America's health. The Subcommittee's analysis has identified 57 separate instances in which the Trump Administration has undermined science in just eight months since taking office. These actions include:

Censored Research and Suppressed Scientific Speech

- Suppressed a measles forecast in the midst of the country's worst outbreak of that disease in decades
- Deleted or removed data from the websites of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other health agencies, including information relied on by providers for HIV prevention
- Suppressed the findings of a study on ultra-processed foods, causing a top researcher at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to resign
- Instituted a "pause" on communications that held back publication of CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) for the first time in agency history
- Forced out top vaccine officials at CDC and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for refusing to fire career vaccine scientists or compromise vaccine safety databases
- Removed career employees managing scientific research at multiple branches of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), including within the division responsible for hazardous waste emergencies, and replaced them with political appointees

Abandoned Scientific Institutions and Slashed Their Resources

- Fired all of the staff on CDC's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, around the same time that lead exposure forced the closure of multiple schools in Milwaukee, displacing more than 1,000 students
- Put approximately 40 percent of the scientists and public health workers at CDC's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities on leave, including those monitoring emergency room data to forecast outbreaks
- Suspended data collection for the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), forcing scientists at state and local public health bodies to abandon maternal health research
- Halted funding to Columbia University's Diabetes Prevention Program, home of a multi-decade study supervising more than 3,000 patients
- Cancelled millions of dollars in NIH grants for multi-year studies on a drug regimen intended to prevent HIV
- Delayed acknowledging an attack on CDC headquarters that killed a police officer and forced staff into lockdown for hours

Put Ideology Over Public Health

- Abandoned dozens of clinical trials prior to completion, in some cases causing patients taking experimental drugs or outfitted with new medical devices to be cut off from the researchers monitoring them
- Fired all sitting members of CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), the first time such a mass firing has occurred, and replaced them with vaccine skeptics or people with comparatively little expertise
- Cancelled a contract with Moderna for a promising bird flu vaccine using mRNA technology in the midst of a bird flu outbreak that left farmers terrified about livestock deaths, then further abandoned mRNA technology, pulling \$500 million in funding and cutting off 22 studies
- Hired David Geier, who was disciplined for practicing medicine without a license in Maryland and authored studies that could not be reproduced linking vaccines and autism, to help lead HHS's efforts to find "the cause" of autism

- Released a MAHA Commission report that contained numerous citations to studies that do not exist, and an updated version that cited studies for propositions that the studies' authors say their work does not support
- Announced an end to the recommendation for healthy children and pregnant women to be vaccinated against COVID-19 without consulting CDC's vaccine advisory committee

The harms from the Trump Administration's cuts and firings will accumulate for years, indeed for decades, to come: lives that might have been saved by studies the Administration defunded; the loss of scientific innovation as scientists flee to countries where their work is not censored; or kids who develop life-long vaping habits the year that the Office of Smoking and Health was eliminated. Together these reckless actions reveal the Administration's damning indifference to the fate of independent science. The Trump Administration has shown that it has little regard for the scientists and public health workers it employs and little understanding of the work they do—that it quite literally considers them afterthoughts.

Instances of Interference in Science Since January 20, 2025

1	January 20, 2025	Withdrew the United States from the World Health Organization. Within hours of taking office, President Trump issued an executive order that halted payments to World Health Organization (WHO) and recalled government employees or contractors working with WHO “in any capacity.” ⁱ Public health scholars warned of “dire consequences,” including reduced pandemic surveillance and preparedness. ⁱⁱ
2	January 21, 2025	Mandated a ‘pause’ in all federal health communications. Federal health agencies—including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) —were ordered to pause all external communications, leading to temporary delays in the release of critical information about bird flu cases, drug overdose deaths, and more. ⁱⁱⁱ As a result, that week, CDC failed to issue an MMRW for the first time in agency history. ^{iv}
3	January 22, 2025	Canceled meetings of scientific bodies. HHS cancelled meetings of NIH to review grants and fellowships, and a meeting of the National Vaccine Advisory Committee. ^v The White House also cancelled a meeting of a presidential advisory body addressing antibiotic-resistant bacteria. ^{vi}
4	January 27, 2025	Attempted to freeze funding for all active federal grants. The Office of Management and Budget ordered federal agencies to pause “all activities related to obligation or disbursement of all federal financial assistance,” including research grants. ^{vii} The Association of American Cancer Institutes warned that a prolonged funding freeze would have “devastating consequences for scientific research, stifling innovation and slowing progress against cancer.” ^{viii}

5	January 28, 2025	Fired all members of two EPA scientific advisory boards. Members of the EPA's Science Advisory Board and the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee were told that they had been let go in order to ensure that the agency "receives scientific advice consistent with its legal obligations to advance our core mission." ^{ix}
6	January 29, 2025	Removed websites and purged agency databases. Among the removed content were websites about safe food choices during pregnancy and about HIV prevention. ^x A CDC advisory board wrote a letter to CDC's acting director describing the removals as "unprecedented." ^{xi} Facing multiple lawsuits, the Administration did not agree to fully restore the wrongfully removed data until September 2. ^{xii}
7	January 31, 2025	Blocked all CDC researchers from publishing in any journal. The Trump Administration's communications pause had previously resulted in delays for multiple studies that had been set to appear in an MMWR, CDC's internal journal. ^{xiii} But by the close of the month, the Administration went further, forcing staff to retract work they had previously submitted to any journal, in order to ensure that "forbidden terms" did not appear. ^{xiv}
8	February 4, 2025	Replaced career EPA officials overseeing scientific research with political appointees. The employees worked at four EPA divisions, including its primary research arm, and the branch charged with cleaning up hazardous waste and responding to environmental emergencies. ^{xv}
9	February 6, 2025	Abandoned clinical trials participants. The Administration's cuts to USAID resulted in dozens of clinical trials being cancelled mid-way through, in some cases causing patients taking experimental drugs or outfitted with new medical devices to be cut off from the researchers overseeing their care. ^{xvi} More than 30 studies were ended prematurely, including one on malaria treatment for children under 5, and another on tuberculosis treatment for children and teens. ^{xvii}

10	February 7, 2025	Sought to cut support for research costs. NIH announced a plan to immediately slash research overhead paid to universities, medical centers and other recipients, mandating that going forward it would provide no more than 15 percent support for “indirect costs,” which could include everything from administrative costs to the electricity powering buildings where experiments are conducted. ^{xviii} Researchers sued, claiming the cuts would bring research to a halt and, although a federal judge suspended the effort, as of June the Administration was reportedly continuing to limit research overhead spending. ^{xix}
11	February 14, 2025	Fired thousands of employees at CDC, FDA, and NIH. At HHS, the Trump Administration’s efforts to reduce the size of the federal government by terminating probationary employees resulted in the loss of training programs that helped staff local public health departments, and PhD-credentialed FDA employees who reviewed drugs, medical devices, food, and tobacco products. ^{xx}
12	February 18, 2025	Fired a tenth of the staff at the National Science Foundation. The termination of 168 of the National Science Foundation’s (NSF) roughly 1,700 employees was intended to comply with President Trump’s executive order to increase efficiency in the federal workforce. ^{xxi} Laid off employees and policy researchers said the firings were likely to slow down the review of grants for new research, and compromise training of people working in AI, semiconductors, and other fields. ^{xxii}
13	February 20, 2025	Postponed a meeting of a key vaccine advisory committee. HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. postponed a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) that had been scheduled to occur February 26-28. ^{xxiii} The committee, whose recommendations form the basis of insurance coverage requirements and federal subsidized child vaccination programs, traditionally meets three times a year, and infectious disease experts said that it was the first cancellation of an ACIP meeting they could recall. ^{xxiv}

14	February 24, 2025	Attempted to ban CDC employees from using certain words. Employees received an email informing them that they were prohibited from using more than a dozen “key words,” including “race,” “bias,” and “disparity,” when creating annual goals for performance evaluations. ^{xxv} After being contacted by reporters about the email, the agency claimed that the words were still permitted, but scientists continue to fear that the Administration’s attempts to stamp out “diversity, equity, and inclusion,” would prevent essential medical research. ^{xxvi}
15	February 26, 2025	Mischaracterized the growing Texas measles outbreak. Following the first measles death in the United States in a decade, of an unvaccinated child, Kennedy described the outbreak in Texas as “not unusual,” and falsely claimed that children who had been hospitalized with measles in Texas were there only for “quarantine” purposes. ^{xxvii}
16	February 26, 2025	Cancelled funds for Ebola prevention. DOGE head Elon Musk said at a cabinet meeting that the cost cutting group had “accidentally” eliminated funding for Ebola prevention in the course of its dismantling of USAID. ^{xxviii} Although Musk said the funds were quickly restored, some staff disagreed, saying the cuts resulted in screening work being held up for weeks. ^{xxix}
17	February 26, 2025	Cancelled a crucial meeting for preparing seasonal flu shots. FDA sent an email to members of a vaccine advisory committee informing them that a scheduled March 13 meeting, at which the committee would determine the makeup of the flu vaccine for the coming winter, would be cancelled. ^{xxx} No explanation for the cancellation was provided, and the decision followed the deadliest flu season in nearly 15 years, one that took the lives of some 250 children. ^{xxxi}

18	March 2, 2025	Forced out a USAID employee who warned about health impact of cuts. The Trump Administration placed Nicholas Enrich, an assistant administrator at USAID, after he distributed memos warning that cutting the agency could result in an additional 200,000 children paralyzed with polio and a one million additional cases of malnutrition every year. ^{xxxii} Enrich subsequently detailed many additional problems created by the Administration's dismantling of USAID, including compromising response to the Ebola outbreak in Uganda. ^{xxxiii}
19	March 3, 2025	Suspended data collection for a maternal health system. After researchers complained that they were unable to access the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), CDC, which oversees the database, said that it had suspended collecting data in order to make the survey that the system used compliant with President Trump's executive orders. ^{xxxiv} And while state-and-local level PRAMS programs appear to have retained funding, subsequent CDC layoffs appear to have targeted employees that state and local offices rely on for assistance, forcing a pause for some maternal health data collection efforts. ^{xxxv}
20	March 10, 2025	Ended grants related to vaccination. The decision, announced in an email, cancelled or retracted dozens of NIH grants related to "vaccine hesitancy and/or uptake," impacting more than 40 grants. ^{xxxvi} This came as declining vaccination rates helped fuel what would become the worst year for measles in more than two decades. ^{xxxvii}

21	March 10, 2025	Threatened sweeping cuts to research funds at 60 universities. The Department of Education sent letters to 60 institutions warning them that it would freeze federal funding if the universities did not comply with Trump Administration mandates. ^{xxxviii} Although the letters claimed that the threats were related to concerns about campus anti-Semitism, subsequent communications revealed that, at certain universities, the Administration was also seeking to force universities to provide “all hiring and related data” and to submit to “a comprehensive audit” by the federal government.” ^{xxxix} Research held up by the freeze covered, among other topics, national defense, cybersecurity, and health. ^{xl}
22	March 10, 2025	Cancelled a landmark diabetes study. Investigators with the Diabetes Prevention Program learned that NIH had halted funding for the study, which began in 1996 and recruited more than 3,000 patients considered to be at risk of developing type 2 diabetes. ^{xli} NIH did not comment on reports about the loss of funding, but it appeared to be related to the Trump Administration’s feud with Columbia University, which was managing the most recent phase of the study, and had recently been singled out for cancellation of federal grants. ^{xlii}
23	March 17, 2025	Terminated grants for studying HIV prevention. Beginning the week of March 17, NIH began cancelling millions of dollars in grants for multi-year studies on a drug regimen intended to prevent HIV. ^{xliii} One professor who lost multiple grants predicted that the Trump Administration’s policies would cause a “resurgence” of HIV in the country. ^{xliv}
24	March 24, 2025	Cancelled grants researching drugs to prevent pandemics. The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) cancelled at least 29 grants, including nine devoted to grants for antivirals targeted at future outbreaks. ^{xlv} HHS attributed the cancellations to the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic had ended, and while many of the grants did relate to the coronavirus, they also addressed other viruses, including Ebola, dengue, and chikungunya. ^{xlvi}

25	March 24, 2025	Suppressed a measles forecast in the midst of an outbreak. During the week of March 24, CDC leaders ordered staff not to release a report on measles that noted that the risk of contracting the disease was high in areas where vaccination rates were lagging. ^{xlvi} A CDC spokesperson said that the report had been held back because it did not “say anything that the public doesn’t already know,” but the report, created by the Center for Forecasting and Outbreak Analytics, relied in part on new data from the Texas measles outbreak. ^{xlvi}
26	March 25, 2025	Rescinded billions in grants to state and local public health departments. CDC withdrew \$11.4 billion in grants related to the COVID-19 pandemic to public health departments and nonprofits. ^{xlvi} An HHS spokesperson described the grants as unnecessary given the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency, but the loss of the grants impacted local immunization programs for all diseases, including some in Texas as it dealt with a surge in measles cases. ¹
27	March 25, 2025	Hired a discredited researcher to lead a study on link between vaccines and autism. HHS officials said Kennedy had hired David Geier, who had previously been disciplined for practicing medicine without a license in Maryland. ^{li} Together with his father Mark, Geier has authored or co-authored many previous studies finding a link between autism and vaccination, but these studies were retracted or widely criticized as methodologically unsound. ^{lii}
28	March 28, 2025	Forced out top vaccine regulator. Peter Marks, who had headed the FDA office overseeing vaccines since the first Trump Administration, resigned, saying Kennedy was not interested in transparency but rather “subservient confirmation of his misinformation and lies.” ^{liii} In a subsequent interview, Marks said that he had offered to give Kennedy access to a vaccine safety database, but had refused when the Secretary sought to “edit” the database. ^{liv}

29	April 1, 2025	<p>Laid off 10,000 HHS employees across multiple agencies. The sweeping “Reductions in Force” (RIF) were announced as part of a “dramatic restructuring” to comply with the “Department of Government Efficiency Workforce Optimization Initiative,” a President Trump Executive Order.^{lv} Secretary Kennedy promised that HHS would preserve “core functions,” but the cuts created significant problems almost immediately.^{lvi} Within a week, Kennedy said that it was “always the plan” to hire back 20 percent of those laid off, but it remains unclear how many have returned or in which agencies.^{lvii} Kennedy said in a subsequent Senate hearing that, of the 10,000 people laid off as part of the RIF, 2,473 were at CDC, 1,312 were at NIH, and 2,519 were at FDA. According to one analysis, more than 20,500 HHS employees have left or been forced out since the beginning of the Trump Administration.^{lviii}</p>
30	April 1, 2025	<p>Cancelled the National Youth Tobacco Survey. According to the American Lung Association, the survey was “pulled early from the field.”^{lix} The survey, which helped track the youth vaping epidemic and other health issues, was one of many cuts to smoking prevention efforts that occurred as part of the elimination of CDC’s Office of Smoking and Health, one of many sub-agencies impacted by the HHS RIF.^{lx}</p>
31	April 1, 2025	<p>Removed all federal experts on preventing HIV in children in foreign countries. Staff working in this area, who had been stationed at CDC, USAID, and the State Department, were either terminated or told to await reassignment.^{lxi} The experts were administering programs funded by the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief [PEPFAR], a swath of efforts that had been previously impacted by Trump’s sweeping freeze on all foreign aid; Secretary of State Marco Rubio later said PEPFAR would be exempted, but without staff to administer the prevention programs, it was unclear how they would go forward.^{lxii}</p>

32	April 1, 2025	Cut hundreds of CDC staff working to address birth defects. At least 40 percent of the scientists and public health workers at CDC’s National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities were put on leave as part of the RIF. ^{lxiii} Among other tasks, the eliminated staff monitored emergency department data to detect outbreaks that could threaten people with disabilities. ^{lxiv}
33	April 2, 2025	Ordered NIH to cut more than one-third of its contracts budget. On top of the more 1,300 people that were laid off from NIH in the RIF, DOGE ordered spending cuts equivalent to approximately 35 percent of NIH’s contracts expenditures. ^{lxv} The directive ordering the cuts included contracts DOGE recommended for termination and told staff that “mission criticality” was not a justification for maintaining a contract. ^{lxvi}
34	April 14, 2025	Used the DOJ to intimidate medical journals. On April 14, Ed Martin, the acting U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, sent a letter to the medical journal CHEST, suggesting that it and other medical journals had become “partisans” in scientific debates, and asking whether medical publishers were “adjusting their method of acceptance of competing viewpoints.” ^{lxvii} Later that week, Martin sent letters to at least two additional medical journals. ^{lxviii} And the following week, Martin sent a similar letter to the New England Journal of Medicine, against which Kennedy, said he would pursue racketeering charges during his presidential campaign. ^{lxix}
35	April 16, 2025	Censored NIH’s top researcher of ultra-processed foods. Kevin Hall, who had led research on links between diet and chronic disease, resigned after NIH leadership made him feel he could no longer “freely conduct unbiased science.” ^{lxx} In a subsequent interview, Hall said the Administration attempted to suppress findings of a study he had conducted. ^{lxxi}

36	April 17, 2025	Further targeted universities' grant funding. A directive sent from NIH's Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration told staff not to award any new grants to certain universities that had previously had grant funding frozen as part of the Trump Administration's ongoing dispute over allegations of campus anti-Semitism. ^{lxxii} Reporting on the directive specified Brown, Columbia, Cornell (and its medical school), and Harvard, but other schools among the 60 that originally received letters from the Department of Education may also have been impacted. ^{lxxiii}
37	April 18, 2025	Transformed the Covid.gov website into a partisan page. The site, a previously staid source of information about testing, treating, and vaccinating against COVID-19, became a stylized purveyor of theories from a Republican report on the pandemic's origins. ^{lxxiv} The new site contains a picture of a glowering President Trump as well as a dramatic presentation of President Biden's pardon of Dr. Anthony Fauci. ^{lxxv}
38	May 1, 2025	Demanded 'placebo testing' for vaccines, violating medical ethics. HHS said that Kennedy planned for all "new vaccines" to undergo "safety testing in placebo-controlled trials." ^{lxxvi} While placebo testing is standard for vaccines for new pathogens, those that have been well studied and have existing, proven vaccines are typically not subject to placebo trials, because doing so would deprive children of protection from diseases like polio. ^{lxxvii}
39	May 2, 2025	Laid off most staff at agency evaluating workplace safety. This round of layoffs got rid of most remaining staff at NIOSH, which had already been cut extensively in the April 1 RIFs. ^{lxxviii} Those let go included staff on a program evaluating safety equipment, including breathing apparatuses used by first responders, and nurses and scientists working at a program offering monitoring and treatment for those with long-term injuries sustained during or in responding to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. ^{lxxix}

40	May 5, 2025	Gave DOGE authority to stop NIH grants. DOGE was able to monitor pending NIH grants and in some cases halt grants that had already been promised. ^{lxxx} In the period from May 5-16, when DOGE's review began, NIH awarded five times fewer grants than it had in a period of equal length in the previous month. ^{lxxxi}
41	May 20, 2025	Upended COVID-19 vaccine approval process. In an article in the New England Journal of Medicine, FDA Commissioner Marty Makary and Vinay Prasad, the FDA's top vaccine official, suggested that FDA would need new randomized controlled trials to approve yearly variants for the COVID-19 vaccine. ^{lxxxii} Public health experts noted that the new procedure they laid out was not published in the Federal Register and provided no opportunity for public comment, as is typically the case, and left many questions unanswered, including how the changes would impact insurance coverage. ^{lxxxiii}
42	May 20, 2025	Failed to respond to lead exposure crisis. As part of the April 1 RIF, Kennedy fired all of the staff on CDC's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, around the same time that lead exposure forced the closure of multiple schools in Milwaukee, displacing 1,800 students. ^{lxxxiv} At a May 20 appearance before the Senate Appropriations Committee, Kennedy claimed that funding had been restored and that a CDC team was in the city of Milwaukee, but local officials said there had never been a team there and that schools remained closed. ^{lxxxv}
43	May 22, 2025	Released an error-filled report on childhood chronic disease. On May 22, HHS released the "MAHA Commission" report. ^{lxxxvi} Within days public reporting had identified citations in the report to studies that did not appear to exist. ^{lxxxvii} In response to the reporting, HHS updated at least 18 citations, several of which contained studies whose authors say the report had misinterpreted. ^{lxxxviii}

44	May 27, 2025	<p>Changed recommendations for COVID-19 vaccines without consulting vaccine recommendation body. Kennedy announced that he had removed the recommendation for healthy children and pregnant women to be vaccinated against COVID-19.^{lxxxix} The decision appeared to contradict Makary's statement a week before that the vaccine would still be recommended for people with preexisting conditions, including pregnancy.^{xc} Asked why Kennedy had not waited for the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), which is traditionally responsible for issuing vaccine recommendations, Makary said that ACIP would "just rubber stamp everything."^{xc}</p>
45	May 28, 2025	<p>Cancelled a contract to develop a bird flu vaccine. The contract with Moderna to develop a vaccine against H5N1 had been signed shortly before the beginning of the second Trump Administration, and the company said that early phase trials had showed "a rapid, potent, and durable immune response."^{xcii} Along with forcing farmers to cull millions of chickens earlier in 2025, the bird flu sickened dozens of people and killed one.^{xciii}</p>
46	May 30, 2025	<p>Gave political appointees power to screen research at VA. The Department of Veterans Affairs assistant secretary for public and intergovernmental affairs ordered department scientists not to publish in medical journals before clearing their work with the Trump Administration appointees, just hours after two VA pulmonologists published an article the New England Journal of Medicine warning about the impact of funding cuts on the treatment of veterans.^{xciv}</p>

47	June 9, 2025	<p>Fired all sitting members of key vaccine advisory panel. Kennedy dismissed all 17 sitting members of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), claiming that a “clean sweep” was “necessary to reestablish public confidence in vaccine science.”^{xcv} While the terminated members were among the most knowledgeable and respected immunologists and public health experts in the country, the new panel, whose members were announced by Kennedy several days later, featured several people with a record of expressing unfounded doubts about vaccine safety, or with comparatively little experience.^{xcvi} One new member would go on to post memes hinting at gun violence against government officials less than 48 hours after a police officer was killed by a gunman attacking CDC headquarters.^{xcvii}</p>
48	June 17, 2025	<p>Announced plans to reduce review of some pharmaceutical products. FDA Commissioner Makary said the agency would rapidly reduce the amount of time it spent reviewing certain drugs for companies “aligned with U.S. national priorities.”^{xcviii} The decision appeared to be in contradiction with the Administration’s policies calling for lengthier, more extensive review of vaccines.^{xcix} In a journal commentary published the week before, Makary and Prasad said that “[Artificial intelligence] can make a first-pass review of documentation received by FDA.”^c</p>
49	June 18, 2025	<p>Forced out FDA’s lead reviewer of cell and gene therapies. Nicole Verdun, who had previously worked on bringing treatments for rare diseases to the market, was placed on administrative leave and escorted out of FDA headquarters.^{ci} She received no explanation, but an HHS spokesperson said FDA needed staff who were “aligned” with the Administration’s efforts.^{cii} Verdun had been perceived in the biotech community as providing continuity with Peter Marks, the FDA official ousted in late March over his unwillingness to follow Kennedy’s vaccine agenda.^{ciii}</p>

50	June 28, 2025	<p>Withheld Congressionally authorized funding from CDC that serves state and local public health systems. Health departments across the country were reporting unpredictable delays in receiving grants they depended on from CDC.^{civ} CDC employees said that these were attributable to months-long delays in receiving Congressionally authorized funds for fiscal 2025, forcing the agency to budget in 30-day increments and impairing state and local public health work.^{cv}</p>
51	July 9, 2025	<p>Cancelled meeting of preventive care experts. Kennedy cancelled the meeting of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) just day before it was to occur.^{cvi} Subsequent reporting indicated Kennedy was considering ousting all members of the panel, which determines which preventive services should be covered by insurance, because they were too “woke.”^{cvii}</p>
52	July 18, 2025	<p>Dissolved EPA Office of Research and Development (ORD). The Trump Administration described the elimination of ORD as part of its “comprehensive restructuring efforts” at EPA, which it states have shrunk EPA’s workforce by nearly 4,000 employees.^{cviii} Although the Administration claimed it had supplemented other divisions to remain able to “tackle statutory obligations and mission essential functions,” scientists feared that it would impair their ability to assess risks of mixing certain chemicals, and compromise databases used by a wide variety of researchers.^{cix}</p>
53	July 29, 2025	<p>Proposed changing landmark scientific finding about climate change. EPA announced its intent to “rescind” the endangerment finding, a scientific determination that greenhouse gases posed a threat to human health.^{cx} In doing so, the Trump Administration cited a report from five scientists, some of whom it had recently hired, with a record of casting doubt on the thoroughly established connection between fossil fuels and climate change.^{cx}</p>

54	August 5, 2025	Abandoned \$500 million in mRNA vaccine development. HHS said that the move would impact 22 studies and was part of “a broader shift in federal vaccine development priorities.” ^{cxii} Public health experts said the move’s biggest impact would be to lessen “our preparedness and national security for the next emerging pathogen or pandemic.” ^{cxiii}
55	August 7, 2025	Gave political appointees control over science grants. President Trump issued an executive order on “Improving Oversight of Federal Grantmaking,” requiring that a political appointee review funding announcements and discretionary grants for every federal agency to ensure that they are consistent with “agency priorities and the national interest.” ^{cxiv} The order, experts said, takes funding decisions away from fellow scientists and “thoroughly politicizes” research. ^{cxv}
56	August 8, 2025	Offered a tepid response to a shooting at CDC, abandoning agency staff. A gunman who reportedly believed that COVID-19 vaccines were responsible for ailments he suffered from killed a police officer and fired hundreds of rounds at CDC headquarters, but Kennedy did not address the shooting until the following day, 30 minutes after posting images of himself fishing to his personal account. ^{cxvi} In his first interview following the shooting, Kennedy said, “One of the things we saw during COVID was that the government was overreaching in its efforts to persuade the public to get vaccinated and they were saying things that were not always true.” ^{cxvii} Kennedy’s response, combined with his past criticism of CDC as corrupt, caused agency employees to feel unsafe and angry. ^{cxviii} As of September 8, President Trump had yet to mention the shooting, although he had commented on other violent crimes during this period. ^{cxix}

57	August 27, 2025	<p>Fired the CDC director and forced out top agency officials. Kennedy reportedly pressed CDC Director Susan Monarez to commit to changes in vaccine policy and to fire top CDC officials.^{cxx} When she declined, President Trump fired her, prompting three other CDC officials to resign: Dr. Demetre Daskalakis, the agency's top respiratory illness and immunization official; Dr. Deb Houry, the chief medical officer; and Dr. Dan Jernigan, who oversaw infectious disease response.^{cxxi} Each wrote resignation letters expressing concern over the state of the agency they were leaving.^{cxxii}</p>
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Endnotes

ⁱ Exec. Order No. 14155, 90 C.F.R. 8361 (Jan. 20, 2025), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/withdrawing-the-united-states-from-the-worldhealth-organization/>.

ⁱⁱ Lawrence Gostin, et al., *US withdrawal from WHO is unlawful and threatens global and US health and security*, THE LANCET, Volume 396, Issue 10247, 293 – 295, [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)31527-0/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)31527-0/fulltext).

ⁱⁱⁱ Brenda Goodman & Meg Tirrell, *Trump administration directs federal health agencies to pause communications*, CNN (Jan. 22, 2025), <https://www.cnn.com/2025/01/21/health/hhs-cdc-fda-trump-pause-communication>.

^{iv} Grard Gallagher, Caitlyn Stulpin & Stephen I. Feller, *Famed CDC Journal goes unpublished amid HHS communications freeze*, HEALIO (Jan. 24, 2025), <https://www.healio.com/news/infectious-disease/20250124/famed-cdc-journal-goes-unpublished-amid-hhs-communications-freeze>.

^v Anil Oza, *Trump administration's abrupt cancellation of scientific meetings prompts confusion, concern*, STAT (Jan. 20, 2025), <https://www.statnews.com/2025/01/22/trump-administrations-cancels-scientific-meetings-abruptly/>.

^{vi} *Id.*

^{vii} Memorandum from Matthew J. Vaeth, Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget, Subject, Temporary Pause of Agency Grant, Loan, and Other Financial Assistance Programs, M-25-13 (Jan. 27, 2025), <https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/25506186/m-25-13-temporary-pause-to-review-agency-grant-loan-and-other-financial-assistance-programs.pdf>.

^{viii} *Federal Grant Freeze Causes Confusion for Cancer Centers*, ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN CANCER INSTITUTES, <https://www.aaci-cancer.org/news-federal-grant-freeze-causes-confusion-for-cancer-centers> (last visited Sept. 5, 2025).

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