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# Public Health Authority Legislative Update

July 2023

## Expanded Scope of Practice for Vaccine Administration

Laws expanding vaccination access were an important public health authority state legislative trend in 2022, and the trend continues.

Despite intensified anti-vaccine rhetoric during the COVID-19 pandemic, almost 70% of the U.S population is considered fully [vaccinated against COVID-19](#) (over 80% has received at least one dose). That [translates to](#) the prevention of 3.2 million additional deaths, 18.5 million additional hospitalizations, and almost 120 million more infections as well as over \$1 trillion in medical costs saved.

While these benefits have not been across the board – with [differences](#) by race/ethnicity, community type, education, and political affiliation – laws that expand access to vaccines by increasing the vaccination workforce (also known as expanded scope of practice laws) are an opportunity to advance health and health equity.

Between January 1 and May 22, 2023, 66 bills expanding vaccination access have been introduced in 28 states. This includes at least 8 enacted laws in 6 states (GA, KS, MD, MT, NC, and WV).

**New York** introduced a bill that permits dentists to administer vaccines for COVID-19 and the flu and vaccines related to a declared public health emergency ([S 7356](#)).

**Montana** enacted a law to allow pharmacists to delegate the administration of authorized immunizations to a licensed intern or to a pharmacy technician under the supervision of the pharmacist ([HB 710](#)).

**New Hampshire** introduced a bill to expand the practice of optometry to include administering influenza, COVID-19,

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and shingles vaccines that have been approved by the FDA to adults ([SB 200](#)).

Visit LawAtlas for more information on [laws](#) addressing public health authority to respond to emergencies.

## Further reading

Popovian, R., [Pharmacists are the solution for the lagging vaccinate rates of seniors in the U.S](#) (June 2023).

Stoecker, C., [Shooting from the 'Scrip: Scope of Practice Laws and Access to Immunizations in the Pharmacy Setting](#) (May 2021).

National Governors Association, [State Strategies to Increase COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in Rural Communities](#) (August 2021).

Barraza, L., Schmit, C., Hoss, A., [The Latest in Vaccine Policies: Selected Issues in School Vaccinations, Healthcare Worker Vaccinations, and Pharmacist Vaccination Authority Laws](#) (March 2017).

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REPORT



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