

# Philadelphia Weekly PHP Outreach Newsletter

## Philadelphia Department of Public Health

### The Latest News

- **National and local increases in Respiratory Syncytial Virus or RSV**
  - RSV is a common respiratory infection that usually affects infants and young children.
  - The CDC has recently reported an increase in RSV infections in multiple parts of the U.S. including Philadelphia.
  - More information available at [https://bit.ly/RSV\\_CDC](https://bit.ly/RSV_CDC) and in the FAQ below.
- **Updated, bivalent booster available for everyone 5 and older**
  - As the weather gets colder and more people are socializing inside, it is very important to make sure everyone eligible, including children, gets the latest COVID-19 booster.
    - This will help people build back protection that has gotten weaker over time from their previous vaccines.
    - This booster is updated to include protection from the current versions of the COVID-19 virus that are currently circulating.
      - The current versions of the virus are more easily passed from person to person.
  - Information on the new authorization is available at <https://bit.ly/5plusUpdatedVax>.
  - Information on how to get a booster is available at <https://bit.ly/COVIDvaxPHL>.
- **Job Opening: Recovery Specialist in Public Health Preparedness Program**
  - The Public Health Preparedness program helps communities prepare for and respond to public health emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and write this weekly newsletter.
  - The Recovery Specialist will assist the Recovery Planner to analyze responses to public health emergencies, identify areas for improvement, and develop and implement policies and procedures to support recovery from public health emergencies.
    - This position will be working with internal and external stakeholders to ensure that all perspectives are represented.
  - The position requires a Bachelor's degree or better and would be contracted by PHMC.
  - Find the full job description at: <https://bit.ly/RecoverySpecialistPHP>
  - Feel free to spread the word to anyone you think would be qualified and interested.
- **Special Initiatives Application Extended: Resiliency in Communities after Stress and Trauma Philadelphia (ReCAST)**
  - The mission of Philadelphia ReCAST is to promote resilience and equity, improve behavioral health, and reduce trauma through a sustained community change process.
  - Application deadline extended to January 15, 2023, or until all available funding has been allocated. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.
  - More information is available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PhilaReCAST>.

### The Latest Events

- **Childhood COVID-19 Vaccine Info Session**
  - November 9, 2022 from 12 – 1pm
  - Get your questions answered directly from the Philadelphia Department of Public Health about COVID-19 vaccines for children.

- As the weather gets colder and people are spending more time inside, to protect your children and family, it is very important everyone eligible get a seasonal flu vaccine and the latest COVID-19 booster.
- Live interpretation in Spanish, French, Mandarin, Russian, Vietnamese, and ASL.
- Register at: <https://bit.ly/1109PDPHInfoSession>

#### Frequently Asked Questions on Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

- **What is RSV?**
  - Respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms.
  - Most people recover in a week or two, but RSV can be serious, especially for infants and older adults.
  - In the United States, RSV is the most common cause of pneumonia and bronchiolitis, which is an inflammation of the small airways in the lung for children younger than 1 year of age.
- **I heard there are more cases of RSV this year in the United States; is this also true in Philadelphia?**
  - Yes, similar to the rest of the country, Philadelphia has more cases of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) in recent weeks compared to this time last year, particularly among children and infants.
- **Who do we worry will get severely sick if they get RSV?**
  - Infants
  - Children less than 2 years of age with chronic lung disease or congenital heart disease.
  - Premature infants who are less than 35 weeks gestation at birth
  - Children who have neuromuscular disorders
  - Older adults
  - Immunocompromised persons
  - Adults with chronic heart and lung disease
- **If RSV is increasing, will other respiratory viruses like the flu also increase in Philadelphia?**
  - Currently there are low levels of flu infections in Philadelphia. However, states in the southeast and south-central US are experiencing high levels of flu. This is a sign that flu is expected to increase rapidly in Philadelphia in coming weeks.
- **What can I do to protect my child from getting RSV, the flu, and COVID-19?**
  - Stay up to date on COVID-19 boosters and get an annual flu vaccine.
    - COVID-19 boosters are recommended for everyone 5 years and older.
      - Find a vaccine at [phila.gov/vaccine](https://phila.gov/vaccine) or [vaccines.gov](https://vaccines.gov)
    - Seasonal flu vaccines are recommended for everyone 6 months and older.
      - Find a vaccine with your primary care provider or at <https://bit.ly/FluPHL>
  - Most respiratory viruses, including RSV, COVID-19, and the flu can all be prevented in similar ways:
    - Stay home from work, school, and childcare when sick.
  - Cough or sneeze into a tissue or elbow.
  - Wash hands often with soap and warm water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water aren't available.
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  - Disinfect commonly touched surfaces such as doorknobs, phones, and toys.
  - Wear a mask in healthcare facilities, crowded public spaces, and to help high-risk people stay safe.
- **Where can I find more information?**

- Talk with your primary care provider or visit [https://bit.ly/RSV\\_CDC](https://bit.ly/RSV_CDC)
- If you don't have a primary care provider, find one at: [www.phila.gov/primary-care](http://www.phila.gov/primary-care)
  - Find free or low-cost medical care, if you are insured or uninsured.
  - Search by location, type of primary care, specialty care, and testing services.

### COVID-19: Resources and Services

- Where to find COVID-19 vaccine, including booster doses:
  - Call 3-1-1 or visit [phila.gov/vaccine](http://phila.gov/vaccine) or [vaccines.gov](http://vaccines.gov) to find a vaccine clinic near you.
    - For interpretation, call 3-1-1, press #5 and say your language.
    - Visit <https://bit.ly/KnowB4Ugo> for updates on transportation, access and functional needs resources, and up-to-date access descriptions of City-run clinics.
  - Options for COVID-19 vaccines for uninsured residents include:
    - Free vaccine at City health centers and pop-up clinics, for insured and uninsured residents. No ID is required at these locations.
    - Other sites, like pharmacies, may bill your insurance company or charge you a direct fee. Call these sites before you go to find out about their policies.
  - More information available at: [www.phila.gov/vaccine](http://www.phila.gov/vaccine) and [bit.ly/COVIDvaxFAQ-PDPH](http://bit.ly/COVIDvaxFAQ-PDPH)
- Free COVID Testing Kits available for distribution by CBOs
  - PDPH has procured a supply of at-home COVID-9 test kits and will be offering these tests to community-based organizations (CBOs) serving clients and patrons in areas of high COVID-19 risk.
  - Request your free test kits here: <https://bit.ly/CBOtestDistro>
- Free at-home COVID-19 tests for blind/low-vision people
  - If you are blind or have low vision, you can order the more accessible tests online at <https://special.usps.com/testkits/accessible> or by calling 1-800-232-0233.
  - These tests will be available for order until supplies run out.
  - For more information, visit: <https://bit.ly/COVIDKitAccess>.
- What to do if you lost your vaccination card?
  - Ask your healthcare provider first. If they cannot help, call 215-685-5488 or email [COVID@phila.gov](mailto:COVID@phila.gov) to request a copy of your vaccine record.
  - The CDC does not provide copies of COVID-19 vaccination cards.
- Stock up on FREE N95 masks
  - Visit <https://bit.ly/FreeN95s> for free masks from the Strategic National Stockpile.
- Stock up on home tests
  - Health insurance companies are required to reimburse 8 at-home tests per month for each person enrolled in the plan and will reimburse up to \$12 per individual test.
  - For more information, visit: <https://go.cms.gov/3Lqo0Yk>.
    - Includes information on how to get tests if you don't have insurance or if you cannot afford to pay for your test up front.

### Monkeypox: Resources and Services

- People who are concerned that they've been exposed, or believe they are at high risk of being exposed to monkeypox, should call the PDPH Call Center at 215-685-5488 to see if they are eligible to be vaccinated.
- Find the latest information on cases and vaccine at <https://bit.ly/MPXDASHBOARD>.
  - This is updated every Monday.

- Find the latest guidance about monkeypox at <https://bit.ly/PHLMonkeypoxInfo>.
- Find the latest flyers and printable information at <https://bit.ly/PHPGuidance>.
- Find information on precautions to take while you wait for your Monkeypox vaccine at: <https://bit.ly/MPXvaxWait>.
- If you would like to receive the weekly Monkeypox newsletter update, email [publichealthpreparedness@phila.gov](mailto:publichealthpreparedness@phila.gov).

#### Public Health Preparedness: Resources and Services

- **Sign up for Ready Philadelphia**
  - To receive free text alerts to your phone on emergencies or severe weather, text “ReadyPhila” to 888-7777.
  - Be the first to know, then spread the word to family and neighbors.
- **Text-to-911 in Philadelphia:** <https://bit.ly/PATextTo911>
  - Individuals who are Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, and those who face communication barriers may find this service a more accessible means of interface with 911.

#### More Information

- **PDPH COVID-19 website and social media**
  - Information on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, vaccines, and testing resources is available at [phila.gov/COVID-19](http://phila.gov/COVID-19) as well as on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
- **PDPH Call Center**
  - Call 215-685-5488. Press 3 for interpretation in your language, press 2 for Spanish. Dial 711 for TRS/TTY assistance.
- **Philadelphia Coronavirus Helpline**
  - Call 800-722-7112, Press 9 for interpretation
  - Open 24/7!
  - Talk to a medical professional about COVID-19 symptoms, exposure, vaccine, tests, etc.
  - Get help making decisions about how to keep you, your loved ones, and contacts safe from COVID-19

#### How to Stay Connected

- **Join the Community Response Partner Network**
  - This newsletter is sent to the [Community Response Partner Network](#), part of the PDPH Public Health Preparedness Program.
  - Sign up at <https://bit.ly/phlcommunityresponse> to get essential public health information, then pass it on to your family, friends, and community.
- **Questions or suggestions?**
  - Email us at [publichealthpreparedness@phila.gov](mailto:publichealthpreparedness@phila.gov)
  - Leave a message with the Public Health Preparedness Program Outreach Team at 215-429-3016.

Be safe,  
Philadelphia Department of Public Health

- PDPH Launches the Primary Care Finder: [www.phila.gov/primary-care](http://www.phila.gov/primary-care)
  - Find free or low-cost medical care in Philadelphia.
  - Search by location and type (primary care, specialty care, or testing services).
  - The goal of this tool is to increase access to free or low-cost primary care services for Philadelphians, especially people who are uninsured or underinsured.
- Text-to-911 now fully operational in Philadelphia
  - Text-to-911 is a service that allows the public to send a text message to 911.
- Spread the word about the Violence Prevention Hotline
  - A free and confidential hotline to connect people with over 100,000 important services and resources, such as conflict intervention, peer counseling, workforce programs, and behavioral health support.
  - Call 211 and press 3 to reach a Resource Navigator OR text your zip code to 989-211.
  - This hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, and interpretation is available in 150+ languages.
  - More information is available at <https://bit.ly/Philly211>.
- PDPH Seasonal Flu website
  - Information on the seasonal flu and how to get vaccinated is available at <https://bit.ly/FluPHL>.
- PDPH Monkeypox website
  - Information about the latest updates, vaccine, testing, and the data dashboard is available at <https://www.phila.gov/monkeypox>.
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