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**April 22, 2019**

**NEWS RELEASE**

## **Free Vaccines Offered as part of National Observance**

### Department Urges Education, Action during National Infant Immunization Week

**EL PASO, Texas** – The City of El Paso Public Health Department is celebrating National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) in the community by offering **free vaccines on Wednesday May 1, 2019** to Texas Vaccines for Children (TVFC) eligible infants and children birth to 2 years old. This year we will be celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NIIW.

Public health officials say the observance of NIIW is a great opportunity for local healthcare providers to increase community awareness and to promote the importance of immunizations against Measles and other illnesses as the first level of prevention to stop the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases. They stress that it is exceptionally vital to recognize the importance of protecting infants from vaccine-preventable diseases.

“We are generally in a safe position in El Paso in regards to our herd immunity against Measles, but we can do better. Infants are especially vulnerable to Measles since they do not get their first vaccination until they’re a year old. For that reason, it is very important to vaccinate babies on time, to protect them from serious diseases,” said Dr. Hector Ocaranza, City/County Health Authority.

As of April 11, 2019, there have been 555 confirmed cases of measles in the United States and 15 of those confirmed cases are in Texas. Measles is a highly contagious respiratory viral illness spread by contact with an infected person through sneezing or coughing that can cause serious complications in some infected children. Additionally, it is one of many diseases being addressed as a part of National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) this year.

TVFC eligibility is as follows:

- Enrolled in Medicaid
- Uninsured: a child who has no health insurance coverage
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Enrolled in CHIP (El Paso Health only)
- Underinsured: a child with no insurance coverage for vaccinations or only partial coverage

Vaccines will be offered on a first come/first served basis at our **Ysleta Clinic: 110 Candelaria Road** and at our **Henderson Clinic: 721 S. Mesa Street**. Hours of operation are from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. with the last patients seen at 5:00 p.m. We will see both scheduled patients and walk-ins. For information please contact our appointment line at 915-212-6555.

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