
ADMINISTRATION

Fauci to leave Biden administration in December

BY NATHANIEL WEIXEL - 08/22/22 11:13 AM ET

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Fauci, the chief medical adviser to the president and longtime director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), said he will be leaving those positions to “pursue the next chapter in my career.”

“While I am moving on from my current positions, I am not retiring,” Fauci said in a statement Monday. “After more than 50 years of government service, I plan to pursue the next phase of my career while I still have so much energy and passion for my field.”

Fauci, 81, has led the NIAID for 38 years, and has advised every president since Ronald Reagan.

In a statement, President Biden praised Fauci as a dedicated public servant with a “steadying hand” who helped guide the country through some of “the most dangerous and challenging” public health crises.

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Fauci has been at the forefront of every new and re-emerging infectious disease threat the country has faced over the past four decades, including HIV/AIDS, West Nile virus, the 2001 anthrax attacks, pandemic influenza, Ebola and Zika, and most recently the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Because of Dr. Fauci’s many contributions to public health, lives here in the United States and around the world have been saved. As he leaves his position in the U.S. Government, I know the American people and the entire world will continue to benefit from Dr. Fauci’s expertise in whatever he does next,” Biden said.

Biden worked closely with Fauci during the Zika and Ebola outbreaks when he was vice president, and has leaned heavily on Fauci’s expertise during the COVID-19 pandemic. Biden noted one of his first calls as president-elect was to ask Fauci to become his chief medical advisor.



Fauci previously said he does not plan stay beyond the end of President Biden’s first term in 2025 but had yet to give a formal announcement



Fauci said he would use his remaining time in government to “continue to put my full effort, passion and commitment into my current responsibilities” and to help prepare his institute for a leadership transition.



Fauci has been one of the leading infectious diseases researchers for decades, but he became a household name at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic during the Trump administration as part of the White House pandemic response team.

It was in this role that Fauci became a political lightning rod. He fell out of favor with Trump after numerous public disagreements over unproven COVID-19 treatments as well as the level of danger posed by the virus.

Fauci’s embrace of mitigation measures like masks and temporary business closures early in the pandemic made him a villain to conservatives, who view him as a symbol of government overreach and “lockdown culture.”





Threats from the public led to Fauci needing a security detail.

Fauci has clashed repeatedly with Republicans in Congress, who are are eagerly floating investigations into the Biden administration's response to the coronavirus pandemic if they win back control of the House or Senate in November's midterm elections.

Fauci's fiercest clashes have come against Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), a libertarian ophthalmologist who has repeatedly antagonized Fauci over the benefits of masks, vaccinations and the origins of COVID-19.

"Fauci's resignation will not prevent a full-throated investigation into the origins of the pandemic. He will be asked to testify under oath regarding any discussions he participated in concerning the lab leak," Paul [tweeted](#) Monday.

Following Fauci's announcement Monday, House Republicans also indicated Fauci's decision to leave government won't shield him from any potential investigations.

Rep. James Comer (R-Ky.), the top Republican on the House Oversight Committee, said in a statement Monday Fauci needs to answer questions about what he knows about the origins of the coronavirus, including whether the National Institutes of Health helped fund controversial research that led to the



The U.S. intelligence community has ruled out the possibility that COVID-19 was a bioweapon developed by China, but beyond that the origins of the virus are unclear.

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Some scientists have said the idea that it escaped from a lab needs further investigation but acknowledge that won't happen without China's help. Many others think that it spilled into the human population from animals sold in a Wuhan market.

Still, there is little evidence to suggest it was created in a lab or with funding help from the National Institutes of Health or Fauci.

Updated at 12:30 p.m.

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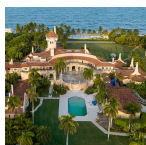
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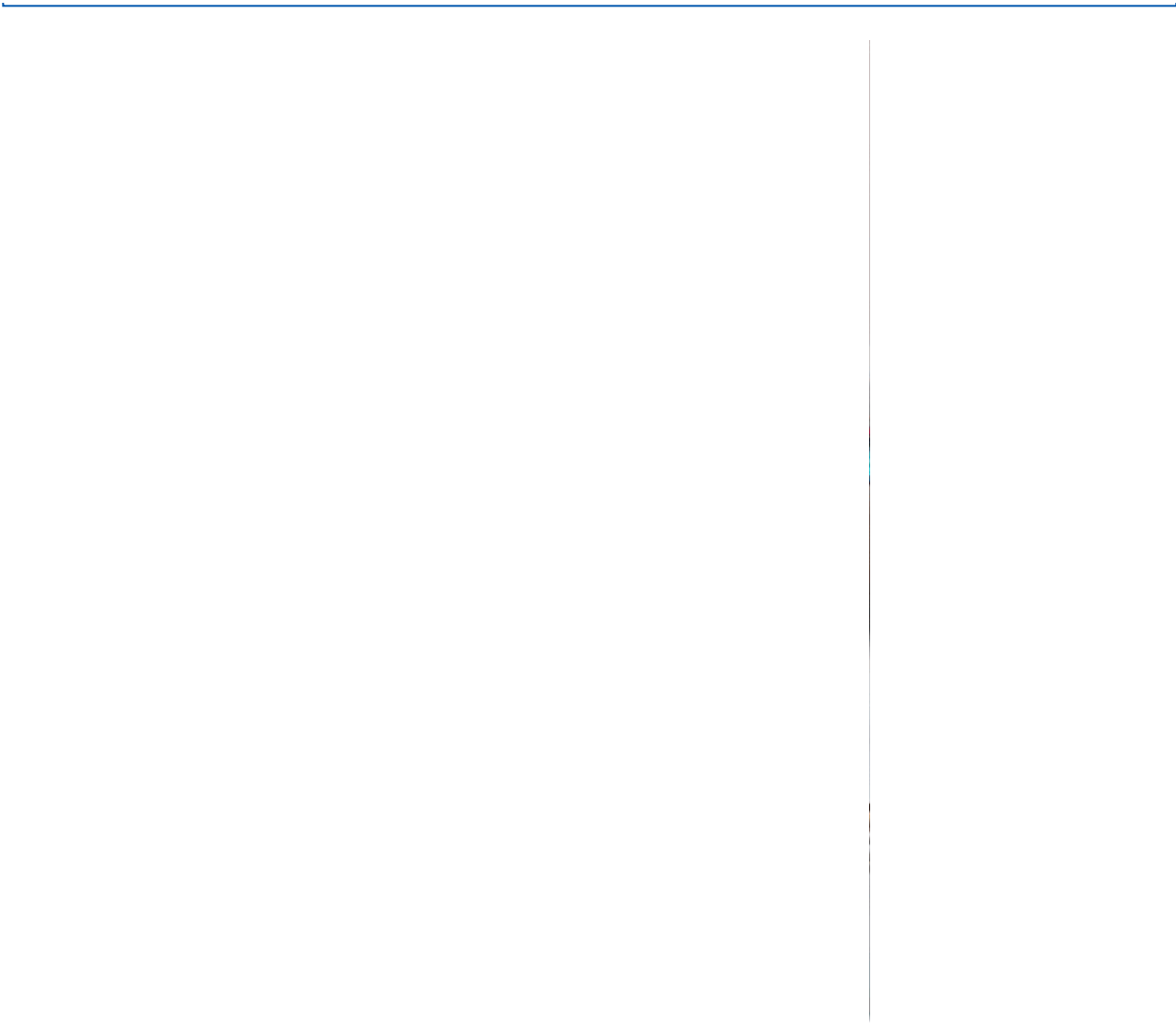
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