



DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

OIFA Member Newsletter - June 2022

COVID-19 Update

Arizona continues to be impacted by positive COVID-19 cases.

Arizonans 5 years of age and older can receive the Pfizer vaccine. Arizonans 18 years of age and older can receive the Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson vaccine. COVID-19 vaccines are safe, highly effective and available at no cost.

Booster Shots

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has updated its guidelines for COVID-19 vaccine booster shots. The following groups should get a booster:

- People 5 years and older who received the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine at least 5 months ago.
- People 18 years and older who received the second dose of the Moderna vaccine at least 5 months ago.
- People 18 years and older who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine at least 2 months ago.

The CDC says that people 18 years and older do not need to get the same brand they received for their initial vaccine. The Moderna and Pfizer mRNA vaccine boosters are preferred. This is true even if a person received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine initially. Either will boost the person's immune system against COVID-19. The Johnson & Johnson booster is still available if it is preferred.

People aged 5-17 who received the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine at least 5 months ago can only get the Pfizer booster.

The CDC recommends a second booster for.

- People aged 50 years and older who received a first booster dose at least 4 months ago.
- People aged 12 and over who are moderately or severely immunocompromised who received a first booster dose at least 4 months ago.

How to Get the Vaccine

The vaccines are as widely available and as easily accessible as possible. Vaccines are available at pharmacies, doctor's offices and other locations run by county health departments. You can find a vaccine site near you online at <https://www.azdhs.gov/findvaccine> or by calling 1-844-542-8201. You can text your zip code to 438829, for English, or 822862, for Spanish, to receive a text message with details about three locations near you with vaccine availability. You can also find facts and myths about the COVID-19 vaccine on the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov) website.

How to Get Tested

Testing is available to anyone who thinks they may have COVID-19. A testing location near you can be found online at <https://www.azdhs.gov/covid19/index.php#everyone-get-tested>. The federal government has also made at-home tests available at no cost. These can be ordered by visiting <https://www.covidtests.gov/>.

Eligible Medicaid members can get non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) to their vaccine appointment. Contact your [health insurance provider](#) for more details. All guidance and details about flexibilities allowed during the COVID-19 public health emergency are available on the [DDD Actions Related to COVID-19 web page](#).

COVID-19 Federal Public Health Emergency Extended

In May 2021, AHCCCS identified service flexibilities that would end when the public health emergency (PHE) is over. The Secretary of Health and Human Services extended the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) effective April 16, 2022.

These service flexibilities continue to be available since the Federal PHE has been extended until at least July 16, 2022:

- Parents as paid providers of direct care to their minor children.
 - This flexibility is also included in Arizona's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) spending plan. AHCCCS has published [Frequently Asked Questions](#) specific to this flexibility.
- Home delivered meals.
- Services during remote learning.

Arizona House Bill 2113

On March 30, 2022, Governor Ducey signed House Bill 2113 into law. This law adds Down Syndrome as a qualifying diagnosis for DDD eligibility. This change will take effect 90-days after the end of the current legislative session. DDD is updating its website, forms, policies, and other documents to reflect this change. Individuals must also have functional limitations in at least 3 of 7 daily life skills to be eligible. More information about eligibility is available on the DDD website.



National Core Indicators (NCI) is an effort between the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS) and the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI). NCI uses in-person interviews and surveys to measure member and family satisfaction. These surveys also measure DDD programs and services effectiveness. The surveys and interviews are a chance for members and families to provide feedback about the services they receive. Members and families are encouraged to participate. Surveys must be returned by June 30, 2022. DDD receives a final report from NCI with no individual survey answers. Your input helps DDD improve member services. Learn more at nationalcoreindicators.org.



In December 2014, the U.S. Congress passed the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act. In 2016, the Arizona Legislature passed House Bill 2388 which created the Arizona ABLE Act. On March 5, 2018, the AZ ABLE Account Program was launched. This law allows [eligible individuals with disabilities](#), their family and friends, to contribute at least \$16,000 annually to the account. These savings do not impact their eligibility for benefit programs like Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Earnings spent on [qualified disability expenses](#) are not subject to federal income tax. Visit <https://az-able.com/> for more information or to open an AZ ABLE account.

Policy Updates

The Division is currently accepting public comments regarding Division policies. They can be found on the Division’s [Policy page](#). Members and families can use this form, <https://forms.gle/4MGCsdyKTRPJna3m9>, to submit public comments. Members or families interested in being notified about policy changes can [register online](#) to receive updates.

Town Hall Meetings

DDD hosts town hall meetings for members, families and providers. You can join via the Internet or by telephone. Attendees can also ask questions. The next town hall will be held on Thursday, July 7, 2022. Visit <http://bit.ly/dddtownhall> for details to join.

Community Resources

DDD has information for local, state, and national groups that support members and their families. The DDD website has links to many of these groups that can assist with day to day tasks and other services that may not be covered by the Division. [Visit the community resources section of the DDD website to learn more.](#)

Arizona Warm Lines

Trained peer support specialists are available to provide support if you need it. These warm lines are available to all Arizonans age 18 and over. Peer support specialists have lived experience. They have been through tough times. They are trained to listen and support callers.

| Area Covered | Provider | Phone Number | Hours |
|----------------------|---|----------------|---|
| All Arizona Counties | NAZCARE | 1-888-404-5530 | 4pm to 10pm Monday – Thursday 3pm to 10:30pm Friday – Sunday |
| Central Arizona | Crisis Response Network | 602-347-1100 | 24 hours |

| Area Covered | Provider | Phone Number | Hours |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|------------|
| Southern Arizona - Pima County | Hope, Inc | 520-770-9909 | 8am - 10pm |
| Southern Arizona - All Other Counties | Hope, Inc | 1-844-733-9912 | 8am - 10pm |

If you are having an emergency or are thinking about hurting yourself, call 911 or the crisis services line in your area.

Suicide and Crisis Hotlines by County

- Maricopa County served by Mercy Care: 1-800-631-1314 or 602-222-9444
- Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz and Yuma Counties served by Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan: 1-866-495-6735
- Apache, Coconino, Gila, Mohave, Navajo and Yavapai Counties served by Health Choice Arizona: 1-877-756-4090
- Gila River and Ak-Chin Indian Communities: 1-800-259-3449
- Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community: 1-855-331-6432
- Tohono O’odham Nation: 1-844-423-8759

Especially for Teens

- Teen Life Line phone or text: 602-248-TEEN (8336)

National 24-Hour Crisis Hotlines

Phone

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- National Substance Use and Disorder Issues Referral and Treatment Hotline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Text

- Text the word “HOME” to 741741

The Family Involvement Center offers a warm line for family members. They offer support to family members that deal with behavioral health challenges. This service is also available at no cost.

- Statewide phone number: 1-877-568-8468
- Hours:
 - Monday - Friday: 8am - 6pm
 - Saturday - Sunday: 8am - 12pm

Report Fraud, Waste or Abuse

Medicaid fraud, waste and abuse (FWA) are crimes. Report fraud, waste, and abuse right away. You will not get in trouble or lose services if you report any suspected fraud, waste, or abuse.

You can report FWA to DDD by:

- Calling DDD at 1-877-822-5799
- Sending an email to dddfwa@azdes.gov
- Sending a letter to DES/DDD, Attn: Corporate Compliance Unit, 1789 W Jefferson St., Mail

Drop 2HA1, Phoenix, AZ 85007

- Completing this [online form](#).

You can also report FWA to AHCCCS

- Call the Office of the Inspector General at 602-417-4193
- Report Online at the [AHCCCS Website](#)
- Report provider fraud by calling:
 - Maricopa County: 602-417-4045
 - Outside Maricopa County: 1-888-487-6686
- Report member fraud by calling:
 - Maricopa County: 602-417-4193
 - Outside Maricopa County: 1-888-487-6686
- Submit general questions via email at AHCCCSFraud@azahcccs.gov.

Stay Up to Date

All old OIFA newsletters are available to view on DDD's website. Visit the [Member Services](#) page and click on the "Member Newsletters" section.

DDD is Here to Help

Please contact your Support Coordinator or the DDD Customer Service Center at 1-844-770-9500 ext. 1 (TTY/TDD 711) if you have questions.

Call the DDD Customer Service Center at 1-844-770-9500 ext. 1, TTY/TDD 711, to ask for this material in other formats. Language help is available at no cost to you.