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# HHS Winds Down mRNA Vaccine Development Under BARDA

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) today announced the beginning of a coordinated wind-down of its mRNA vaccine development activities under the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), including the cancellation and de-scoping of various contracts and solicitations. The decision follows a comprehensive review of mRNA-related investments initiated during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

“We reviewed the science, listened to the experts, and acted,” **said HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.** “BARDA is terminating 22 mRNA vaccine development investments because the data <https://zenodo.org/records/15787612> show these vaccines fail to protect effectively against upper

respiratory infections like COVID and flu. We're shifting that funding toward safer, broader vaccine platforms that remain effective even as viruses mutate.”

The wind-down affects a range of programs including:

- **Termination** of contracts with Emory University and Tiba Biotech.
- **De-scoping of mRNA-related work** in existing contracts with Luminary Labs, ModeX, and Seqirus.
- **Rejection or cancellation of multiple pre-award solicitations**, including proposals from Pfizer, Sanofi Pasteur, CSL Seqirus, Gritstone, and others, as part of BARDA's Rapid Response Partnership Vehicle (RRPV) and VITAL Hub.
- **Restructuring of collaborations with DoD-JPEO**, affecting nucleic acid-based vaccine projects with AAHI, AstraZeneca, HDT Bio, and Moderna/UTMB.

While some final-stage contracts (e.g., Arcturus and Amplitude) will be allowed to run their course to preserve prior taxpayer investment, no new mRNA-based projects will be initiated. HHS has also instructed its partner, Global Health Investment Corporation (GHIC), which manages BARDA Ventures, to cease all mRNA-based equity investments. In total, this affects 22 projects worth nearly \$500 million. Other uses of mRNA technology within the department are not impacted by this announcement.

“Let me be absolutely clear: HHS supports safe, effective vaccines for every American who wants them. That's why we're moving beyond the limitations of mRNA and investing in better solutions,” **said Secretary Kennedy.**

The move signals a broader shift in federal vaccine development priorities. Going forward, BARDA will focus on platforms with stronger safety records and transparent clinical and manufacturing data practices. Technologies that were funded during the emergency phase but failed to meet current scientific standards will be phased out in favor of evidence-based, ethically grounded solutions – like whole-virus vaccines and novel platforms.

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