

Advisory Commission on Childhood Vaccines Frequently Asked Questions

About the Advisory Commission on Childhood Vaccines (ACCV)

1. What is the ACCV?

The ACCV advises the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (the Secretary) on issues related to the implementation of the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP).

2. What is the VICP?

The VICP provides compensation to people found to be injured by certain vaccines. Even in cases in which such a finding is not made, petitioners may receive compensation through a settlement.

3. What are specific examples of work the ACCV conducts?

- Recommends changes to the VICP to the Secretary.
- Recommends Vaccine Injury Table (Table) changes to the Secretary, at its own initiative or as a result of someone from the public filing a petition to request a change to the Table.
- Provides advice to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding the development or revision of Vaccine Information Statements.

Membership Requirements and General Questions

1. How many members are appointed to serve on the ACCV?

The ACCV consists of nine voting members appointed by the Secretary as follows:

- (1) Three health professionals, who are not employees of the United States Government, and who have expertise in the health care of children, the epidemiology, etiology, and prevention of childhood diseases, and the adverse reactions associated with vaccines, of whom at least two shall be pediatricians;
- (2) three members from the general public, of whom at least two shall be legal representatives (parents or guardians) of children who have suffered a vaccine-related injury or death; and
- (3) three attorneys, of whom at least one shall be an attorney whose specialty includes representation of persons who have suffered a vaccine-related injury or death, and of whom one shall be an attorney whose specialty includes representation of vaccine manufacturers.

In addition, the Director of the National Institutes of Health, the Assistant Secretary for Health, the Director of the CDC, and the Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration (or the designees of such officials) serve as nonvoting ex officio members.

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2. What criteria determines if individuals are legal representatives (parents or guardians) of a vaccine-injured child?

At least two of the three ACCV members of the general public must be legal representatives (parents or guardians) of children who have suffered a vaccine-related injury or death. To be considered for appointment to the ACCV in this category, the individual must be the legal representative of a child who suffered a vaccine-related injury or death. Specifically, there must have been a finding (*i.e.*, a decision) by the U.S. Court of Federal Claims or a civil court that a VICP-covered vaccine caused, or was presumed to have caused, the represented child's injury or death.

3. How can someone become a member of the ACCV?

The Secretary will consider nominations of all qualified individuals and will appoint qualified nominees ensuring that the ACCV includes the areas of expertise noted on the previous page.

4. How long are ACCV members appointed?

ACCV members serve 3-year terms.

5. Are ACCV members government employees?

Yes. ACCV members are appointed as Special Government Employees. As such, they are covered by the federal government ethics rules, including the criminal conflict of interest statutes governing executive branch employees. For example, an ACCV member may be prohibited from discussions about making changes to the Vaccine Injury Table and Vaccine Information Statements for the Hepatitis B vaccine if he/she or his/her spouse owns stock valued above a certain amount in companies which manufacture this vaccine, affecting their own pecuniary interests, including interests imputed to them. To evaluate possible conflicts of interest, potential candidates complete the Confidential Financial Disclosure Report, OGE Form 450, to provide detailed information concerning financial interests, consultancies, research grants, and/or contracts that might be affected by recommendations made by the ACCV.

6. How often does the ACCV meet?

The ACCV meets four times per year and these meetings usually occur in March, June, September and December (quarterly). Most of these meetings are one day; however, if there are more agenda items than usual, the meeting may last two days.

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7. Are the quarterly meetings the only time ACCV members meet?

No, members may volunteer to serve on ACCV workgroups to develop recommendations on specific issues related to the VICP. Most workgroup meetings are held via conference call and may meet once a month for 1-2 hours.

8. Does ACCV membership require travel?

Generally, two of the four ACCV meetings are in person in Rockville, Maryland (in the Washington D.C. metro area), where the VICP is located; the other two meetings are held via the internet and telephone conference call. When in-person meetings occur, members may participate via the internet and/or telephone conference call if traveling to the meeting presents a hardship.

9. Do ACCV members receive compensation?

Yes. ACCV members are paid \$598 per day for attending the quarterly meetings (in-person and internet/telephone conference call meetings). Lodging and travel expenses are reimbursed for in-person meetings according to federal government travel guidelines.

ACCV Member Nomination Process

1. How do I apply to serve on the ACCV?

To be considered for an appointment to the ACCV, a nomination package should be submitted as hard copy, email communication, or on a compact disk. Individuals can nominate themselves or be nominated by someone else.

A nomination package should include the following information for each nominee:

- (1) a letter of nomination stating the name, affiliation, and contact information for the nominee, the basis for the nomination (i.e., what specific attributes, perspectives, and/or skills does the individual possess that would benefit the workings of the ACCV) and the nominee's field(s) of expertise;
- (2) a biographical sketch of the nominee and a copy of his/her curriculum vitae; and
- (3) the name, address, daytime telephone number, and email address at which the nominator can be contacted.

2. How long does it take to be appointed after a nomination is received?

It varies, and generally can range from 12 to 14 months.

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ACCV Contact Information

1. Who do I contact for more information about ACCV membership?

For more information, please contact Pita Gomez, ACCV Principal Staff Liaison, at 1-800-338-2382 or email: ACCV@hrsa.gov. The ACCV website can be accessed at: <https://www.hrsa.gov/advisory-committees/vaccines>. The ACCV is administered by the Division of Injury Compensation Programs, Health Systems Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services.

2. Does the VICP have a website?

Yes, the VICP website may be accessed at:
<https://www.hrsa.gov/vaccine-compensation/about/index.html>.