

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Jim Pillen, Governor

December 31, 2023

Mr. Brandon Metzler
Clerk of the Legislature
State Capitol Room 2028
Lincoln, NE 68509

Subject: Immunization Program Annual Report

Dear Mr. Metzler:

Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 71-526 through 71-530 constitutes the Childhood Vaccine Act, and as such authorizes the Department of Health and Human Services to administer a statewide comprehensive program. Activities conducted as part of this program may include:

- Seeking stakeholder participation to ensure children are appropriately immunized;
- Providing information and education to the public and other stakeholders to maintain a high level of awareness and demand for immunization;
- Helping stakeholders improve the availability and delivery of immunizations to ensure the adequacy of the vaccine delivery system;
- Evaluating the effectiveness of these statewide efforts, measuring children's immunization status, identifying children at risk for deficiencies, and reporting annually to the Legislature;
- Recognizing people who volunteer efforts towards achieving the goal of providing immunization to children; and/or
- Providing for immunization of children who are not eligible for immunization coverage through private third-party payment.

This report provides a summary of the progress that has been made in carrying out the duties prescribed above for the period of November 1, 2022 to October 31, 2023.

Sincerely,

Charity Menefee
Director, Division of Public Health

Attachment

Division of Public Health

Immunization Program Annual Report

December 2023

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 71-529

Immunization Program Overview

The Immunization Program is funded by federal funds from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to implement and maintain an immunization program for eligible Nebraska children from birth through 18 years of age. Eligible children include those that are Medicaid eligible, uninsured, underinsured (their insurance specifically excludes vaccine coverage), and/or American Indian/Alaska Native children. Program activities include:

- Distributing publicly funded vaccines to participating providers (currently numbering approximately 314 public and private clinics)
- Providing immunization training on vaccines and vaccine management
- Conducting quality assurance procedures with enrolled providers
- Maintaining and enhancing the Nebraska State Immunization Information System (NESIIS)
- Conducting surveillance of vaccine preventable diseases
- Participating in activities related to perinatal hepatitis B prevention
- Assessing immunization coverage levels

In addition, the CDC provides funding to conduct similar program activities as they relate to eligible adults. The Vaccine for Adults (VFA) program currently maintains approximately 39 enrolled public clinics to assist in serving eligible adults. Eligible adults include people 19 years of age or older who are uninsured or underinsured.

Total funding from the CDC to conduct the above activities is approximately \$3.9 million each year. This total does not include previously awarded additional funding from smaller, project-specific grants, and no additional funding of this type was awarded during this report period. In addition to the federal funds, the program has approximately \$272,293 in state general funds that can be used to purchase and distribute vaccines to eligible children. This program specifically utilizes these dollars to secure vaccinations for those new born babies who are born exposed to Hepatitis B virus.

Immunization Coverage Rates

There are a variety of mechanisms in place to monitor immunization coverage rates at both the national and state level. The National Immunization Survey (NIS) is a survey that monitors childhood and adolescent immunization coverage. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), which is facilitated at the national level but administered at the state level, also routinely asks participants questions regarding immunization status. Finally, at the state level, two annual surveys are conducted to assess the immunization status of children: one is a survey of licensed child care facilities asking for a report on children enrolled in care; the other is the school survey, which asks schools to report on enrolled children in kindergarten and seventh grade.

BRFSS questions are somewhat limited in number and scope, so they do not give a complete picture of immunizations in Nebraska. The NIS, the Nebraska child care survey, and the Nebraska school survey were used for this report.

The National Immunization Survey

In April 1994, the CDC began collecting data to monitor childhood immunization coverage across the country using a standard survey methodology. This survey is conducted through the utilization of a format list-assisted random-digit-dialing telephone calls, which are followed by a mailed packet to children's immunization providers for verification. The data collected from this effort is used to monitor vaccination coverage of Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) among children and teens and evaluate program effectiveness.

Nebraska Child Care Survey

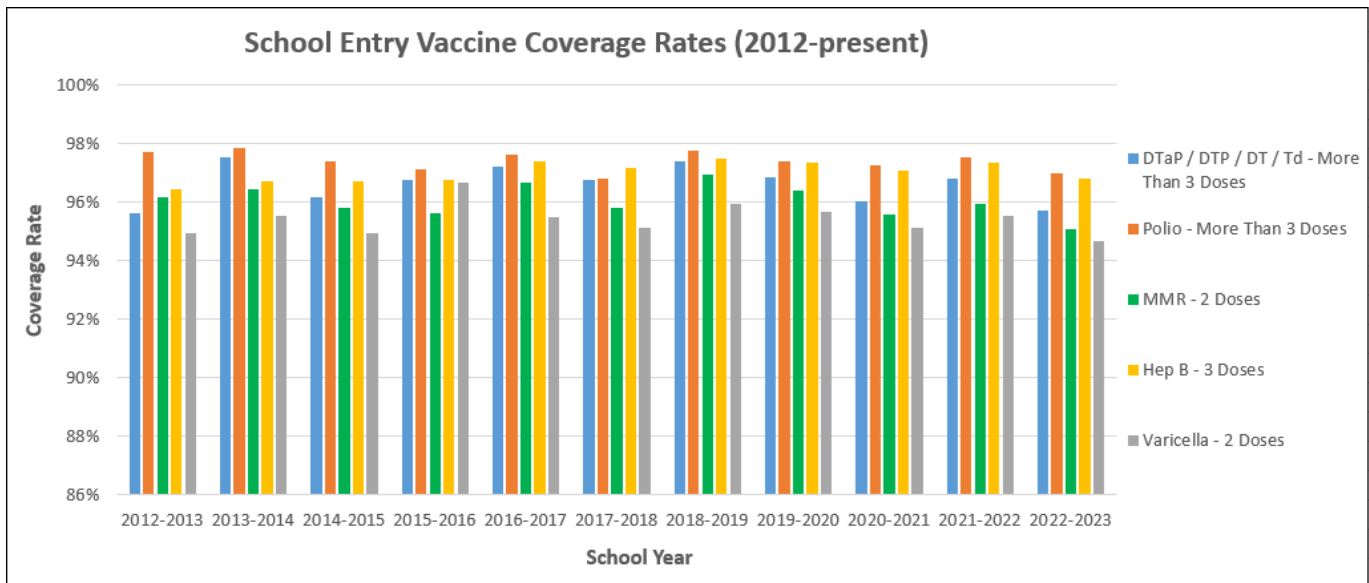
Each year, the Nebraska Immunization Program conducts a survey of licensed child care programs in Nebraska to obtain the age-appropriate immunization status of children in their care. This survey gathers information on who has been vaccinated for DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis), polio, MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella combined), varicella, Hib (haemophilus influenzae type b), hepatitis B, and pneumococcal disease. Survey responses are not numerated, however deidentified immunization rates of Nebraska's child care age children, can be reviewed through reporting mechanism found in Nebraska State Immunization Information System (NESIIS).

Nebraska School Survey

Each year, the DHHS Immunization Program and Epidemiology conducts a survey of Nebraska schools to obtain summary information related to kindergarten and seventh grade students' immunization status. This survey gathers information on the number of children within a school who have been vaccinated for DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis), polio, MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella combined), varicella, and hepatitis B in the case of kindergarten-aged children. School staff must report the number of seventh graders who have been vaccinated for Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis), MMR, varicella, and hepatitis B. In addition, schools report the number of children who have medical or religious exemption documentation or are provisionally enrolled while completing vaccination requirements.

The school survey conducted for the 2022–2023 school year shows a 95% or higher coverage rate for both kindergartners and seventh graders for each of the vaccines mentioned above.

Vaccine Coverage Rates since 2012: School Entry



Vaccine Coverage Rates since 2012: 7th Grade

