

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Ron DeSantis
Governor

Joseph A. Ladapo, MD, PhD
State Surgeon General

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

May 12, 2022

Robert M. Califf, MD, MACC
Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Ave
Silver Springs, MD 20993

Sent via e-mail and U.S. Postal Service

Dr. Califf,

On February 17, 2022, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [issued a warning](#) and a voluntary recall on numerous powdered infant formula produced by Abbott Nutrition's facility in Sturgis, Michigan. As you know, this facility produces a majority of the formula supply for the United States and has since been shut down, causing baby formula supplies nationwide to dwindle.

The Florida Department of Health (Department) proactively contacted all retailers that accept Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits to recommend ordering an alternative supply of powdered infant formula, when the initial recall was issued in February by Abbott Nutrition. The Department also serves medically complex children whose lives depend on medical specialty formula. While we found alternative products in an effort to off-set the shortage caused by the FDA's lack of oversight, the cost of these alternatives remains high, and the availability is low.

Floridians are worried about the lack of formula availability. Our agency is charged with the protection of public health and needs as much information as possible to continue serving our most vulnerable residents and prevent potentially catastrophic public health consequences.

As you know, the FDA has recently acknowledged the formula shortage, caused by its warning and recall. Time is of the essence to restart production at the Abbott facility, yet the FDA has failed to produce any preliminary findings necessary to begin the reopening process and update the nation on this issue.

As a father, doctor, and Surgeon General for the State of Florida, I respectfully request open channels of communication for routine updates on the expected time the supply chain will be impacted and the most viable path to resuming sufficient nationwide formula supplies.

We stand ready to assist in any capacity that we are able in order to expedite a resolution of this pressing problem for immunocompromised infants and their families across the great state of Florida and our blessed Nation.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Ladapo, MD, PhD
State Surgeon General

cc Robert B. Ford, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer, Abbott