

State's Faith-Based Vaccine Exemptions Reversed

The West Virginia Board of Education reinstated its ban on religious exemptions to vaccine requirements in schools after the state Supreme Court paused a lower court's decision allowing the exemptions.

"In light of the West Virginia Supreme Court's stay of the class certification order and the permanent injunction order entered in Raleigh County Circuit Court, the West Virginia Board of Education is reinstating its directive to county boards of education not to accept religious exemptions to compulsory vaccination laws," the board said in a statement. "This directive will be in effect until the Supreme Court issues further guidance. Our priority is to ensure compliance with W. Va. Code §16-3-4 and safeguard the health and well-being of all students across West Virginia."



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Last week, Raleigh County Circuit Judge Michael Froble issued a permanent injunction on a lawsuit filed earlier this year, allowing students who refused to comply with the vaccine mandates to attend class and extracurricular activities. The ruling mandated that the state's Board of Education align policies with the Equal Protection for Religious Protection Act of 2023, which permits children with religious exemptions to attend school.

The West Virginia Supreme Court stayed the ruling on December 2.

"Upon consideration and review, the Court is of the opinion to, and does, grant the petitioners' motion to stay. Enforcement of the circuit court's November 26, 2025,

'Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order Granting Permanent Injunction and Declaratory Relief' and any further proceedings in circuit court are stayed pending resolution of this petition for a writ of prohibition," the court found.

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