

## **Securing the Trustworthiness of the FDA to Build Public Trust in Vaccines**

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### **Abstract**

The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the need to examine public trust in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) vaccine approval process and the role of political influence in the FDA's decisions. Ensuring that the FDA is itself trustworthy is important for justifying public trust in its actions, like vaccine approvals, thereby promoting public health. We propose five conditions of trustworthiness that the FDA should meet when it reviews vaccines, even during emergencies: consistency with rules, proper expert or political decision-makers, proper decision-making and noninterference, connection to public preference, and transparency of both reasons and procedures. The five conditions provide a roadmap of procedural and substantive requirements, which the FDA has variably implemented, focused on ensuring appropriate influence of political interests. While being a trustworthy agency cannot guarantee the public's trust, implementing these conditions build a groundwork for public trust.