



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on February 12, 2026

States Join WHO Network; CDC-WHO Cooperation Continues Despite U.S. Withdrawal

In the wake of the federal government's withdrawal from the World Health Organization (WHO), some U.S. jurisdictions are moving in the opposite direction. California, Illinois, New York, and New York City have joined the WHO's Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN), an international outbreak-coordination system. At the same time, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) maintains active ties to the same infrastructure, along with numerous other globalist "health" frameworks.



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States Move Back

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [confirmed](#) on January 22:

Following its formal withdrawal from WHO in January 2026, the United States has completed the legal withdrawal process, ending its membership, governance participation, and funding contributions.

The organization [responded](#) that the decision "makes both the United States and the world less safe." It also expressed hope that the country would eventually return.

Less than 24 hours after the withdrawal became official, state leaders began moving toward WHO-linked structures.

California became the first state to formally align with a WHO platform after Democratic Governor Gavin Newsom met with Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus in Geneva. In a January 23 [statement](#), Newsom said:

The Trump administration's withdrawal from WHO is a reckless decision that will hurt all Californians and Americans. California will not bear witness to the chaos this decision will bring.

Illinois followed. On February 3, Governor J.B. Pritzker, also a Democrat, [announced](#):

By withdrawing from the World Health Organization, Donald Trump has undermined science and weakened our nation's ability to detect and respond to global health threats. I refuse to sit idly by and let that happen.

On February 5, New York City became the first municipal health department in the United States [to join](#) GOARN. Acting Health Commissioner Michelle Morse stated, "the NYC Health Department is joining



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hundreds of public health institutions worldwide that share critical public health information.” She emphasized the department’s global reach, noting that it is one of the largest public-health agencies in the world and serves more than 8.5 million residents while also supporting the health of over 12 million international visitors each year.

Shortly afterward, New York state followed suit. Governor Kathy Hochul [announced](#) on Thursday that the state would also align with the network.

The WHO [formally welcomed](#) the new U.S. partners.

What’s GOARN?

The mechanism drawing states back into the WHO orbit is the [Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network](#). Established in 2000, it was created with the ostensible mission to improve “[global] coordination during global health emergencies.” The WHO [describes](#) it as

a global technical partnership and a key mechanism to engage the resources of technical agencies beyond the United Nations for rapid identification, confirmation of and response to public health emergencies of international importance.

Despite that description, GOARN is not a legislature or treaty body. It does not carry the force of law, but functions instead as a coordination system. Members, which can include national health agencies, academic centers, laboratories, nongovernmental organizations, and technical networks, share outbreak intelligence, deploy specialists upon request, and synchronize epidemic response strategies.

The network has expanded significantly since its founding. It now encompasses hundreds of institutions across roughly 360 partner organizations worldwide. It is often referred to as a “network of networks,” reflecting its role as an umbrella structure linking existing surveillance, laboratory, and emergency-response systems.

GOARN partners have participated in numerous real-world outbreak [responses](#). During the 2003 SARS outbreak, teams of GOARN experts deployed to affected cities across Asia. The network later supported responses to Ebola outbreaks in West Africa, cholera emergencies, influenza risk-assessment missions, and emerging threats across regions such as the Pacific Islands and the Western Pacific.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, GOARN deployments expanded. Between January 2020 and May 2023, seventy-two experts were sent on eighty-nine missions across 12 countries to support response operations.

To sum it up, GOARN functions as the operational arm of global outbreak response, placing technical teams directly into crisis zones, coordinating data flows, and linking local health authorities with international decision-makers in real time.

The CDC’s Continuing Role

The two states and New York City are not the only ones continuing with the collaboration.

Despite the highly publicized exit from the notoriously corrupt WHO, federal operational ties to it remain extensive. In its announcement, HHS stated that “hundreds of U.S. engagements with WHO have been suspended or discontinued.”

Hundreds — but not all. The ties to the “network of networks” are still very much in place.



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The CDC, one of the agencies housed under the sprawling, unconstitutional HHS apparatus ostensibly responsible for protecting public health, continues to function inside multiple international frameworks linked to WHO programs.

On its “[Global Health Protection](#)” webpage, the agency describes work aimed at strengthening global disease detection, response, and workforce capacity so that outbreaks can be identified and contained before they reach the United States.

The CDC [explains](#) that GOARN “leverages the expertise and resources” of its extensive partner network. That includes the agency’s Division of Global Health Protection ([DGHP](#)), to deploy specialists and technical teams worldwide.

According to the agency, collaboration through GOARN improves “global health security” by helping countries respond more rapidly to disease threats and by strengthening public-health systems internationally. In reality, such language reflects a broader architecture of transnational coordination that continues largely unchanged despite Washington’s formal withdrawal from WHO governance.

But the connections do not stop with GOARN.

Other WHO Ties

Another partner listed by the CDC is the Training Programs in Epidemiology and Public Health Interventions Network ([TEPHINET](#)). The WHO [describes](#) it as an “invaluable partner.” Founded in 1997 with support from both the WHO and the CDC, it spans over 100 countries. Operated through the global nonprofit [Task Force for Global Health](#), the network trains epidemiologists and surveillance specialists.

The CDC is also [deeply involved](#) in the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA). The initiative’s [stated goal](#) is to “accelerate implementation” of the WHO’s [International Health Regulations of 2005](#). That’s a legally binding international framework governing cross-border disease surveillance and emergency response. Last July, the United States [opted out](#) of the 2024 amendments to those rules. However, it remains a party to the underlying agreement itself.

Meanwhile, the CDC’s influenza division appears to [still serving](#) as a WHO collaborating center, feeding viral surveillance data into the Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System ([GISRS](#)).

The agency’s international integration extends into laboratory systems as well. Through its Division of Global Health Protection, the CDC [collaborates](#) with the Global Laboratory Leadership Programme ([GLLP](#)). This WHO initiative aims to strengthen national laboratory systems using a “[One Health](#)” model that integrates human, animal, and environmental monitoring.

Finally, the CDC also works through outside intermediaries to expand these and other global partnerships. One of the most prominent is the [CDC Foundation](#), a congressionally chartered nonprofit created to help the agency collaborate with corporations, philanthropies, and other private entities in support of health-related [programs](#). Besides pharmaceutical giants such as Pfizer, its [donor roster](#) includes major global actors such as the Gates Foundation and the Gavi vaccine alliance — both partners of the WHO. It even includes the WHO itself. The foundation has also [worked directly](#) with WHO-affiliated initiatives, placing it within the same interconnected global ecosystem.

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