

Governor Phil Murphy

# Press Pool Coverage: Governor Murphy Celebrates One Year Anniversary of COVID-19 Vaccinations in New Jersey

12/15/2021

## PRINT:

Gov. Phil Murphy on Wednesday celebrated the first anniversary of New Jersey COVID-19 vaccine program by returning to University Hospital, the site of the state's first shot.

He and other officials witnessed four people get vaccine booster shots at the hospital's vaccine clinic.

"It's déjà vu all over again, to quote Yogi Berra," Murphy said.

The first to get a booster, Sylvia, Lee of Newark was asked if she was excited to get a booster.

"No," Lee said. "But we've got to do what we've got to do. We've got to keep people safe."

Shereef Elnahal, president of the hospital, said the facility saw "a big rush" this morning for boosters and an increase in demand in general, over the last couple weeks, partially driven by the omicron variant. State Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli said there has also been a statewide uptick

Also on hand was Maritza Beniquez, the emergency room nurse at the hospital who was the first person in the state last year to receive a vaccine shot. She said she got a booster in September.

"I was one of the first ones," Beniquez said. "This disease is too scary to wait."

Also getting boosters at the site were Maryann Smith of Aberdeen, a nurse manager at the hospital; Alexandra Bhuya, an ambulatory care technician at the hospital; and Robin Dickerson, who works in the hospital's Department of Medicine.

Dickerson, 44, of Newark, said she wasn't planning on getting a booster shot as late as last week. She changed her mind this morning.

"I had the first and second shots," She said. "Why do I need a third so soon? I realized things are changing fast. I better reconsider."

Brent Johnson  
NJ.COM

  
Back  
to top

**PHOTOS**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/wk4h8rf25rwgltw/AADTRBfXVHUAKImNfAv0YmTia?dl=0>  
(<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/wk4h8rf25rwgltw/AADTRBfXVHUAKImNfAv0YmTia?dl=0>)

Tariq Zehawi  
NorthJersey.com

**VIDEO**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/wk4h8rf25rwgltw/AADTRBfXVHUAKImNfAv0YmTia?dl=0>  
(<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/wk4h8rf25rwgltw/AADTRBfXVHUAKImNfAv0YmTia?dl=0>)

Mattie Rosen  
NJ Spotlight News

## Governor Phil Murphy

[Home \(/governor/\)](#)

### Administration

[Governor Phil Murphy \(/governor/admin/about/\)](#)

[Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver \(/governor/admin/lt/\)](#)

[First Lady Tammy Snyder Murphy \(/governor/admin/fl/\)](#)

[Cabinet \(/governor/admin/cabinet/\)](#)

[Office of Health Care Affordability and Transparency \(/governor/admin/affordablehealthcare/index.shtml\)](#)

[Boards, Commissions & Authorities \(/governor/admin/bca/\)](#)

[Internship Opportunities \(/governor/admin/internship.shtml\)](#)

[Governor's Residence - Drumthwacket \(http://drumthwacket.org/\)](http://drumthwacket.org/)

### Key Initiatives

[Economy & Jobs \(/governor/initiatives/#Economy\)](#)

[Education \(/governor/initiatives/#Education\)](#)

[Environment \(/governor/initiatives/#Environment\)](#)

[Health \(/governor/initiatives/#Health\)](#)

[Law & Justice \(/governor/initiatives/#Justice\)](#)

[Transportation \(/governor/initiatives/#Transportation\)](#)

### News & Events

[Press Releases \(/governor/news/news/562022/approved/news\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/news/562022/approved/news_archive.shtml)

[Photos \(https://www.flickr.com/photos/govmurphy\)](https://www.flickr.com/photos/govmurphy)

[Public Addresses \(/governor/news/addresses\)](/governor/news/addresses)

[Executive Orders \(/infobank/eo/056murphy/approved/eo\\_archive.html\)](/infobank/eo/056murphy/approved/eo_archive.html)

[Administrative Orders \(/governor/news/ao/approved/ao\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/ao/approved/ao_archive.shtml)

[Direct Appointments \(/governor/news/appointments\)](/governor/news/appointments)

[Advice and Consent Appointments \(/governor/news/acappointments\)](/governor/news/acappointments)

[Statements on Legislation](#)

[\(/governor/news/statements/approved/statements\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/statements/approved/statements_archive.shtml)

[Administration Reports \(/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml)

[Transition Reports \(/governor/news/reports/approved/reports\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/reports/approved/reports_archive.shtml)

[Press Kits \(/governor/news/press\)](/governor/news/press)

## Social

[Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/\)](https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/)

[Twitter \(https://twitter.com/GovMurphy\)](https://twitter.com/GovMurphy)

[Instagram \(https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/\)](https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/)

[Snapchat \(https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy\)](https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy)

[YouTube \(https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice\)](https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice)

[TikTok \(https://www.tiktok.com/@njgov?\)](https://www.tiktok.com/@njgov?)

## Contact Us

[Scheduling Requests \(/governor/contact/scheduling/\)](/governor/contact/scheduling/)

[Contact Us \(/governor/contact/all/\)](/governor/contact/all/)

## Statewide

[NJ Home \(//www.nj.gov\)](http://www.nj.gov)

[Services A to Z \(//www.nj.gov/nj/gov/njgov/alphaserv.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/gov/njgov/alphaserv.html)

[Departments/Agencies \(//www.nj.gov/nj/gov/deptserv/\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/gov/deptserv/)

[FAQs \(//www.nj.gov/faqs/\)](http://www.nj.gov/faqs/)

[Contact Us \(//www.nj.gov/nj/feedback.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/feedback.html)

[Privacy Notice \(//www.nj.gov/nj/privacy.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/privacy.html)

[Legal Statement & Disclaimers \(//www.nj.gov/nj/legal.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/legal.html)

**Accessibility Statement ([//www.nj.gov/nj/accessibility.html](https://www.nj.gov/nj/accessibility.html))**

([//nj.gov/opra/](https://nj.gov/opra/))

(<https://my.state.nj.us/openam/UI/Login>)

Copyright © State of New Jersey, 1996-2023  
Office of Governor PO Box 001  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
609-292-6000

(<https://tech.nj.gov/>)