



Restore Access to All PEPFAR-Supported HIV Services Immediately

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IAS – the International AIDS Society – notes the decision to waive the suspension of “life-saving humanitarian assistance,” including “core life-saving medicine.” This should now ensure that HIV treatment disbursed by the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) can continue across all PEPFAR-supported countries.

The Trump administration froze foreign aid funding, [including to PEPFAR and, unexpectedly on January 24, it imposed a stop-work order on existing operations](#). Clinic staff were sent home, distribution of antiretrovirals bought with U.S. funds was halted – cutting off HIV treatment for 20.6 million people. On January 28, new US Secretary of State Marco Rubio [issued a temporary waiver](#) of aspects of this freeze.

“Since its bipartisan creation, PEPFAR has always been synonymous with saving lives and this waiver restores – in some part – that legacy. However, PEPFAR’s continued and uninterrupted support of all HIV treatment and prevention services must be fully restored,” IAS president Beatriz Grinsztejn said.

“PEPFAR has been and should continue to be an active contributor to changing the trajectory of the HIV epidemic. It is our hope that this waiver remains in place and will be expanded to all HIV services.”

For now, the emphasis should be on ensuring that, as a matter of urgency, PEPFAR implementers return to work to ensure that access to critical HIV services is not further interrupted and that communities most in need are able to get the care and treatment they need.

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