



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UPDATE: Free Immunizations, Physicals, Dental Exams to be Provided for School-Aged Children at State Fair

IDPH will also supply free gun locks during the fair in Springfield

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) will provide a variety of health and safety services during the 2023 Illinois State Fair in Springfield, including free immunizations, physicals, and dental exams for school-aged children. IDPH will also give away gun locks as part of its ongoing partnership with the Illinois State Police (ISP) to promote firearms safety in the state.

The fair runs August 10-20 and IDPH staffers will be on hand each day of the fair at the IDPH tent on the east side of the Annex Building, in a booth at the Illinois Building, and in a booth at Conservation World. The tent and booths will be manned from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends, during the fair.

“The Illinois State Fair is one of my favorite events of the year,” said IDPH Director Dr. Sameer Vohra. “It is always filled with great fun, incredible food, and precious time with family and friends. The Fair represents the best that Illinois has to offer, and I am excited that IDPH, along with our incredible partners, are able to provide free services to help promote health, safety, and wellness. We encourage all Illinoisans to take advantage of these public health resources while visiting this year’s State Fair.”

The immunizations and physicals will be provided in conjunction with Mobile Care Chicago and are available free of charge to school-aged children, regardless of insurance status. The services will be provided at the Illinois Building booth on Friday, August 11, and Saturday, August 12, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. both days.

Under Illinois law, physicals are required when entering kindergarten or first grade, sixth grade, and ninth grade, or when entering a new school regardless of grade level. Information on immunization requirements can be found at <https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/prevention-wellness/immunization/minimum-immunization-requirements.html>.

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The dental examinations are also available free of charge to school-aged children and will be offered on Tuesday, August 15 and Friday, August 18, from 1 to 4 p.m. both days, also at the IDPH booth at the Illinois Building.

Throughout the state fair, IDPH will also provide free gun locks at its tent and booths. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has furnished the gun locks for distribution by IDPH, as part of both agencies' commitment to promoting firearms safety. The purpose of the IDPH/ISP program, "Together for a Safer Illinois," is to make gun locks readily available as a means of preventing tragedies, such as accidental shootings, gun violence, gun thefts, and suicide.

The locks include installation instructions for autoloading pistols, revolvers, auto loading and pump-action shotguns, bolt action rifles, modern sports rifles, and single-action revolvers. The locks also come with information about [the national 988 suicide and crisis lifeline](#). No information will be collected from those who obtain a lock at the fair.

Another important aspect of public health at the Illinois State Fair comes through inspections of food vendors. Director Vohra accompanied inspectors from the Sangamon County Department of Public Health this week, prior to the opening of the fair, as they conducted inspections to ensure compliance with food safety regulations. "Food safety is one of the least visible, yet most important, aspects of public health," said Dr. Vohra. "Checking to ensure food vendors at the fair are following the essential rules of safe food preparation and service is a safeguard against illness. The hard work of public health inspectors ensures that you can confidently enjoy the many delicious options the fair has to offer."

During the manned hours of operation at the fair, the IDPH tent and booths will also offer brochures and other information on the wide range of public health services provided by the agency. There will also be information available about employment opportunities within the department.

To learn more about Illinois Department of Public Health services, visit <https://dph.illinois.gov>. For more information about the Illinois State Fair, go to <https://illinoisstatefair.info>.

[CAPTION FOR ATTACHED PHOTOGRAPHS:] Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. Sameer Vohra accompanies a worker from the Sangamon County Department of Public Health during a food vendor inspection at the Illinois State Fairgrounds.

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