

## NEWS RELEASE

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### May 11 marks end of national COVID-19 public health emergency declaration

**El Paso County, CO** – Today, May 11, marks the end of the national COVID-19 public health emergency declaration. This shift—which represents significant progress—comes as the final phase of an ongoing, gradual transition to routine disease response. With this change, El Paso County Public Health (EPCPH) wants residents to know that resources remain available.

Throughout the pandemic, EPCPH prioritized increasing easy access to resources such as testing and vaccination, while removing barriers.

- As of April 23, 2023, more than 1.3 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered to El Paso County residents.
- As of May 11, 2023, approximately 35,000 COVID-19 rapid at-home test kits have been distributed in El Paso County communities.
- More than 429,000 COVID-19 PCR tests were completed across community-based test sites in El Paso County between August 2020 – January 2023.

### Now that the public health emergency has ended, how do I...

#### Get a COVID-19 test:

- People with Medicaid coverage may receive free testing and treatment through September 2024. For those with Medicare, private insurance or no insurance, costs will vary by insurance type and/or provider. Rapid tests are available for purchase at pharmacies, grocery stores and other retail locations.
- Additionally, free rapid tests are currently available—while supplies last—at all three El Paso County Public Health locations by visiting the public health reception desk:
  - **Citizens Service Center**, 1675 W. Garden of the Gods Rd. Suite 2044, Colorado Springs, CO 80907, Second Floor Reception Desk.
  - **El Paso County Public Health South**, 6436 U.S. Highway 85-87, Fountain, CO, 80817, Reception Desk.
  - **Valley Hi Public Health location**, 2948 E. Fountain Blvd., Colorado Springs, CO, 80910, Reception Desk.

#### Get a bivalent COVID-19 vaccine:

- Vaccines will remain free as long as federally purchased supplies last. **The COVID-19 vaccine is considered preventive care.** Currently, COVID-19 vaccinations are covered under Medicare Part B without cost sharing, and this will continue. Private insurance plans and Health First

Colorado (the state's Medicaid program) and Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+), will also continue to cover the vaccine at no charge to enrolled members.

- Under the federal Vaccines for Children program, COVID-19 vaccines will continue to be available at no cost for children through 18 years of age who are uninsured, underinsured, on Medicaid or Medicaid eligible, and/or Alaskan Native or American Indian.
- For adults without insurance, free COVID-19 vaccines will remain available at local pharmacies through the Department of Health and Human Services' Bridge Access Program For COVID-19.
- **Vaccines are available from health care providers, pharmacists, and at [El Paso County Public Health](#). Visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find providers with vaccines in your area code.**

#### **Get treatment for COVID-19:**

- COVID-19 medication treatments purchased by the federal government, such as Paxlovid, will continue to be free to the public while supplies last. After that, out-of-pocket expenses for certain treatments may change depending on a person's health care coverage, similar to costs for other medicines. Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid program) will continue to cover COVID-19 treatments without out-of-pocket expenses. For people without insurance, certain COVID-19 medicines will remain available with no out-of-pocket costs at pharmacies participating in the Department of Health and Human Services' Bridge Access Program For COVID-19 Vaccines and Treatments.
- If you are sick with COVID-19, remember to follow [isolation and exposure recommendations](#).

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