

November 2025 Health Officer's Update

As we enter the season of gratitude, I want to thank every resident, partner, and organization that helps make Montgomery County a healthier, stronger, and more connected community. November gives us time to reflect on the progress we've made together and to prepare for the changes and challenges ahead.

The Monday before Thanksgiving has been designated as Public Health Thank You Day. From nurses and epidemiologists to environmental health inspectors, health educators, emergency planners, and community health workers, their work makes Montgomery County safer, stronger, and more resilient. Please join me in showing appreciation for our DHHS staff and all our public health partners: **thank you** for your tireless efforts, your compassion, and your commitment to equity and service.

Preparing for Health Insurance Changes

Many residents rely on Medicaid for essential health coverage. The passage of **H.R. 1** will bring major changes to Medicaid eligibility and renewal requirements over the next several years, including new work verification, shorter renewal cycles, and the end of some retroactive coverage. These changes could affect up to **23,500 Montgomery County residents**.

While Medicaid is administered by the Maryland Department of Health and the details of implementation are still being finalized (and most won't take effect until 2027), Montgomery County DHHS is actively preparing to support the State's efforts and to help residents maintain their health coverage with as little disruption as possible. You can learn more about what these changes mean for our county by reviewing the presentation shared at the **County [Council Session](#) on November 4, 2025**.

We also recognize the more immediate changes in the ACA marketplace, where expiring tax credits are expected to result in significant increases in insurance premiums for many residents. Maryland has put in funds to help support those whose premiums may be increasing. You can learn more about what it means for you at [Maryland Health Connection](#).

Supporting Residents During the Federal Government Shutdown

Our hearts are with all who are impacted by the ongoing **federal government shutdown**, especially families facing financial uncertainty. DHHS is increasing access to emergency services, food assistance, and behavioral health support. Federal workers and contractors affected can contact **311**. Please see the attached sheet for where to find food assistance.

Diabetes Awareness Month

November is **Diabetes Awareness Month**, a reminder of the importance of prevention, screening, and management. More than 1 in 10 adults in Montgomery County are living with diabetes or prediabetes. This month, we are:

- Partnering with community organizations to offer **free blood sugar screenings** and education sessions.
- Highlighting the connection between **nutrition, physical activity, and chronic disease prevention**.
- Encouraging everyone to take small steps like walking, cooking healthy meals, or checking blood sugar to protect your health.

Cold and Flu Season: Protect Yourself and Others

As temperatures drop and we gather indoors more often, respiratory illnesses like **flu, COVID-19, and RSV** tend to spread. Getting your **annual flu shot, an updated COVID-19 vaccine, and RSV vaccine (if eligible)** remains the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones. In addition to getting vaccinated:

- **Stay home if you're sick,**
- **Wash your hands frequently** and avoid touching your face.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes** with your elbow or a tissue.
- **Improve indoor ventilation** by opening windows or using air purifiers when possible.
- **Consider wearing a mask** in crowded indoor spaces when Flu or COVID rates are high, especially if you or someone close to you is at higher risk.
- **Plan ahead:** When you are sick everyone else probably will be too, consider getting over the counter cold and flu medicine now and avoid the rush. Also, talk with your doctor to know if they would want you to take prescription medication for flu or COVID if you were to get it. Please be kind and don't hoard medications- save some for your neighbors.

These small steps can go a long way in keeping our community healthy through the winter months.

Looking Ahead

As we approach the holidays, I encourage you to take time to rest, reconnect, and care for yourself and those around you. Thank you for being part of Montgomery County's ongoing commitment to health, equity, and compassion. I personally extend thanks and appreciation to all who are committed to making our community a healthier, happier place to live, work, and play!



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