



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Renee Mallory, RN, BSN
Secretary of Health

Jennifer Dillaha, MD
Director

Viral Respiratory Diseases Weekly Report **2023-2024**

Week Ending Saturday 02/17/2024

Mike Cima, PhD
State Epidemiologist

Austin Porter III, DrPH, MPH
Deputy Chief Science Officer
Deputy State Epidemiologist

Prepared by:

Haytham Safi, MD, MPH
Epidemiology Supervisor
Influenza Surveillance Coordinator
Haytham.Safi@Arkansas.gov
501-661-2920

Reviewed by:

Lori Simmons, MS
Branch Chief, Epidemiology

February 21, 2024

The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) produces a Weekly Viral Respiratory Diseases Report for clinicians. The report provides information on Influenza, COVID-19 and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) activity in the state. The report also compares activities in Arkansas to the U.S. ADH receives reports of only a fraction of COVID-19 cases and flu cases since it only requires reports of flu hospitalizations, deaths, and outbreaks. RSV is not a reportable disease in Arkansas. Therefore, it is important to understand that the information in the weekly update is representative of the timing and location of activity, but it does not reflect the overall disease burden. It is presumed that there are many more people actually affected than the report shows. Clinicians and policymakers may find the report helpful in terms of communicating to colleagues and patients about the current status of viral respiratory diseases in the state and nationwide.

Report Key Points for Week 7:

- Arkansas reported “Very High” or 11 out of 13 for the Influenza-Like-Illness (ILI) activity level indicator determined by data reported to ILINet.
- Hospital Emergency Department visits reported through Syndromic Surveillance were at 10.07% for Influenza-Like-Illness (ILI), 3.29% for COVID-Like-Illness (CLI), and 0.17% for Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV).
- Outpatient visits for ILI reported through ILINet from the Sentinel Providers were at 6.40%.
- The average school absenteeism rate last week was 8.80% among public schools.
- Arkansas reported 55 influenza-related deaths in the 2023-24 flu season. Of these, 73% were not vaccinated.
- Nationally, CDC estimates that there have been at least 24 million illnesses, 260,000 hospitalizations, and 16,000 deaths from flu so far this season.
- Arkansas reported no COVID-19-related deaths this week with a total of 701 deaths in 2023 and 88 since 01/01/2024. The weekly deaths reflect week reported not date of death.
- This flu season, 21 influenza outbreaks have been reported from nursing homes or other congregate setting institutions.
- Nationally, the proportion of deaths reported to the National Center for Health Statistics that were attributed to pneumonia, influenza and COVID-19 (PIC) was above the epidemic threshold this week.

You can report flu year-round and view the weekly Viral Respiratory Disease Weekly Report during the influenza season at: <http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/influenza>. You can also access the reporting website directly at: <https://FluReport.ADH.Arkansas.gov>.

For Additional National and International Influenza Surveillance Information:

World Health Organization (WHO): <https://www.who.int/tools/flunet>

CDC - Seasonal Influenza (Flu) - Weekly Report: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>

2023-2024 Viral Respiratory Diseases Weekly Report (Week 7: 02/11/2024 – 02/17/2024)

Deaths Reported for Week 7*

* Deaths reflect week reported not date of death.

- Deaths from all causes: 742
- Deaths due to Pneumonia: 77
- Deaths due to Flu: 7
- COVID-19 Related Deaths: 0

Cumulative Deaths

- Total Flu deaths since 10/01/23: 55
- Total COVID deaths in 2023: 701
- Total COVID deaths since 01/01/24: 88

New Hospital Admissions

- Flu Week ending 02/17/2024: 69
- COVID Week ending 02/17/2024: 61

School Absenteeism*

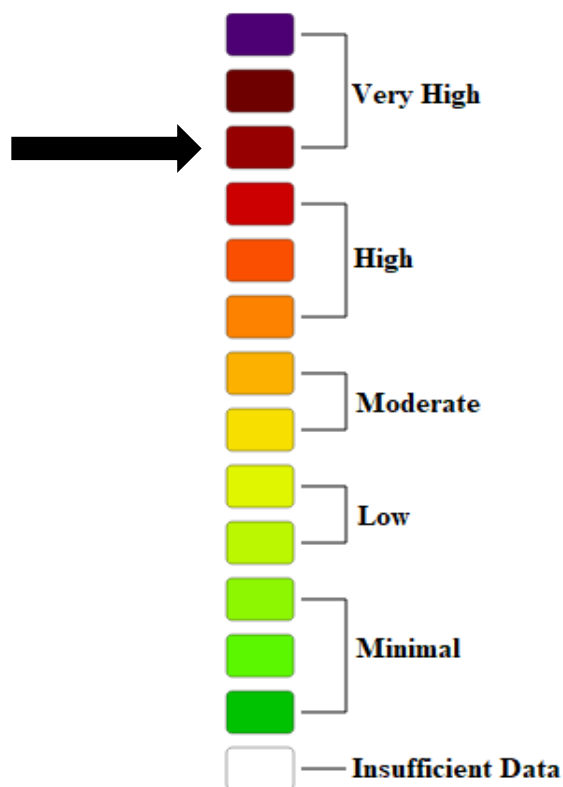
* Average daily absenteeism for all public schools during this reporting week.

Week Ending: 02/17/2024

- Percent Absent: 8.80

- Previous Week: 9.03

Weekly Arkansas ILI Intensity Level Reported by Sentinel Providers



Lab Confirmed Influenza Cases

Reported flu cases reflect only a portion of the actual numbers of flu cases in the state.

Tests	Week 7	Cumulative Cases Since 10/01/2023
Flu A+	922	7,311
Flu B+	388	5,845
Flu A and B	8	119
Flu B/Victoria	0	15
Flu B/ Yamagata	0	0
Flu A, H1N1+	1	54
Flu A, H3+	21	123
Unsubtypeable	0	0
Total	1,340	13,467

Influenza Reported Cases, Hospitalization and Death Cumulative Cases Since 10/01/2023

Age Groups	Cases	Hospitalized	Deaths
0-4 yr.	1,909	50	0
5-17 yr.	4,521	45	0
18-24 yr.	1,034	30	2
25-44 yr.	2,696	138	4
45-64 yr.	1,810	235	13
>= 65 yr.	1,471	445	36
Unknown	26	0	0
Total	13,467	943	55

ER Visits (Syndromic Surveillance)

Week Ending: 02/17/2024:

Total (% of Visits)

- Total ER Visits: 16,363
- Visits with ILI: 1,648 (10.07%)
- Visits with CLI: 538 (3.29%)
- Visits with RSV: 27 (0.17%)

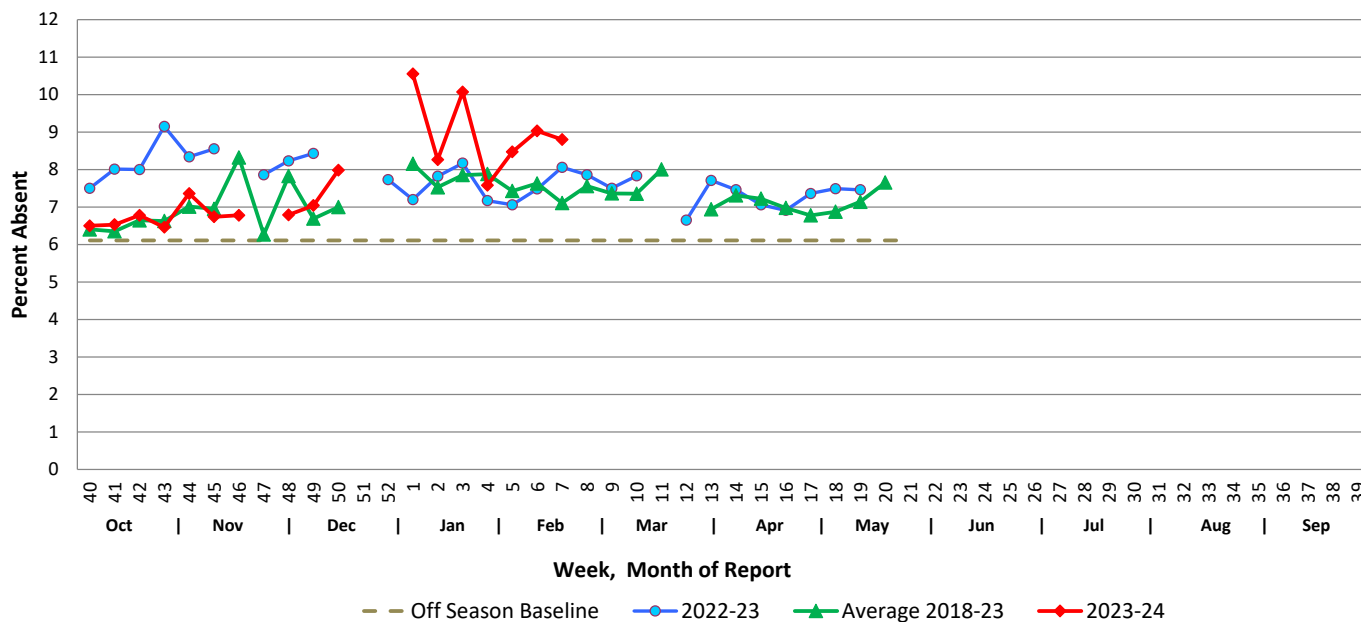
Previous Week:

Total (% of Visits)

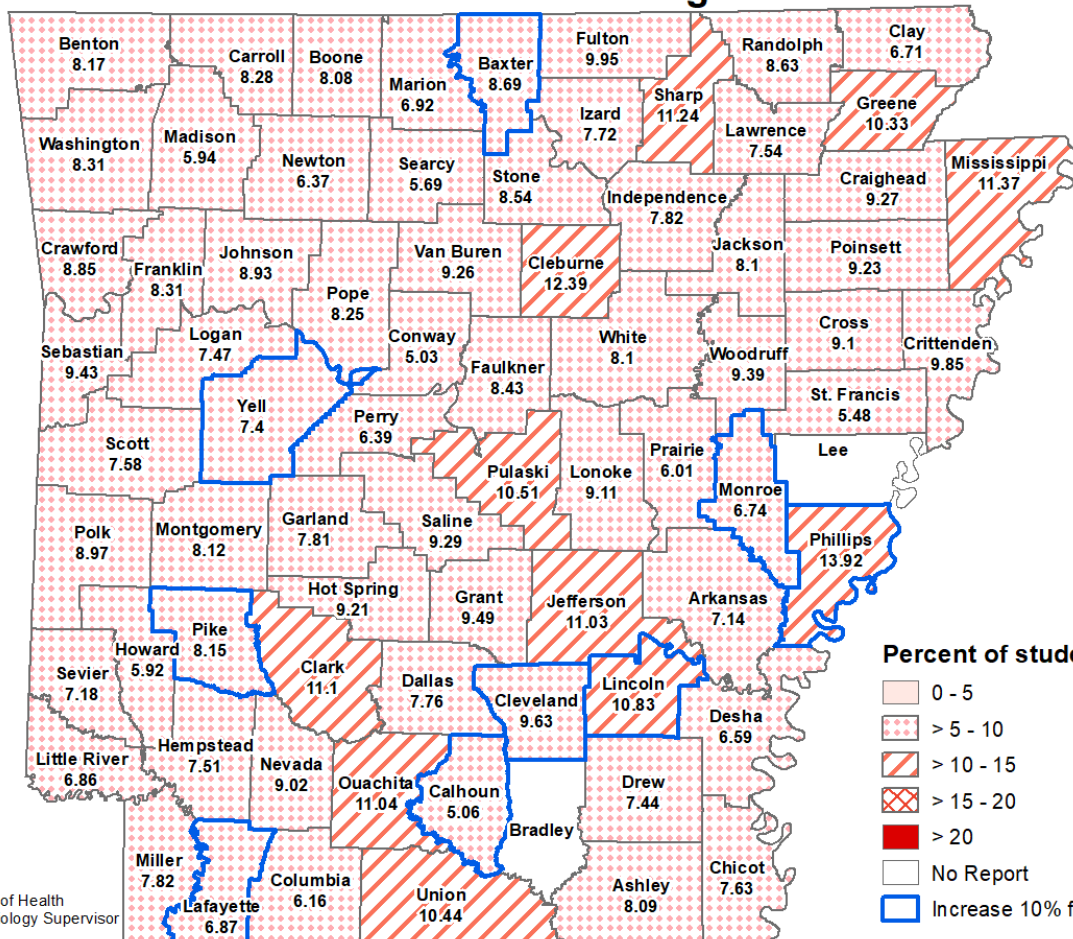
- Total ER Visits: 16,813
- Visits with ILI: 1,722 (10.54%)
- Visits with CLI: 574 (3.41%)
- Visits with RSV: 49 (0.29%)

Schools Report

Weekly School Absenteeism Rates, Arkansas Public Schools



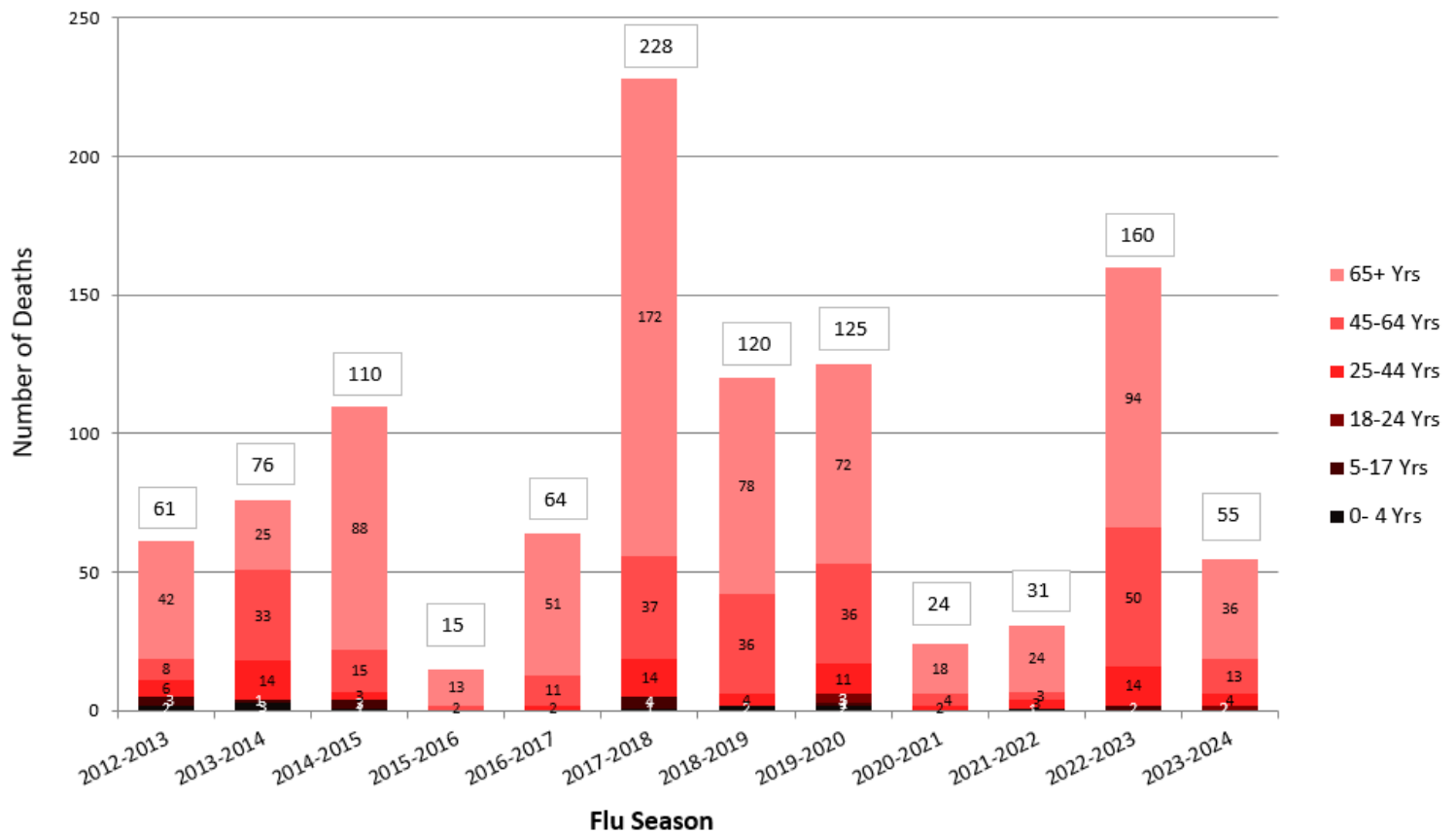
School Absenteeism Rate per County, Arkansas 2023-2024 Percent Absent for Week Ending 2/17/2024



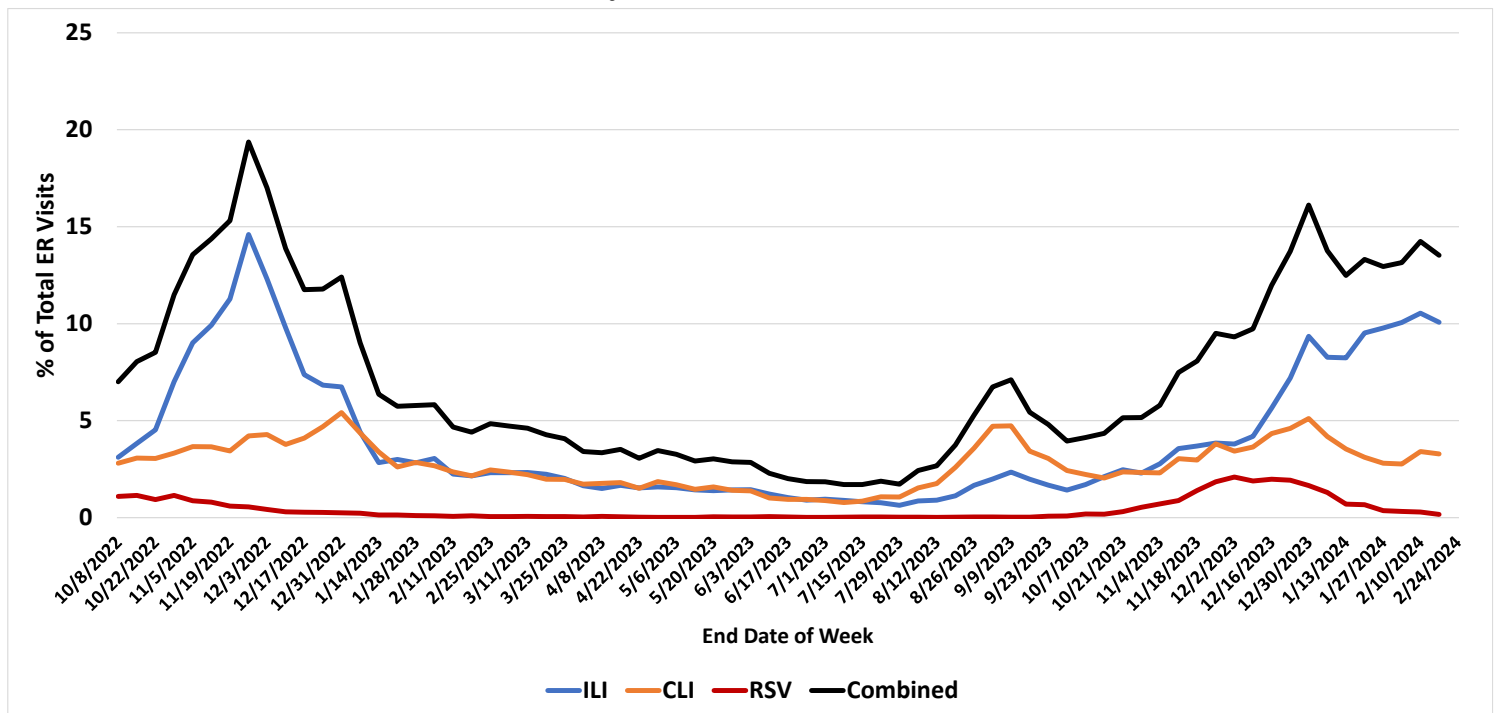
Date: February 20, 2024
Source: Arkansas Department of Health
Author: Haytham Safi, Epidemiology Supervisor

Influenza Mortality by Age Group, Arkansas 2012-2024 (Provisional)

Report Updated: 02/20/2024

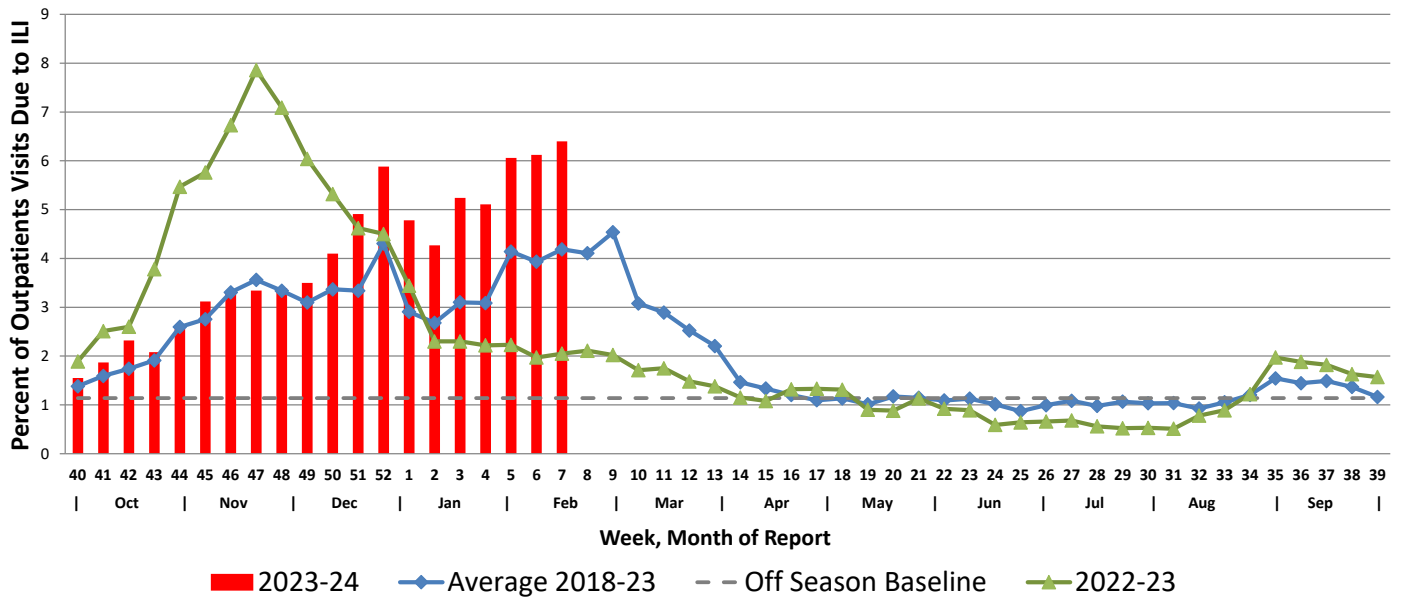


Emergency Department Visits for ILI, CLI and RSV, Arkansas Data Downloaded from NSSP (Syndromic Surveillance)

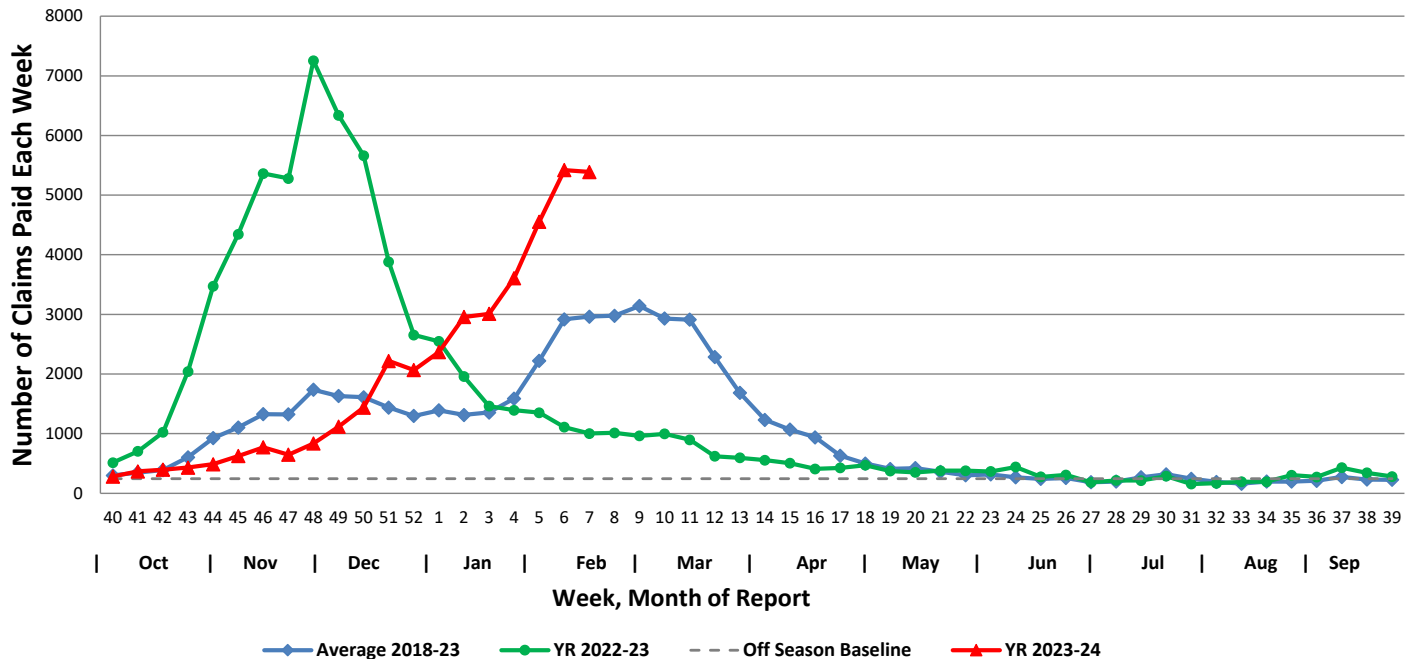


Arkansas Subset of US Outpatient Influenza Surveillance (ILINET)

Percentage of Outpatient Visits Due to Influenza-like Illness Reported by ILINet in Arkansas

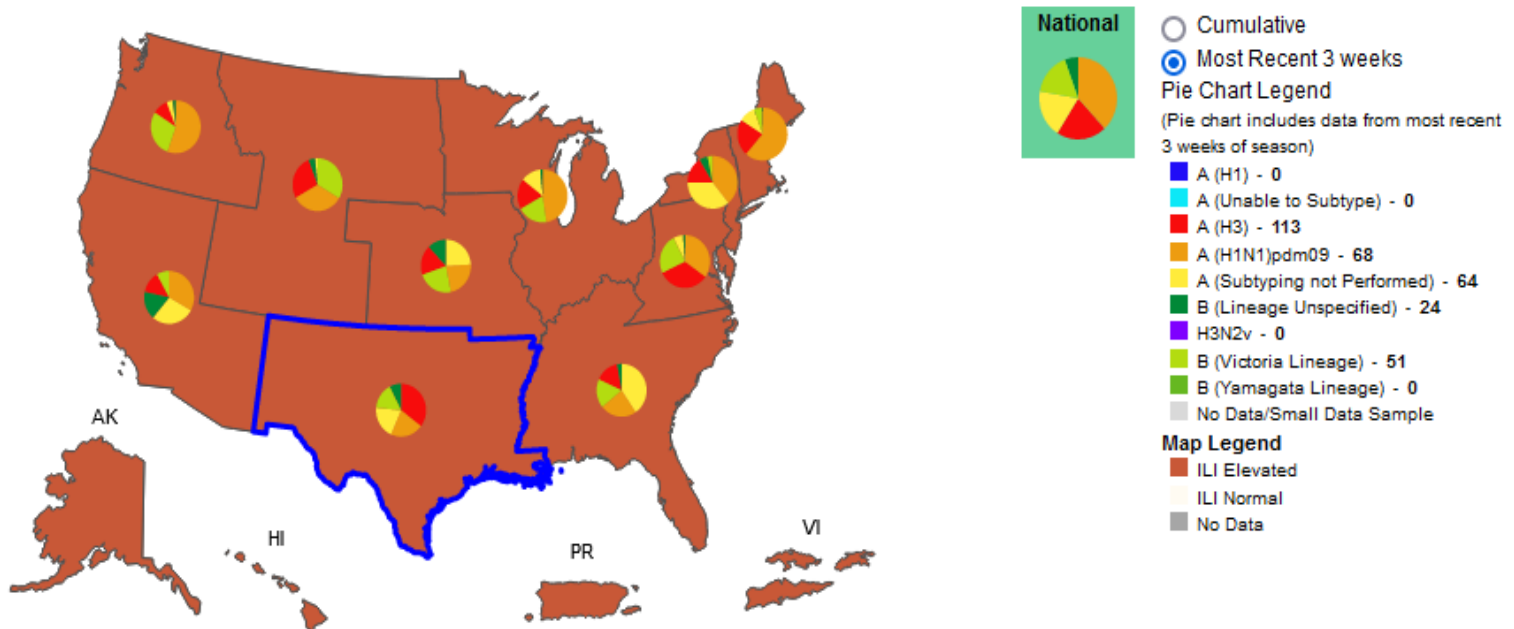


Weekly Influenza Claims Paid by Medicaid and BCBS of Arkansas

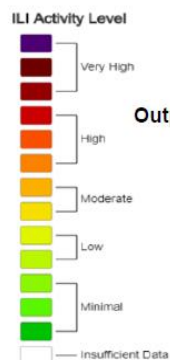
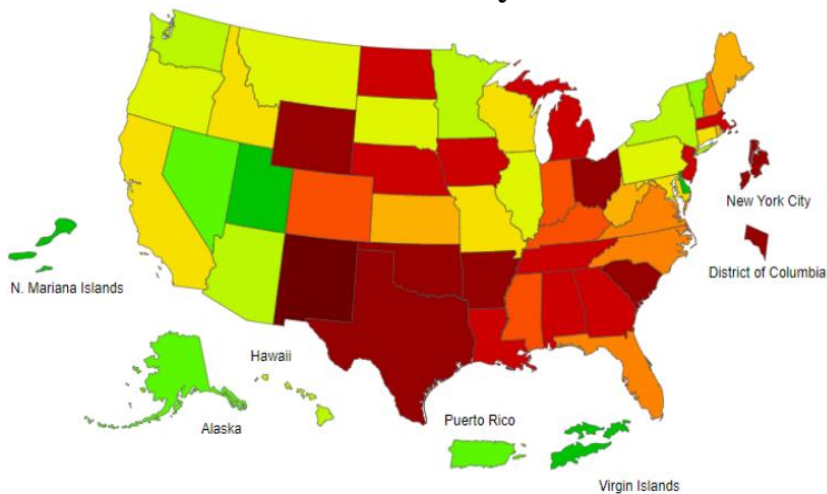


Influenza Positive Tests Reported to CDC and ILI Activity, by HHS Region Public Health Labs, 2022-2023 Season, Week Ending Feb 10, 2024

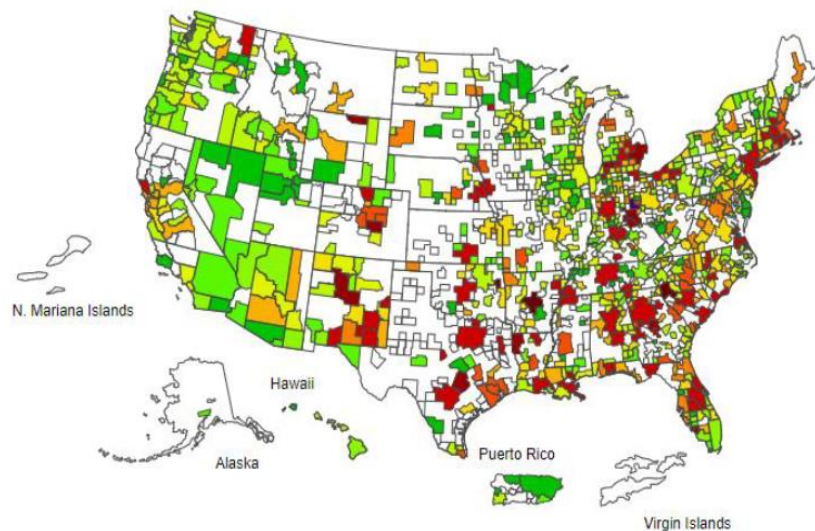
Values in legend are for the highlighted HHS region (Region 6) for the most recent 3 weeks.



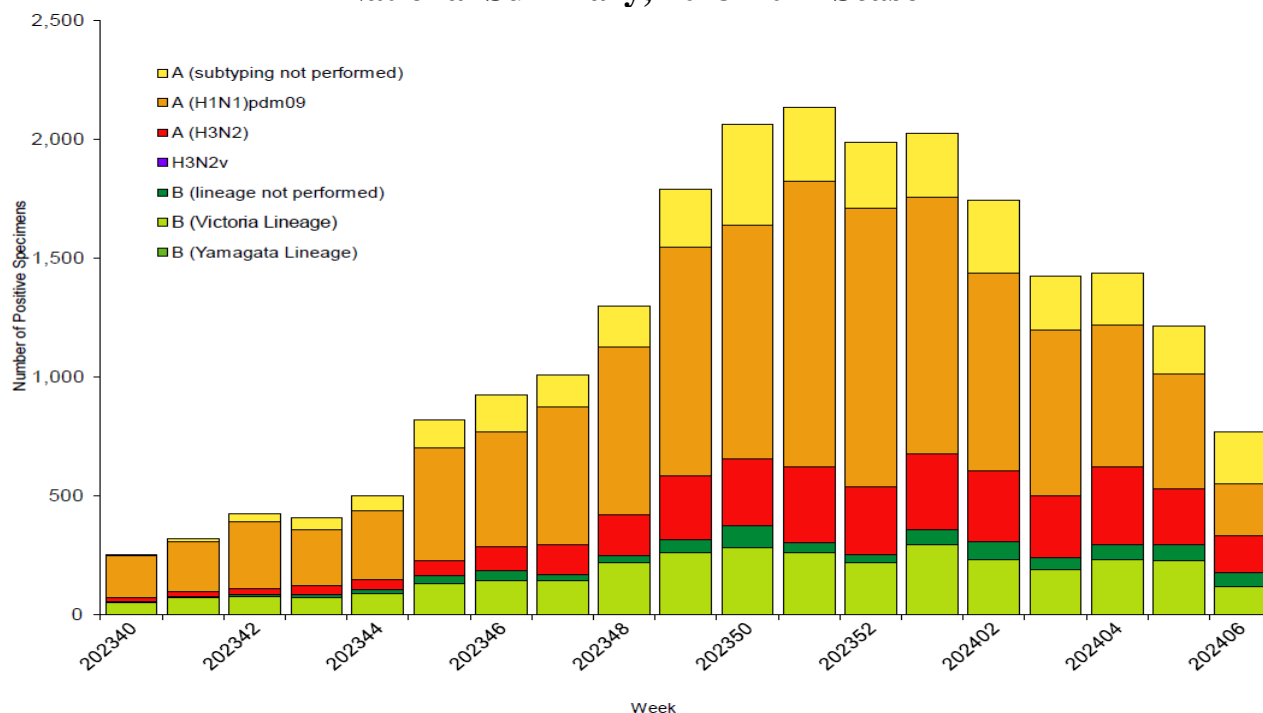
Influenza-Like-Illness Activity Level Indicator Determined by Data Reported to ILINet



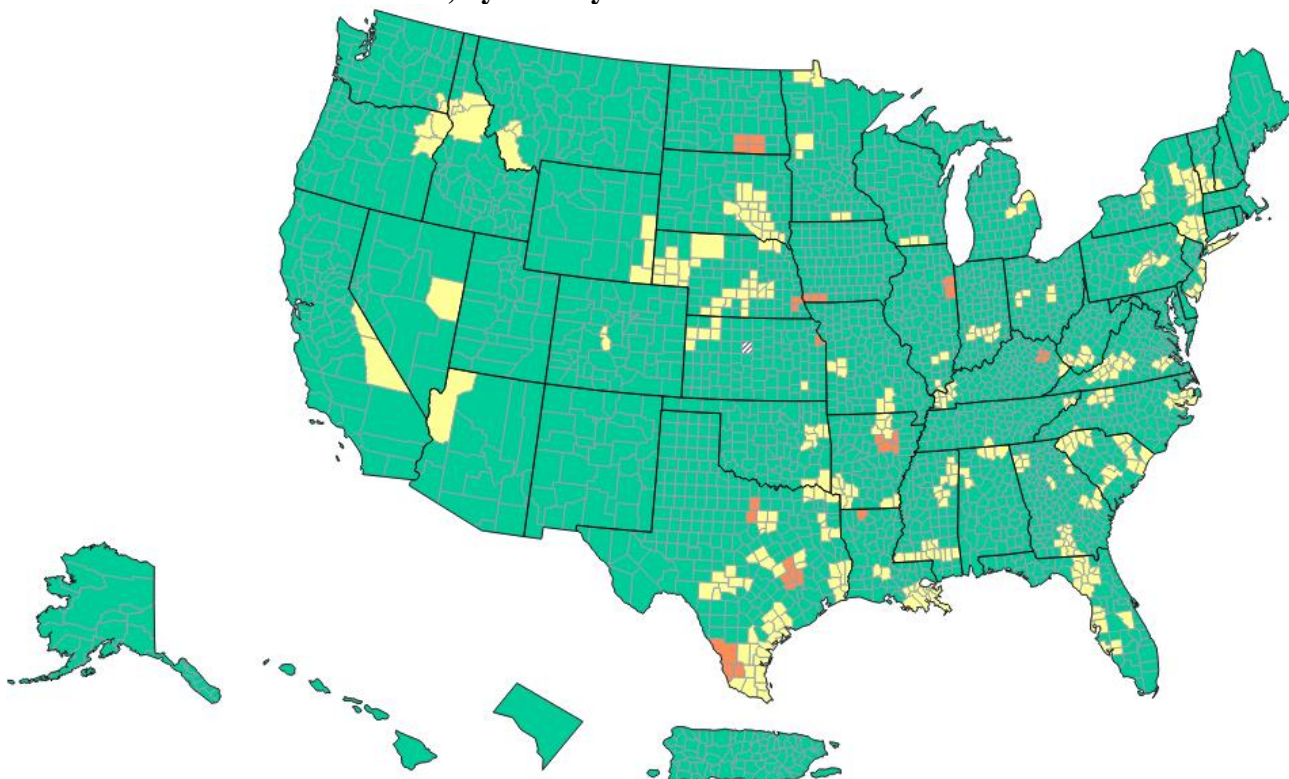
Outpatient Respiratory Illness Activity by CBSA
Week 6, ending February 10, 2024



Influenza Positive Tests Reported to CDC by U.S. Public Health Laboratories, National Summary, 2023-2024 Season



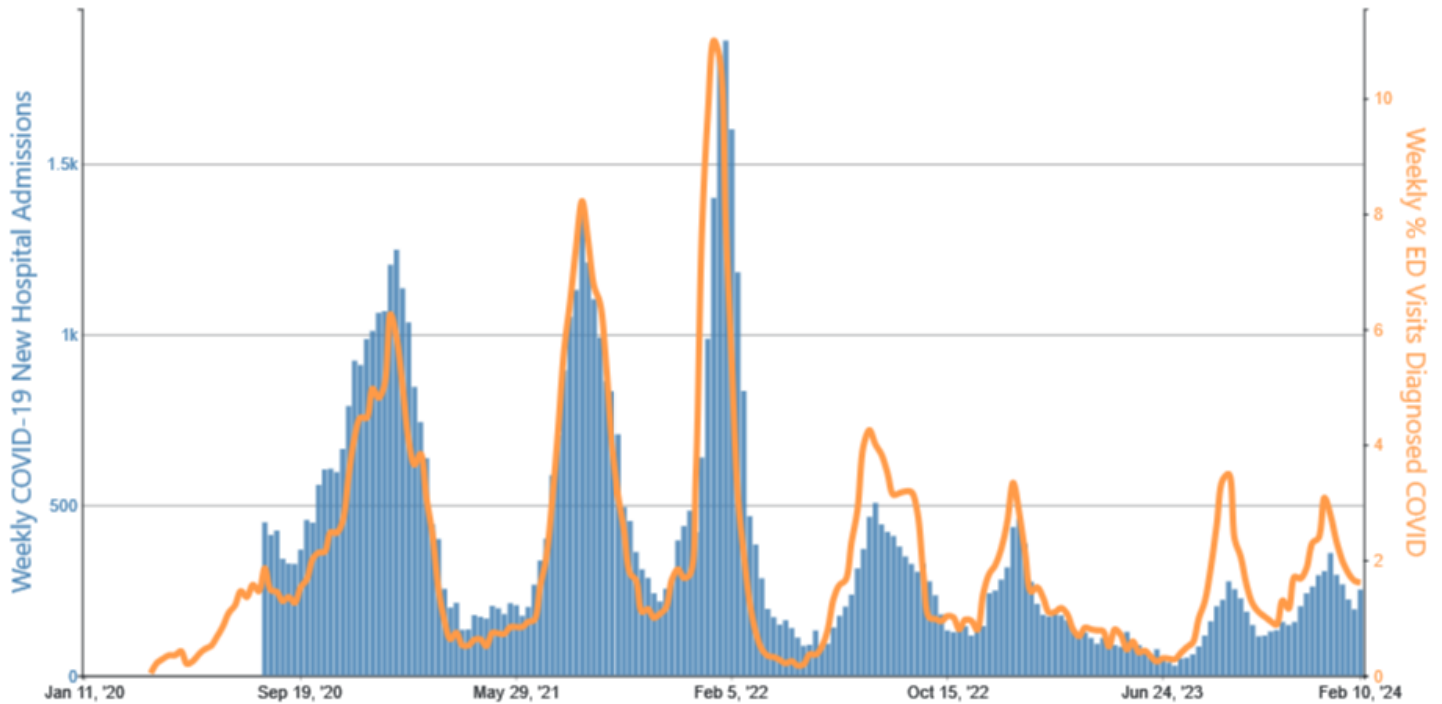
Reported COVID-19 New Hospital Admissions Rate per 100,000 Population for Week Ending 02/10/2024, by County of Residence – United States



	Total	Percent	% Change
≥ 20.0	32	0.99%	0.78%
10.0 - 19.9	370	11.48%	2.79%
<10.0	2820	87.52%	-3.48%

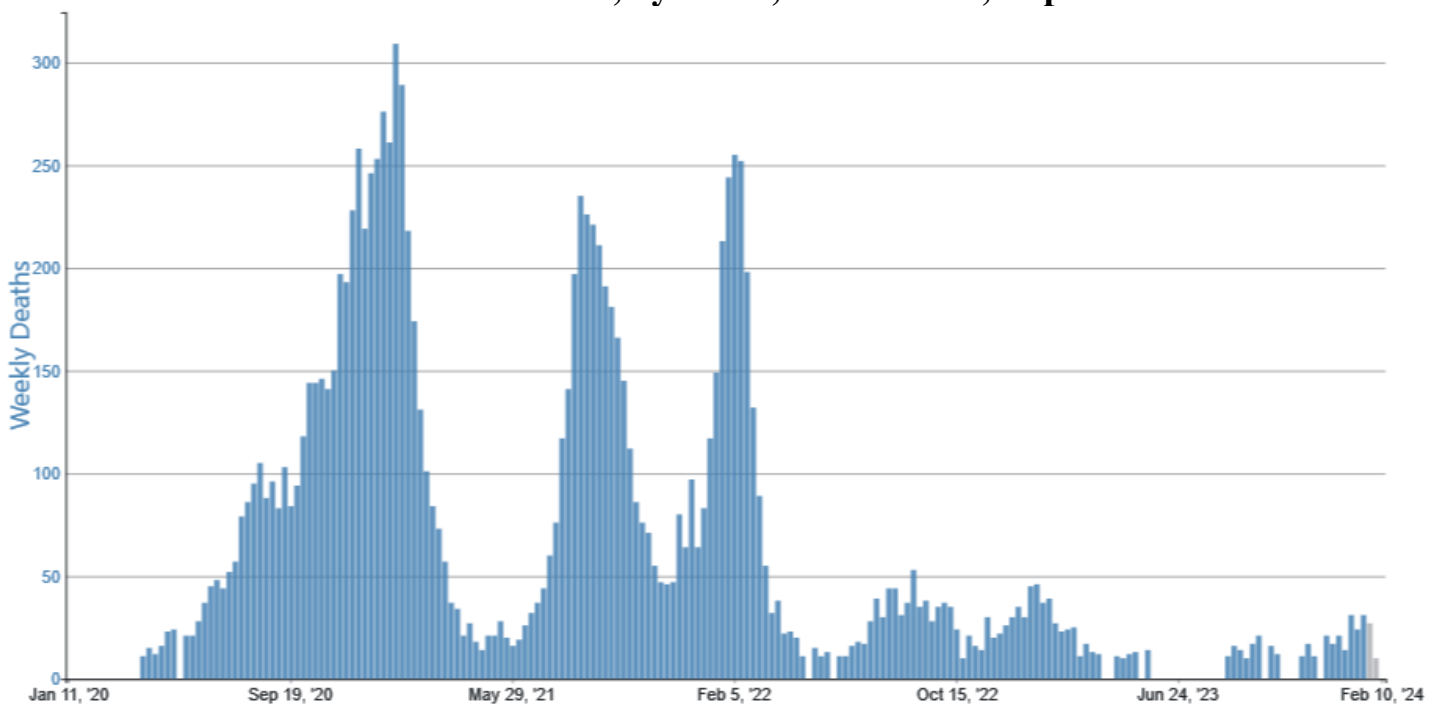
Source: https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#maps_new-admissions-rate-county.

COVID-19 New Hospital Admissions and Percentage of Emergency Department (ED) Visits Diagnosed as COVID-19, by Week, in Arkansas, Reported to CDC



Source: COVID-19-associated hospitalization data reported to CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN).

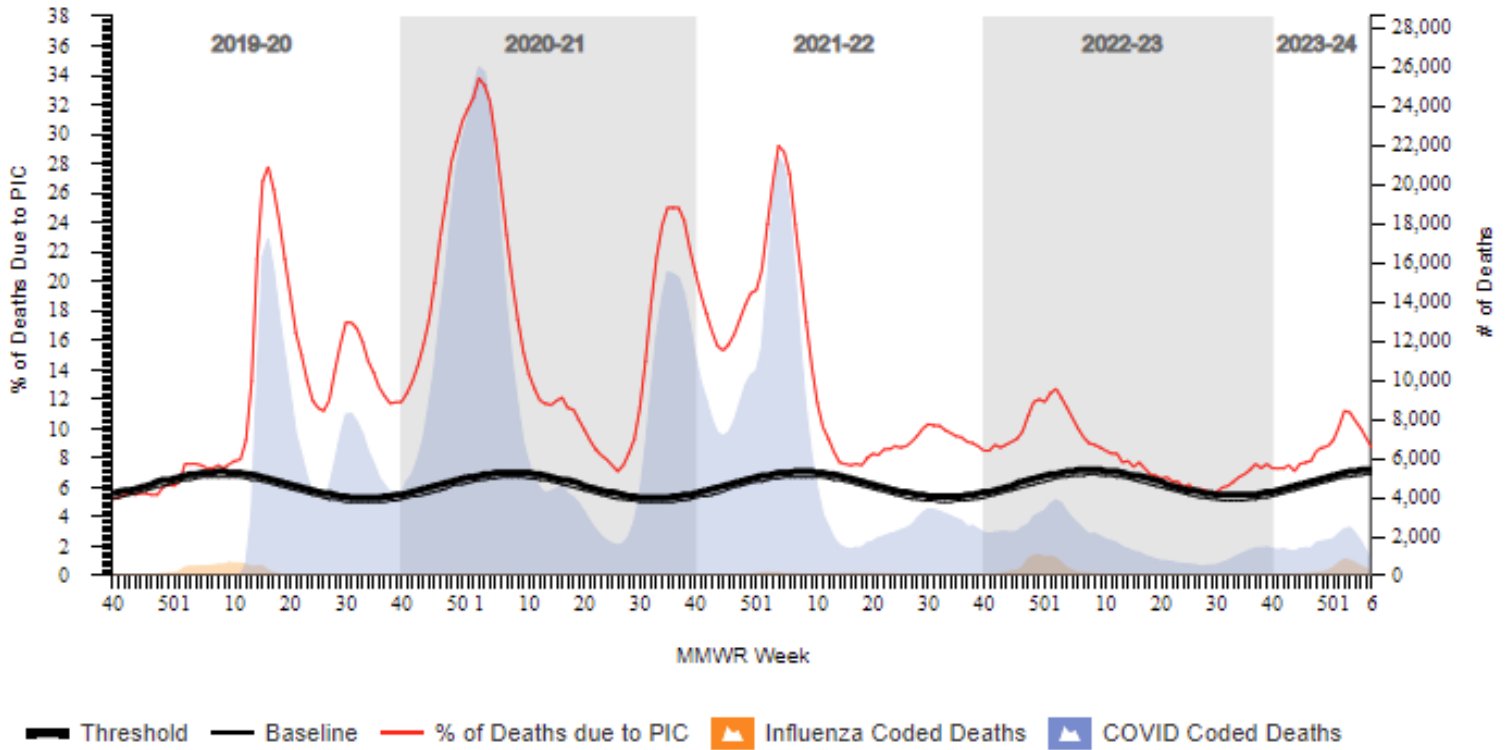
Provisional COVID-19 Deaths, by Week, in Arkansas, Reported to CDC*



Source: Provisional Deaths from the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) National Vital Statistics System (NVSS).

*Weeks with number of deaths between 1-9 are suppressed (Not Shown).

Pneumonia, Influenza and COVID-19 (PIC) Mortality from the National Center for Health Statistics Mortality Surveillance System Data as of Feb 15, 2024, National Data



Pneumonia, Influenza and COVID-19 (PIC) Mortality from the National Center for Health Statistics Mortality Surveillance System Data as of Feb 15, 2024, Arkansas Data

