

Vermont Chapter

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American Academy of Pediatrics
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VERMONT ACADEMY OF
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Allow Vermont to Uphold Evidence-Based Vaccine Recommendations: Support H.545

The Vermont Medical Society, American Academy of Pediatrics Vermont Chapter, and the Vermont Academy of Family Physicians strongly support H. 545 as it allows Vermont to uphold evidence-based medical recommendations regarding vaccines and ensure Vermont specific responsiveness.

What does H. 545 do?

H.545 establishes clear statutory authority for Vermont's Commissioner of Health to issue immunization recommendations, creating a single, consistent framework for determining which vaccinations are recommended for clinicians to provide, which vaccines the state can purchase and distribute through our immunization program, and which vaccines insurance providers should cover at no cost sharing to patients. It directs the Commissioner to consult with the Vermont Immunization Advisory Council and consider recommendations from authorities such as the CDC, and the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and the American College of Physicians.

Why do we need H. 545?

Recent changes in federal vaccine recommendations have created wide-spread confusion among health care professionals and their patients regarding immunization recommendations, coverage, and where vaccines should be obtained. The federal recommendations have also begun to diverge from evidence-based recommendations from experts and national medical organizations and many have been made without even consulting the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). There were numerous references in Vermont statute to following the recommendations of ACIP, which will be replaced in H. 545 with following the vaccinations recommendations of the Commissioner.

Does this bill prevent Vermont from following federal recommendations?

No, the Commissioner can still look to the CDC and ACIP as a basis for determining Vermont-specific recommendations.

Is Vermont the only state expanding references in statute beyond just looking to ACIP recommendations?

No, [as of October 2025](#), California, Colorado, Maine, Maryland, and Washington, D.C., have enacted legislation moving away from sole reliance on ACIP recommendations, and bills are under consideration in Massachusetts, New Mexico, New York, and Pennsylvania.

Does this bill change anything about required vaccinations?

No, nothing in this bill requires any patient – adult or child – to receive any vaccinations. Nor does it require any practitioner to provide any vaccinations. [Vermont's School Entry Immunization Rule](#) (authority set by [18 VSA § 1121](#)) sets the minimum vaccination requirements for certain regulated child care and educational programs, but nothing in this bill addresses or changes any of those existing requirements.

Do we need to do more in statute about informed consent for vaccination?

No, Vermont law already requires informed consent for medical procedures. [12 V.S.A. § 1909\(a\) and \(d\)](#) state that it could be malpractice if a person providing professional treatment or diagnosis fails to disclose to the patient alternatives and reasonably foreseeable risks and benefits in a procedure or fails to provide a reasonable answer to any specific question about foreseeable risks and benefits. Specific to vaccines, [federal law](#) (under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act, NCIVA) requires a healthcare professional to provide a copy of a current Vaccine Information Sheet to an adult patient or to a child's parent/legal representative before vaccinating an adult or child with a dose of routine vaccines.

Why do we need immunity for health care providers?

Practitioners increasingly face legal uncertainty as immunization recommendations rapidly evolve. H.545 provides essential civil liability protection for licensed health care professionals who act in accordance with official Vermont recommendations. This protection supports high-quality care, reduces defensive practice, and allows our health professionals to focus on patient-centered decision-making.

For Questions or More Information Contact:

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