



It's not too late to get your flu vaccine

Protect yourself and others from influenza (“the flu”) by getting the [2024-25 flu vaccine](#). The flu can cause severe respiratory illness, disease, and death.

Everyone 6 months and older is eligible to get the flu vaccine, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Seniors aged 65 and older need a higher dose flu vaccine.

Even though it is December, it's not too late to get the flu vaccine. It is best to receive the flu vaccine before holiday gatherings, as it takes about two weeks for the body to develop protective antibodies.

The flu is already circulating in the First State. In the week ending November 30, 2024, Delaware had 38 new cases of influenza and no flu hospitalizations, according to the Division of Public Health (DPH). In Delaware, 212,058 doses of flu vaccine (21.6%) had been administered as of November 30.

Visit [flu.delaware.gov](https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dph/dphbulletins.html) for more information and to find vaccine locations. DPH's special respiratory viruses newsletter edition can be found at <https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dph/dphbulletins.html>.

DPH's health care providers, schools, and workplaces can find free flu prevention marketing items at [covidmaterialsde.com](https://www.covidmaterialsde.com).

DPH updates COVID-19 vaccine campaign and shares materials

New posters, fact cards, and social media posts are part of the updated COVID-19 vaccine campaign produced by the Division of Public Health (DPH). The materials educate Delawareans about the COVID-19 vaccine's benefits and availability.

“Today's the day to get the updated COVID-19 vaccine” is the tag line on billboards, streaming services, radio, and Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and Instagram posts.

The campaign reminds individuals that they can get their COVID-19 and flu vaccines at the same time. Another message is to visit de.gov/coronavirus to stay informed and find the nearest vaccine location.

Materials are in English and Spanish, with the flyer and fact cards also offered in Haitian Creole. Health care systems, community organizations, schools, and those communicating to the public can save time and money by using these free materials. Order these items and items from other health campaigns at [covidmaterialsde.com](https://www.covidmaterialsde.com).

According to DPH, for the 2024 to 2025 winter virus season, the age-adjusted rate of new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people in Delaware was 12.8 in Sussex County, 5.7 in Kent County, and 6.2 in New Castle County for the week ending November 30, 2024. Since the new COVID-19 vaccine was authorized on August 22, 2024, 12.2% of Delaware residents had received it as of November 30.

For Delaware's COVID-19 data, visit myhealthycommunity.dhss.delaware.gov.





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Delaware paramedics administer 250th unit of whole blood for prehospital care

Delaware paramedics administered the 250th unit of whole blood as a result of collaboration among county paramedic agencies, the Division of Public Health (DPH) Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS), the Delaware Emergency Management Agency, and the Blood Bank of Delmarva.

A leader in prehospital care, the state also became the first in the nation that has paramedic agencies in every county providing whole blood for patients before they reach the hospital. Paramedics value whole blood for its components: red blood cells, clotting factors, platelets, and plasma. Their most common application is when patients have suffered traumatic injuries resulting in massive blood loss.

On Nov. 23, New Castle County Emergency Medical Services gave the 150th unit in their county and soon after, the 151st, which became the 250th unit in the state. Sussex County also achieved a significant milestone on Nov. 25 when it administered its 100th unit of whole blood. Additionally, Kent County EMS delivered their first unit on Nov. 24, which despite the critical nature of the patient's injuries, provided improvement in vital signs.

The treatment was approved in May 2023 and first used as a pilot program by paramedics in New Castle and Sussex counties. Early success led to statewide adoption for all paramedic agencies, with Kent County currently carrying blood and Delaware State Police paramedics adding blood in early 2025. Nationally, less than 10% of EMS agencies carry and administer whole blood, according to the National Association of State EMS Officials.

For more information about OEMS, visit <https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dph/ems/ems.html>.

Cervical cancer screenings offered at Porter Public Health Clinic January 22

The Division of Public Health (DPH) is offering cervical cancer screenings at the Porter State Service Center in observance of Cervical Health Awareness Month.

The Porter Public Health Clinic, located at 509 W. 8th St. #3, Wilmington, Del. is offering cervical cancer screening appointments on January 22 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. except from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. DPH's Screening for Life (SFL) Program is hosting the day for SFL enrolled women aged 35 and older to receive a cervical exam with a Pap test that detects abnormal cells on the cervix. Clients unable to attend on January 22 should select another appointment date without delay.

SFL enrolled clients aged 35 and older will be asked if they want to participate in the WISEWOMAN (Well-Integrated Screening for Women Across the Nation) Program during the same office visit. WISEWOMAN assesses clients for risk factors for cardiovascular disease or stroke. Women identified with those risk factors are eligible for certain blood tests and access to healthy behavior support services at no cost. Women have up to 30 days to get blood work completed.

SFL enrolled clients who want to make an appointment should call 302-744-1040 (Option 2). [Click here](#) to enroll in SFL or for more information.



The Division of Public Health (DPH) published three reports:

- [*State of Delaware Public Drinking Water Annual Compliance Report and Summary for 2023*](#)
- [*Childhood Blood Lead Surveillance in Delaware, 2023 Annual Report*](#)
- [*Heat-Related Illness Emergency Department Visits in Delaware, 2019-2023*](#)



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Prepare for hazardous winter weather

Winter weather can bring snow and ice, extreme cold, and power outages. Be prepared with these helpful checklists from [PrepareDE.org](https://preparede.org):

Home

- Assemble a household emergency kit containing water and food for household members and pets.
- Have a warm coat, gloves or mittens, a hat, water-resistant boots, and blanket for every household member. Hypothermia, when the body becomes chilled, can be deadly.
- Stay inside during storms.

Vehicle

- Have a mechanic check antifreeze levels, the battery and ignition system, oil, tires, brakes, windshield wipers and fluid, lights (including hazard lights); and the heater, defroster, and thermostat. It is also important to check for leaks in the exhaust system because carbon monoxide is deadly.
- Keep vehicle gas tanks at least half full in case of emergency and to prevent fuel lines from freezing.
- Before driving, be aware of traffic advisories and restrictions. Avoid unnecessary driving during bad weather. Let someone know your destination, route, and when you expect to arrive.
- Keep an emergency kit in your vehicle to keep you safe — and alive — if your vehicle becomes stuck in a snowdrift or in a lengthy traffic jam.

Know the Evacuation Zones for your residence, workplace, and places where you spend time. Visit <https://preparede.org/know-your-zone/#zonefinder> Keep your Evacuation Zone where it can be accessed quickly, such as on your cell phone and in your emergency kit.

For more information, visit [PrepareDE.org](https://preparede.org).

Help unhoused people find Code Purple shelters this winter

During extreme cold events in Delaware, Code Purple is activated to shelter homeless individuals and families. Unhoused individuals seeking shelter should call the [Delaware Housing Alliance's Centralized Intake Line](https://preparede.org) at 1-833-346-3233, Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.; send an email to intake@housingalliancecode.org; or call a participating shelter listed below.

New Castle County

Pre-register for [Friendship House](https://preparede.org) shelters by visiting their [Empowerment Centers](https://preparede.org) or calling:

- 720 N. Orange St., Wilmington, Del.: 302-652-8033
- 62 E. Delaware Ave., Newark, Del.: 302-544-0165
- 44 W. Main St., Middletown, Del.: 302-416-0982.

Code Purple Kent County

First come, first served. Starts daily between 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. from December 1 to March 31 unless otherwise stated. Nothing is needed to enter. Hotline: 1-800-733-6816; codepurpledelaware@gmail.com.

- Dream4 Foundation Sanctuary shelter (for women and children), Maranatha Life Changing Church, 1203 E. Division St., Dover, Del.: 1-800-733-6816
- 203 E. Division St., Dover, Del.: 1-800-733-6816.

Code Purple Sussex County

Priority is given to those who register in person for the following night.

Hotline: Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., 302-629-7050. Other days and times: 302-519-0024.

- Grace Seaford Church (for women), 805 Atlanta Road, Seaford, Del. 19973
- St. Luke's Parish Hall (for men), 202 N. North St., Seaford, Del. 19973
- Georgetown Presbyterian Church (for men), 203 N. Bedford St., Georgetown, Del. 19947
- Milford Church of the Nazarene (for women), 11 N.W. Salevan Place, Milford, Del. 19963
- Avenue United Methodist Church (for men), 20 N. Church Ave., Milford, Del. 19963
- St. Jude The Apostle Church (for men), 152 Tulip Drive, Lewes, Del. 19958
- Lutheran Church of Our Savior (for women), 20276 Bay Vista Road, Rehoboth Beach, Del. 19971.

To connect with Code Purple resources, call or text Delaware 211, use the Delaware 211 mobile app, or visit www.delaware211.org.

National Weather Service revises watches and warnings for cold

As of October 1, 2024, the [National Weather Service \(NWS\)](#) simplified its winter hazard messaging to clarify that cold can be dangerous with or without wind. NWS replaced Wind Chill notifications with Extreme Cold Watch, Extreme Cold Warning, and Cold Weather advisories.

The infographic is divided into two sections. The top section, titled 'EXTREME COLD WATCH', explains that an Extreme Cold Watch is issued when dangerously cold air, with or without wind, is possible. It advises checking the forecast and being prepared in case a Warning is issued. The bottom section, titled 'EXTREME COLD WARNING', explains that an Extreme Cold Warning is issued when dangerously cold air, with or without wind, is expected. It notes that conditions could lead to frostbite or hypothermia and advises limiting time outdoors, dressing in layers, and covering up exposed skin. The infographic concludes with the instruction 'Take Action!' and the website 'weather.gov'.

weather.gov

knows your whereabouts. Update that person when you arrive safely at your destination.

A **Cold Weather Advisory** is issued when seasonably cold air temperatures or wind chill values are expected or occurring.

NWS renamed Hard Freeze Watches to Freeze Watches and Hard Freeze Warnings to Freeze Warnings. A **Freeze Watch** is issued when there is a potential for significant, widespread freezing temperatures within the next 24 to 36 hours.

A **Freeze Warning** is issued when temperatures are forecasted to go below 32 degrees F for a long period of time. This temperature threshold kills some types of commercial crops and residential plants.

ATSDR report about PFAS includes findings from New Castle, Delaware

A December 10 press release posted to the State of Delaware website Delaware.gov summarizes a health consultation completed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) regarding exposure to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) within 41 residences near the Delaware Air National Guard Base in New Castle, Del. and 51 homes in Westfield, Mass.

The report presents the findings for seven types of PFAS, called "forever chemicals," in settled household dust samples. According to the report, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency funded and sponsored the effort, and officials from the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) and the Division of Public Health plan to model methodologies to further study local sources of PFAs and potential exposures to them.

[Click here](#) to access the report or read it at the link within the [press release](#). For Delaware's work on PFAS and links to other reports, visit [De.gov/pfas](#).

To lower the risk of PFAS exposure from contaminated household dust, the authors advise to:

- Clean your house on a regular basis.
- Dust with wet cloths.
- Vacuum with HEPA filters.
- Change heating and cooling unit filters regularly.
- Choose furniture and carpets that are not labeled "stain resistant." Do not apply stain-resistant treatments to items.
- Do not use products with the words "fluoro" and "perfluoro" on the label.
- Replace or remove worn products with newer, PFAS-free items.

DPH regulations available to view

Three sets of Division of Public Health regulations are in the [December issue of the Delaware Register of Regulations](#). They are: [4465 Delaware Radiation Control Regulations](#) and [4466 Radiation Technologists/Technicians \(Certification\)](#) (both proposed); and [4106 Practice of Non-Nurse Midwifery](#) (final). The regulations are accessible online at <http://regulations.delaware.gov> or by calling DPH at 302-744-4951.

Public comment is accepted in written form via email to DHSS_DPH_regulations@delaware.gov, or by U.S. mail to: Vicki Schultes, Hearing Officer, Division of Public Health, 417 Federal Street, Dover, DE 19901.