

Immunization in Colorado

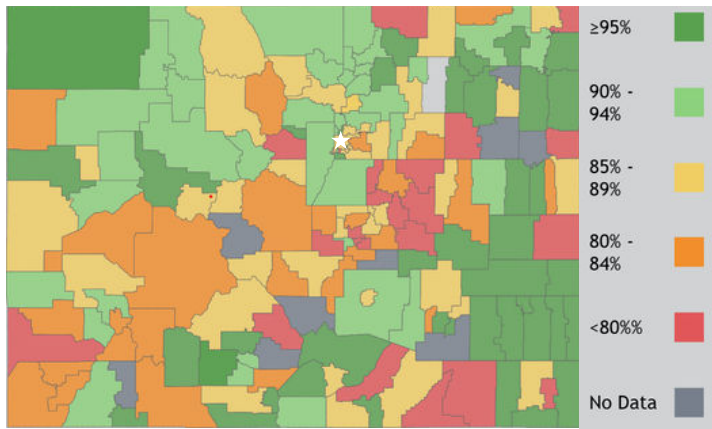
State of the State Report 2026



In 2025, Colorado experienced decreased rates of routine and respiratory vaccination, as well as increases in cases of vaccine-preventable diseases like measles. Changes to vaccine policy and recommendations at the federal level also threatened vaccine access in our state. Fortunately, several bills were passed to protect vaccine access for Coloradans. With significant infectious disease outbreaks happening during a time of such uncertainty, immunizations are more important than ever to keep Coloradans healthy. Despite the confusion, a majority of Coloradans still choose to protect themselves and their children by getting vaccinated.

Measles & MMR Vaccination

2024/25 Fully Immunized MMR Kindergarten Immunization by School District

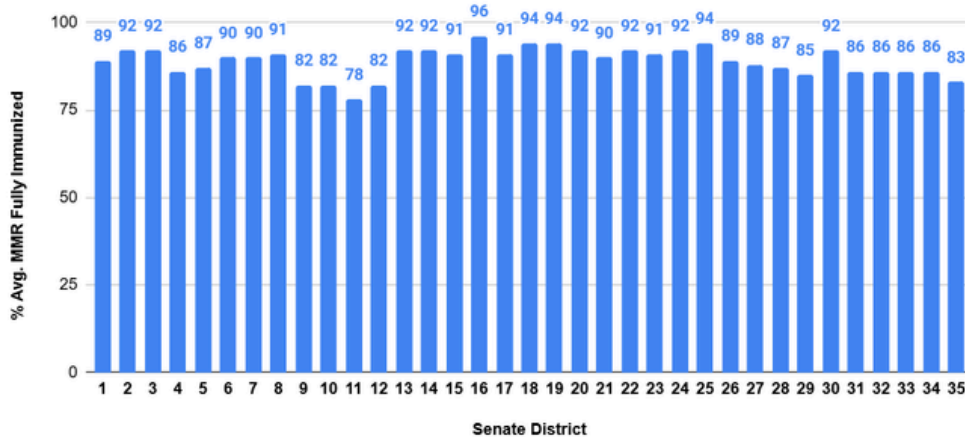


(CDPHE, 2025)

In 2025, there were **36 measles cases in Colorado** amid the worst measles outbreak in the U.S. in decades. 28 (78%) of these cases were among unvaccinated persons or persons with unknown vaccination status.

In Colorado schools, being fully immunized with MMR is defined as having received both doses of the MMR vaccine; the threshold needed for full community protection from a measles outbreak is a **95% vaccination rate**.

Avg. % Fully Immunized for MMR (Kindergarten) Among School Districts within a Senate District (2024/25)



Of the 178 reporting school districts in Colorado, **108 (61%) have MMR immunization rates under 95%**, and 542,540 (64%) K-12 students in Colorado attend these districts.

Only 96.1% of Colorado students are in compliance with school immunization rules (including a 2.7% exemption rate), meaning 3.9% of students have an unknown immunization status.

2025 Colorado Vaccine Policy Highlights

In 2025, federal policy and recommendation changes decreased vaccine access and created confusion for families. In an effort to combat these changes and ensure vaccine access in the future, the following policies were implemented:

HB25-1027: Update Disease Control Statutes

Allows the state to consider vaccine recommendations from scientific and medical societies and boards not affiliated with the CDC, such as the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), limiting the impact of federal changes on Colorado.

SB25-194: Sunset Dental Practice Act

Allows dentists and dental hygienists in Colorado to provide respiratory and oral health vaccines (including HPV) to patients six years and older, creating more opportunities for Coloradans to get vaccinated.

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SB25-196: Insurance Coverage Preventive Health-Care Services

Mandates state-regulated health insurances to cover the cost of certain preventive services, including vaccines, recommended before January 2025.

SB25-290: Stabilization Payments for Safety Net Providers

Creates a stabilization fund to financially support “safety net” primary care providers who serve uninsured and low-income Coloradans, including immunization providers.

Public Health Order 25-01: Access to COVID-19 Vaccines

In response to a federal change in COVID-19 vaccine recommendations, the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE) issued a public health order directing insurers to cover the cost of the COVID-19 vaccine and allow pharmacies in the state to offer the COVID-19 vaccine to patients without them needing a prescription.

Respiratory Illnesses in Colorado

| | COVID-19 | Influenza | RSV |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Hospitalizations / Emergency Dept. Visits (2024 vs. 2023) | 93,582 (-24.1%) | 28,614 (+36.3%) | 8,954 (+8.2%) |
| Total Healthcare Costs (2024 vs. 2023) | \$2.72 billion (-10.4%) | \$513 million (+54.6%) | \$301 million (+20.3%) |
| Vaccine Rates (2025/26 vs. 2024/25) | 12.5% (-2.5%) | 29.2% (-0.7%) | 28.0% (+4.1%) (Adults) 22.9% (+2.5%) (Infants) |

(CDPHE, 2025); (Children’s Hospital Colorado, 2024 & 2025)

School-Required Vaccines

Colorado ranks in the bottom half of states for children who have received all recommended childhood vaccines (34th out of 50). While a majority of students in Colorado are fully immunized with all school-required vaccines, overall immunization rates continue to decline, putting thousands of schools and their students at risk for outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases.

Statewide kindergarten fully immunized and exemption rates by vaccine (2024/25 vs. 2023/24)

| Vaccine | Fully Immunized Rate | Exemption Rate |
|-----------|----------------------|----------------|
| DTaP | 87.4% (-0.5%) | 4.00% (+0.05%) |
| Hep B | 91.3% (+0.2%) | 3.33% (-0.10%) |
| MMR | 88.0% (-0.3%) | 4.14% (+0.09%) |
| Polio | 87.6% (-0.2%) | 4.01% (-0.01%) |
| Varicella | 86.8% (-0.5%) | 4.23% (+0.04%) |

(CDPHE, 2025)

Statewide kindergarten exemption data by exemption type and vaccine (2024/25 vs. 2023/24)

| Vaccine | Nonmedical Exemption | Medical Exemption |
|-----------|----------------------|-------------------|
| DTaP | 97.17% (+0.12%) | 2.83% (-0.12%) |
| Hep B | 97.35% (+0.28%) | 2.65% (-0.28%) |
| MMR | 96.30% (+0.26%) | 3.70% (-0.26%) |
| Polio | 97.30% (+0.08%) | 2.70% (-0.08%) |
| Varicella | 96.42% (+0.47%) | 3.58% (-0.47%) |

(CDPHE, 2025)

RESOURCES

- [ImmunizeForGood.com](https://www.immunizeforgood.com), [VacunalosPorSuBien.com](https://www.vacunalosporsubien.com) - English/Spanish vaccine information
- [COVaxRates.org](https://www.covaxrates.org) - View and compare school and child care vaccination rates with CDPHE data
- [Publications.AAP.org/Redbook](https://www.aap.org/redbook) - Find vaccine resources, including the AAP childhood vaccine schedule
- [CDPHE.Colorado.gov/find-free-low-cost-vaccine-provider](https://www.cdphe.colorado.gov/find-free-low-cost-vaccine-provider) - Find out where to find low- or no-cost vaccines