

CHALLENGE DETAILS



New Jersey 2026-2027 College & University Flu Challenge

Challenge Overview

The purpose of the Challenge is to increase flu awareness and vaccination rates of college-aged young adults through a friendly statewide competition among participating colleges and universities in New Jersey. Students will be asked to self-report their vaccination status via a short online survey. The institutions with the highest flu vaccination coverage percent (based on undergraduate student population) will be presented with a traveling trophy from the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH).

Student Self-Report Vaccination Survey

The survey for students to report their vaccination status is available here:

healthsurveys.nj.gov/NoviSurvey/n/ChallengeStudent2026.aspx.

Students will be asked to report school name, month of vaccination, place where flu vaccine was received, and age. No identifying information will be collected. Multiple responses can be submitted per computer (there will be no limit to responses per IP address) as it is recognized that students often use communal computers. Because no identifying information will be collected, NJDOH will be utilizing the honor system.

Beyond collecting data, one of the purposes of the self-report vaccination survey is to raise awareness of flu vaccination among students and to get students talking about flu vaccination. Therefore, college health centers are not permitted to enter data into the survey on behalf of the students. Student health centers should encourage all students vaccinated at their facility to take the survey and can offer a computer on-site to complete it. However, health center staff should not be filling out the survey for students.

The challenge winners will be determined based on the percent coverage of flu vaccines received by students through **December 31, 2026**. For more details, see next page.



Congrats to the 2025-2026
Challenge Winners:

Large Schools: **New Jersey Institute of Technology**

Medium Schools: **The College of New Jersey**

Small Schools: **Best Care College**

The traveling trophy will be engraved with the winning school name and will relocate to the new winner for each year of the challenge.

For the most up-to-date announcements, visit

nj.gov/health/cd/edu_training/vpdp_flu_challenge.shtml.

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Determining the Challenge Winner

There will be three categories of participants: large schools (7,500+ students), medium schools (2,000 – 7,499 students), and small schools (< 2,000 students).* An overall challenge winner will be determined for each of the three categories through student self-reported vaccination survey data (see page prior). The institutions with the highest flu vaccination coverage (number of students indicating they received vaccine on the survey, divided by the undergraduate student population) will win the challenge for their respective category. The challenge winners will be announced in Spring 2026.

All participants will receive a certificate of recognition and will be eligible for the New Jersey Influenza Honor Roll. For more information on the Honor Roll, please visit nj.gov/health/cd/edu_training/vpdp_flu_honor_roll.shtml. The Challenge winners will receive a traveling trophy, which will relocate to the new winner with each year of the Challenge.

**Depending on the population of the schools that enroll, category ranges may be adjusted.*

New Jersey Immunization Information System (NJIIS)

By participating in this challenge, enrolled colleges and universities are strongly encouraged to enter all flu vaccine doses administered by the health center into the official statewide web-based immunization registry, NJIIS. While state law does not require documentation for individuals older than seven years of age, it is an immunization best practice. NJIIS is a great tool to assist in increasing immunization rates. It provides a centralized location for immunization records for all age groups across the lifespan. For more information, please visit: njiis.nj.gov.

Resources

The toolkit has been updated and is currently going through an internal approval process and will be made available on the [website](#). In the meantime, you can utilize last year's [toolkit](#) for some guidance, if necessary. The toolkit contains information on current flu vaccination rates, ideas for improving vaccination coverage, and interactive tools to help design a campaign. Additionally, please see the timeline for the Challenge below. Lastly, a mid-challenge newsletter will be sent out to provide an update on the Challenge.

Timeline

- **End of August/Beginning of September** – Challenge enrollment and student survey will open
- **End of October/Early November** – Mid-Challenge newsletter
- **December 31** – Student survey will close
- **February**– Winners will be announced, and presentation of award to follow

For questions or comments, please contact:

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