

## Governor Phil Murphy

# Governor Murphy & Commissioner Persichilli Urge Parents to Heed Updated CDC Recommendations on Omicron-Targeting Covid Vaccinations for Young Children

12/13/2022

**TRENTON, NJ** – Following the recent recommendation made by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), children ages six months through five years are now eligible to receive a COVID-19 bivalent vaccine. This updated version of the COVID-19 vaccine offers stronger protections from Omicron, including its BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants.

Under this expanded use of updated COVID-19 vaccines, children ages six months through five years who previously completed a Moderna primary series are eligible to receive a Moderna bivalent booster at least two months after their final primary series dose. Children ages six months through four years who are currently completing a Pfizer primary series will receive a Pfizer bivalent vaccine as their third primary dose.

Everyone ages 6 months and older can be vaccinated for free at sites across New Jersey, regardless of insurance or their immigration status. Parents and caregivers can find locations offering COVID-19 vaccines and boosters, including the bivalent booster for this new age group, on the COVID-19 Vaccine Finder and Community Calendar at [covid19.nj.gov](https://covid19.nj.gov) ([https://urldefense.com/v3/\\_https://t.e2ma.net/click/flbdpi/7ys5259b/rue3e1\\_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtba!OB0bb1pVTUA-2XZGfPB5Arg\\_EXaNv8W4esieyoMIJL\\_HCocPppNt7w8pb23xtjNmz34ap59NVyDzdJffclxKNJMF\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/flbdpi/7ys5259b/rue3e1_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtba!OB0bb1pVTUA-2XZGfPB5Arg_EXaNv8W4esieyoMIJL_HCocPppNt7w8pb23xtjNmz34ap59NVyDzdJffclxKNJMF$)).

"Vaccines remain one of the strongest tools in our toolbox when it comes to defending against severe illness due to COVID-19," **said Governor Phil Murphy**. "The expanded eligibility for the bivalent vaccine means even more of our residents can now receive updated protection against this virus. I encourage parents and guardians to make an appointment for their child to get boosted if they are eligible – or receive the primary series if they have not yet – to help keep their family healthy as we head into the new year."

"As we approach the upcoming winter holidays when travel and gatherings are commonplace, getting the updated bivalent vaccine and getting boosted will give New Jersey residents and their children additional protection against highly transmissible subvariants of Omicron," **said Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli**. "Immunity wanes over time, which is why we encourage everyone to get boosted and keep COVID-19 out of their holiday plans."

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to make an appointment for their children to get vaccinated against COVID-19 and to stay up-to-date on all their childhood immunizations.

The recommendation by the CDC on December 9 follows the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) amendment on December 8 to the Emergency Use Authorization of the updated (bivalent) Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines to include use in children as young as six months of age.

Currently, 81.3% of New Jerseyans have completed their primary series and 17.2% of the eligible population have received an updated (bivalent) booster. However, only 5.5% of children between the ages of six months and four years have completed their primary series. Just over half of eligible children ages five to 17 have completed their primary series.

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