

NMDOH NewsBrief

IMMUNIZATION



NM Department of Health Immunization Program

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Keeping New Mexico Healthy: State Officials Recommend Latest COVID-19 Vaccines

Andrea Romero, Immunization Program Manager

The New Mexico Department of Health has issued updated guidance and extended a standing order for the 2026-2027 COVID-19 vaccines.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved updated 2026-2027 COVID-19 vaccinations on August 27 for the current respiratory virus season. While the FDA approvals focused on specific high-risk groups, the New Mexico standing order allows providers to vaccinate anyone following NMDOH evidence-based guidelines.

The standing order provides access for anyone requesting a 2026-2027 COVID vaccine without a prescription. COVID-19 vaccines remain safe and effective tools for preventing severe illness, hospitalization, and death. The COVID-19 vaccination is especially important for: Adults aged 65+, individuals at increased risk for severe COVID-19, anyone who has never been vaccinated." It is also recommended for pregnant people, providing protection both for the mother and for the infant after birth.

Vaccines
continued on page 6

NMDOH Reaffirms Commitment to Full Immunization Schedule

Andrea Romero
Immunization Program Manager

The New Mexico Department of Health will maintain its full vaccination recommendations for children and adults. We remain committed to ensuring all New Mexicans have access to the full schedule of vaccines. Visit [Immunization Schedules](#) to check for the latest updates for Respiratory season, Influenza, RSV, and COVID-19 vaccine.



Española back-to-school event,
July 2026

NMHealth

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Immunization Program Staffing announcements

Andrea Romero

Immunization Program Manager

Pamela Ortiz

The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) is excited to welcome Pamela Ortiz to the immunization team.



Pamela is a native New Mexican who was born and raised in Albuquerque. She has dedicated most of her career to the medical field, where she worked 13 years as a Medical Assistant in pediatrics. She then transitioned into nursing, earning her RN from Luna Community College and later completing her BSN at Highlands University. Her diverse professional background spans home health, hospice, school nursing, an inpatient stepdown unit, and oncology.

Outside of work, Pamela prioritizes family time. She is married with two adult children and one granddaughter. She loves to travel with her family, especially on cruises, and hopes to explore all of the US and destinations abroad. Her hobbies also include reading, listening to audiobooks, and spending time with her cat, River. Welcome to the team, Pamela!

Anthony Sanchez

NMDOH is delighted to welcome Anthony Sanchez to the team as our new finance clerk! Anthony was born and raised right here in Santa Fe and is deeply dedicated to helping make New Mexico the healthiest state. He brings lively energy and a sharp eye for numbers to our finance operations.



When he is not keeping our budget tracking smooth, Anthony is usually immersed in art and music or out on the disc golf course. He is an avid disc golfer who loves traveling with his wife of 17 years and their 15-year-old son to play the region's most scenic courses. Back at home, the family is rounded out by Spike, their one-eyed Chihuahua/Yorkie mix. Anthony is looking forward to supporting our statewide health initiatives and getting to know everyone across the agency, so please give him a warm welcome!



Annual Say Boo to the Flu

NMDOH, in collaboration with Mountainview Regional Medical Center and Three Crosses Regional Hospital, are providing a drive-thru flu vaccine clinic on Saturday, October 10th from 8 am-12 pm. This event is a long-standing tradition in Las Cruces for families to receive a flu vaccination at no cost to protect from Influenza this respiratory season.



Vaccines To Go!

The NMDOH Mobile Vaccine Unit is dedicated to providing essential vaccine access to underserved and high-need communities. If you are looking to request the mobile unit for an event or community need, you must submit your request at least 3 weeks in advance using their official Microsoft Forms request link or by scanning their designated QR code. Please note that all general inquiries regarding mobile vaccine requests should be directed through this form first. For any further questions or specific assistance, you can [contact the team](#) or call the NMSIIS Help Desk at 833-882-6454.

NMDOH Mobile Vaccine Unit
Request Form



School Survey Results are in!

Andrea Romero, Immunization Program Manager



National childhood immunization data released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reveals a concerning downward trend in national vaccine coverage. The vaccine coverage rates for kindergarteners have been published on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website as of August 17, 2026. During the 2025-2026 school year, vaccination coverage among kindergarten age in the United States decreased for all reported vaccines from the previous year, ranging from 92% for diphtheria, tetanus, and

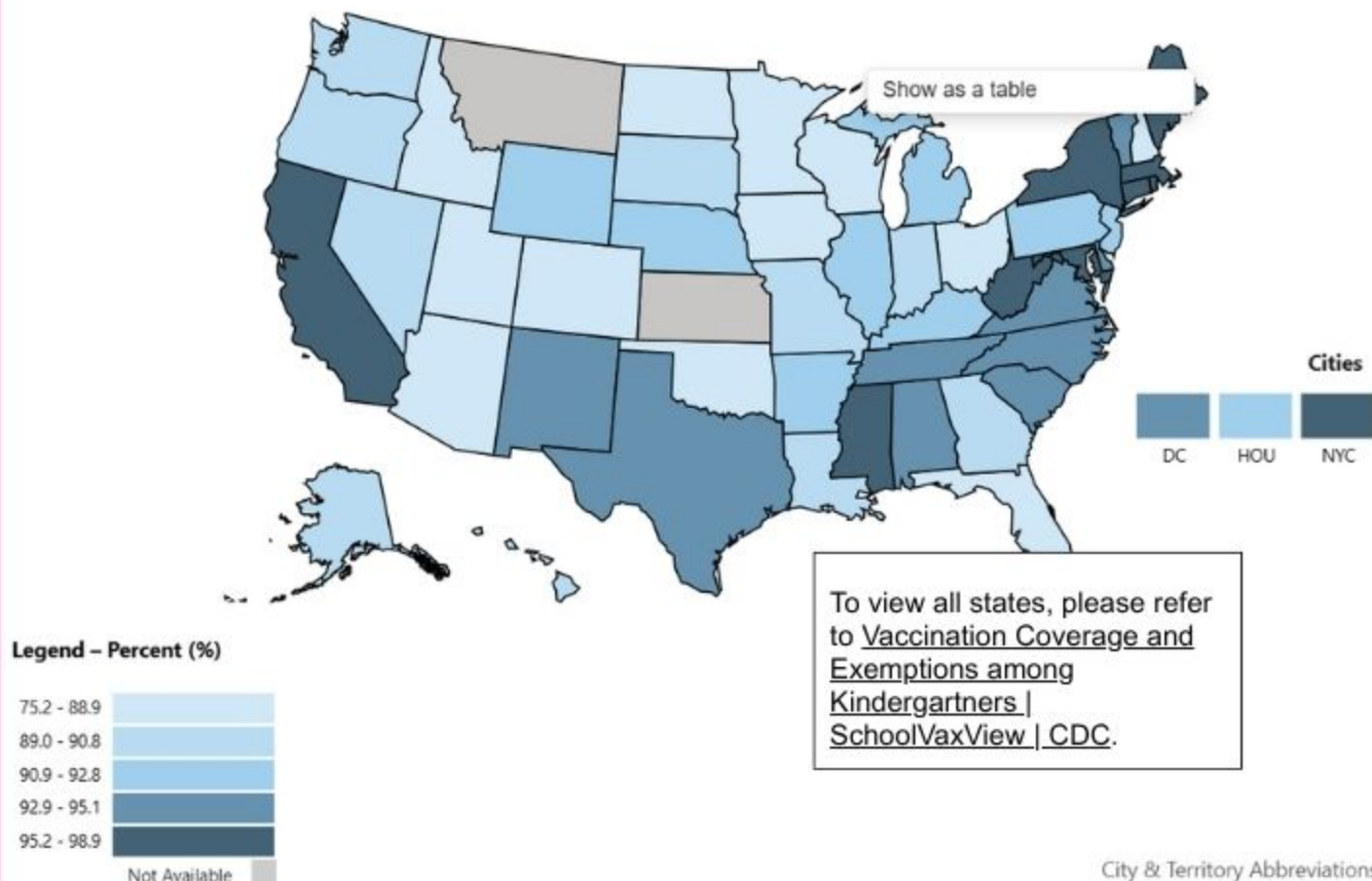
pertussis vaccine (DTaP) to 92.4% for measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine (MMR) and polio vaccine.

Overall vaccine exemptions increased to 4.2% from 3.6% the previous year. In 41 states vaccine exemptions increased, with 24 states reporting exemptions exceeding 5%.

New Mexico has maintained a steady percentage of vaccine coverage percentages but is also seeing a trend of increased exemptions. The state captures vaccine coverage amongst kindergarten and seventh grade age groups.

For more information, please visit the dashboard located on the NMDOH page [Immunization Dashboards](#).

MMR Vaccination Coverage among Kindergartners, by School Year, 2025-2026



SHOT BRIEFS

Christie McAuley, MA, NMIC

Respiratory Virus Season in New Mexico

Every year from October through May, our clinics and hospitals see a big increase in patients with coughs, fevers, and trouble breathing. Handling this seasonal surge takes a team effort from everyone on the front lines — from patient check-in and care coordination to direct nursing care.

The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) keeps a close eye on these seasonal trends and posts weekly updates on its [Immunization Dashboard](#). To protect residents, state health officials also look to federal agencies for guidance.

For the 2026–27 season, NMDOH recommends the updated flu and COVID-19 vaccines for everyone in New Mexico ages 6 months and older. RSV vaccination is recommended for adults ages 50 to 74 with underlying health conditions and for everyone 75 and older.

The Big Picture: National Numbers

It's easy to think of respiratory virus season as something we deal with every winter. But the numbers show just how much of a strain these viruses can put on healthcare systems across the country and can look something like this:

- **Influenza:** About 390,000 hospitalizations and 24,000 deaths nationwide each year.
- **RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus):** Millions of outpatient visits, along with up to 340,000 hospitalizations and tens of thousands of deaths.
- **COVID-19:** Still a steady threat, causing millions of illnesses, hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations, and tens of thousands of deaths each year.

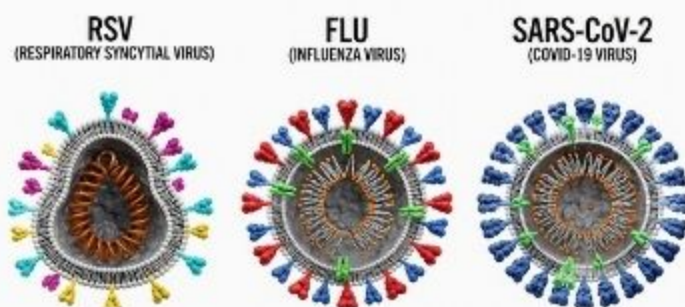
Here in New Mexico, those national numbers can translate into crowded waiting rooms and busy clinics. Even one especially intense week of flu can put a lot of pressure on a local healthcare system.

Vaccine Recommendations Across the Lifespan

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), along with other leading medical groups, updated its guidance this year with the goal of making vaccine recommendations easier to understand and follow. [See the NMDOH immunization schedules](#). The organizations have partnered to share these recommendations through a resource hub at [SpreadTheFacts.org](#). Here's a quick look at what they recommend:

- **Infants and children:** The AAP recommends annual flu and COVID-19 vaccines for everyone 6 months and older. For RSV, infants under 8 months should receive protective monoclonal antibodies — such as before their first RSV season.
- **Pregnant people:** Staying up to date on vaccines helps protect both the pregnant person and their baby. Pregnant individuals should receive their regular flu and COVID-19 vaccines. Because respiratory virus seasons can now stretch longer, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends the maternal RSV vaccine between weeks 32 and 36 of pregnancy, from September 1 through March 1.
- **Adults and seniors:** All adults should receive annual flu and COVID-19 vaccines, which are updated to target the latest circulating strains. For RSV, a single dose is recommended for all adults 75 and older, as well as adults ages 50 to 74 who have chronic medical conditions.

One helpful note for New Mexico patients: NMDOH has issued a statewide standing order for the 2026–27 COVID-19 vaccine. This allows providers to vaccinate anyone who requests it under state guidelines, without the need for an individual prescription. Medicaid covers the full cost for enrolled members. If patients have questions, or if someone is turned away when trying to get vaccinated, they can call the NMDOH Helpline at 1-833-796-8773.



Myth vs. Fact

Fact

One question that comes up every flu season is whether people with egg allergies can safely get a flu shot. In the past, the guidelines were much more restrictive. Today, the answer is much simpler. The CDC and AAP both say that an egg allergy is not a reason to skip flu vaccination. People with egg allergies of any severity can safely receive any age-appropriate flu vaccine, whether it is egg-based or cell-based.

Moving Forward

Our conversations with patients can make a real difference. When we talk about vaccines in a calm, casual, and confident way, it can help ease concerns and make vaccination feel less intimidating. Let's keep the conversation going — and work together to help keep New Mexicans healthy this season.

Expanded RSV Criteria for High Risk Infants



Andrea Romero, Immunization Program Manager

Nirsevimab (Beyfortus) and clesrovimab (Enflonsia) presentations are available for ordering under the Vaccine for Children (VFC) program. Early ordering is available to assist with prepositioning appointments for the administering season of October through March. Providers can order as needed to retain inventory of supply.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) released updated guidance for the use of RSV monoclonal antibodies and maternal vaccination.

The criteria for immunizing infants and children aged 8 months to 19 months entering their second RSV season has expanded to include additional clinical conditions. The current list of criteria for the 8–19-month age group entering their second RSV season is now:

- Children born preterm, at <32 weeks, 0 day's gestation
- Children with hemodynamically significant congenital heart disease
- Children with anatomic pulmonary abnormalities or neuromuscular disorders that put them at risk for severe RSV disease
- Children with Down syndrome or other chromosomal differences
- American Indian or Alaska Native children

- Children with chronic lung disease attributable to prematurity or other significant neonatal conditions that required medical support at any time during the 6-month period before the start of their second RSV season.
- Children with cystic fibrosis who have either manifestation of severe lung disease or weight-for-length that is less than the 10th percentile.

The AAP also recommends RSV immunization for:

- Infants less than 8 months old born during or entering their first RSV season if the birthing parent did not receive the RSV maternal vaccination during pregnancy; if the birthing parent's RSV vaccination status is unknown; if the infant was born less than 14 days after vaccination of the birthing parent.
- Infants between 8 and 19 months of age at high risk for severe disease and entering their RSV season regardless of the RSV vaccination status of the birthing parent or the child's prior receipt of nirsevimab or clesrovimab when less than 8 months old in their first RSV season.

Complete AAP guidance can be found here: [Recommendations for the Prevention of Respiratory Syncytial Virus Disease in Infants and Children: Policy Statement | Pediatrics | American Academy of Pediatrics](#).



A Special Thank You to Dolly

With the recent passing of a Country Music Hall of Fame-r, we want to recognize Dolly Parton for her work to strengthen communities all over the United States. A powerful part of Dolly's legacy includes her generosity during the pandemic: She helped fund a COVID-19 vaccine with \$1 million of her own money. We are grateful for her generosity, compassion, and care for others during her lifetime.



Where Can I Find a Vaccine Provider?



The NMDOH Immunization Program has a dashboard to locate vaccines for children (VFC) providers and Adult 317 providers. The dashboard allows search fields by provider type, county, zip code, and city. Please visit our dashboard page [Immunization Dashboards](#) to view vaccine access locations statewide.

Click the image below to visit the online Vaccine Provider Map.



Senior Wellness Fair, August 21
Brandy Jones (left) and
Bianca Gonzales

Now Available in Spanish

We are delighted to announce that starting with this issue, our newsletter is now available in Spanish!

Moving forward, you can read every edition in both English and Spanish by visiting our website. We hope this addition make stories accessible to even more members of our community.



New Mexico Vaccine Provider Locator

Find healthcare providers offering Vaccines for Children (VFC) or Adult flu vaccines in your area. Use the filters below to search by provider type (child or adult), county, zip code, and/or city. View the results on the map or browse the detailed provider list.

Search by Provider Type (Start Here)

All

Search by County

All

Search by Zip Code

All

Search by City

All

Vaccine Provider Map



Vaccine Provider Table

Provider	Full Address	Phone Number	Provider Type
ABQ HEALTHCARE 2 YOU LLC	8609 HAMPTON AVE NE, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, 87122	505-563-8902	Vaccines for Children (VFC)
ABQ HIGH 58HC	800 ODELLA NE, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, 87102	505-244-1333	Vaccines for Children (VFC)
ACACIA FAMILY CARE	1717 W 2ND ST STE 101, ROSWELL, NEW MEXICO, 86201	575-205-0754	Vaccines for Children (VFC)
AFTER HOUR PEDI-GOLF COURSE	6210 GOLF COURSE RD NW, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, 87114	505-298-2505	Vaccines for Children (VFC)
AFTER HOUR PEDI-HOLLY	5804 HOLLY AVE NE, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, 87113	505-298-2505	Vaccines for Children (VFC)
AFTER HOUR PEDI-MONTGOMERY	6201 MONTGOMERY BLVD NE STE 201, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, 87111	505-298-2505	Vaccines for Children (VFC)
AFTER HOUR PEDI-UNSER	1534 UNSER BLVD SE, RIO RANCHO, NEW MEXICO, 87124	505-298-2505	Vaccines for Children (VFC)
ALAMOGORDO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	805 E 12TH ST BLDG B, ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO, 88310	575-415-1019	Vaccines for Children (VFC)
ALAMOTRIBAL HEALTH CENTER	109 ROUTE MILE MARKER 29, MAGDALENA, NEW MEXICO, 87825	575-854-2525	Vaccines for Children (VFC)
AMERICAN MEDICAL GROUP	2410 N FOWLER, HOBBS, NEW MEXICO, 88240	575-392-2040	Vaccines for Children (VFC)
ARTESIA PHO	1001 MEMORIAL DR, ARTESIA, NEW MEXICO, 88210	575-745-6819	Vaccines for Children (VFC)
AZTEC FAMILY MEDICINE	120 LLANO ST, AZTEC, NEW MEXICO, 87410	505-334-3404	Vaccines for Children (VFC)
BAHC-ALAMOGORDO	2150 HWY 54 S, ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO, 88310	575-443-6133	Vaccines for Children (VFC)
BANC CO LINARI	404 TAYLOR ST, COLUMBIA, NEW MEXICO, 88005	878-831-1986	Vaccines for Children (VFC)

Vaccines from page 1

The New Mexico Health Care Authority confirms individuals enrolled in Medicaid will have the full cost of their COVID-19 vaccines covered. Anyone who wants to learn more, or who is denied a COVID-19

vaccine, should call the NMDOH Helpline at 1-833-796-8773.

Visit our website to find both the [standing order](#) and [NMDOH's guidance on COVID-19 vaccination](#).

Contact us

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<https://www.nmhealth.org/about/phd/idb/imp/>

Call or email us for more information about our newsletter or if you have an item to submit for publication.

