

## Texas Influenza Surveillance Report 2020-2021 Season/2020 MMWR Week 50

(December 6, 2020 – December 12, 2020)  
Report produced on 12/18/2020

### Summary

\*Please note, some aspects of influenza surveillance may be affected by current COVID-19 response activities. For information about COVID-19 in Texas, please visit [www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus](http://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus).

Influenza activity is low across the state of Texas. Compared to the previous week, the percentage of specimens testing positive for influenza reported by hospital laboratories has decreased. The percentage of patient visits due to influenza-like illness (ILI) has decreased. No influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported. No influenza-associated institutional outbreaks or school closures were reported.

Table 1: Summary of Texas Influenza (Flu) and Influenza-like Illness (ILI) Activity for the Current Week

Texas Surveillance Component	Change from Previous Week	Current Week	Previous Week <sup>†</sup>	Page of Report
Statewide ILINet Activity Indicator assigned by CDC (intensity of influenza-like illness)	No Change	Minimal	Minimal	--
Percentage of specimens positive for influenza by hospital laboratories	▼0.21%	0.32%	0.53%	1
Percentage of visits due to ILI (ILINet)	▼0.14%	1.65%	1.79%	4
Number of regions reporting increased flu/ILI activity	No change	2	2	7
Number of regions reporting decreased flu/ILI activity	No change	0	0	7
Number of variant/novel influenza infections	No cases reported	0	0	7
Number of ILI/influenza outbreaks	No change	0	0	7
Number of pediatric influenza deaths	No change	0	0	6

### Laboratory Results

#### Influenza

\*In response to the COVID-19, influenza testing at Texas Public Health Laboratories has significantly decreased to increase capacity for SARS-CoV-2 testing. Please note, this will affect data in Table 3 and Figure 2.

Hospital laboratories across Texas voluntarily report influenza tests (antigen, culture, and PCR) to the National Respiratory and Enteric Virus Surveillance System (NREVSS). Providers throughout Texas also submit specimens for influenza testing (PCR) to Texas public health laboratories, including the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) state laboratory in Austin and the nine Texas Laboratory Response Network (LRN) laboratories. The results reported by Texas NREVSS participants and public health laboratories for the current week are summarized in the two tables below. Additional influenza test results (rapid tests, culture, PCR) and ILI activity were reported from providers and public health departments throughout the state (see county map at the end of this report).

Table 2: Influenza Testing Performed by Texas Hospital Laboratories for the Current Week

	Week 50	Season to Date Week Ending: Dec. 12, 2020
Number of labs reporting flu tests	19	
Number of specimens tested	1578	19550
Number of positive specimens (%) <sup>†</sup>	5 (0.32%)	175 (0.90%)
Percentage of total tests that were antigen detection tests	33.90%	
<b>Positive specimens by type/subtype [n (%)]</b>		
<b>Influenza A</b>	<b>0 (0.00%)</b>	<b>66 (37.71%)</b>
Subtyping performed	0 (0.00%)	2 (3.03%)
A (H1N1)	0 (0.00%)	1 (50.00%)
A (H3N2)	0 (0.00%)	1 (50.00%)
Subtyping not performed	0 (0.00%)	64 (96.97%)
<b>Influenza B</b>	<b>5 (100.00%)</b>	<b>109 (62.29%)</b>

Figure 1: Number and Percentage of Tests (Antigen, Culture, PCR) Positive for Influenza by Type and Subtype Reported by Texas Hospital Laboratories, 2020-2021 Season

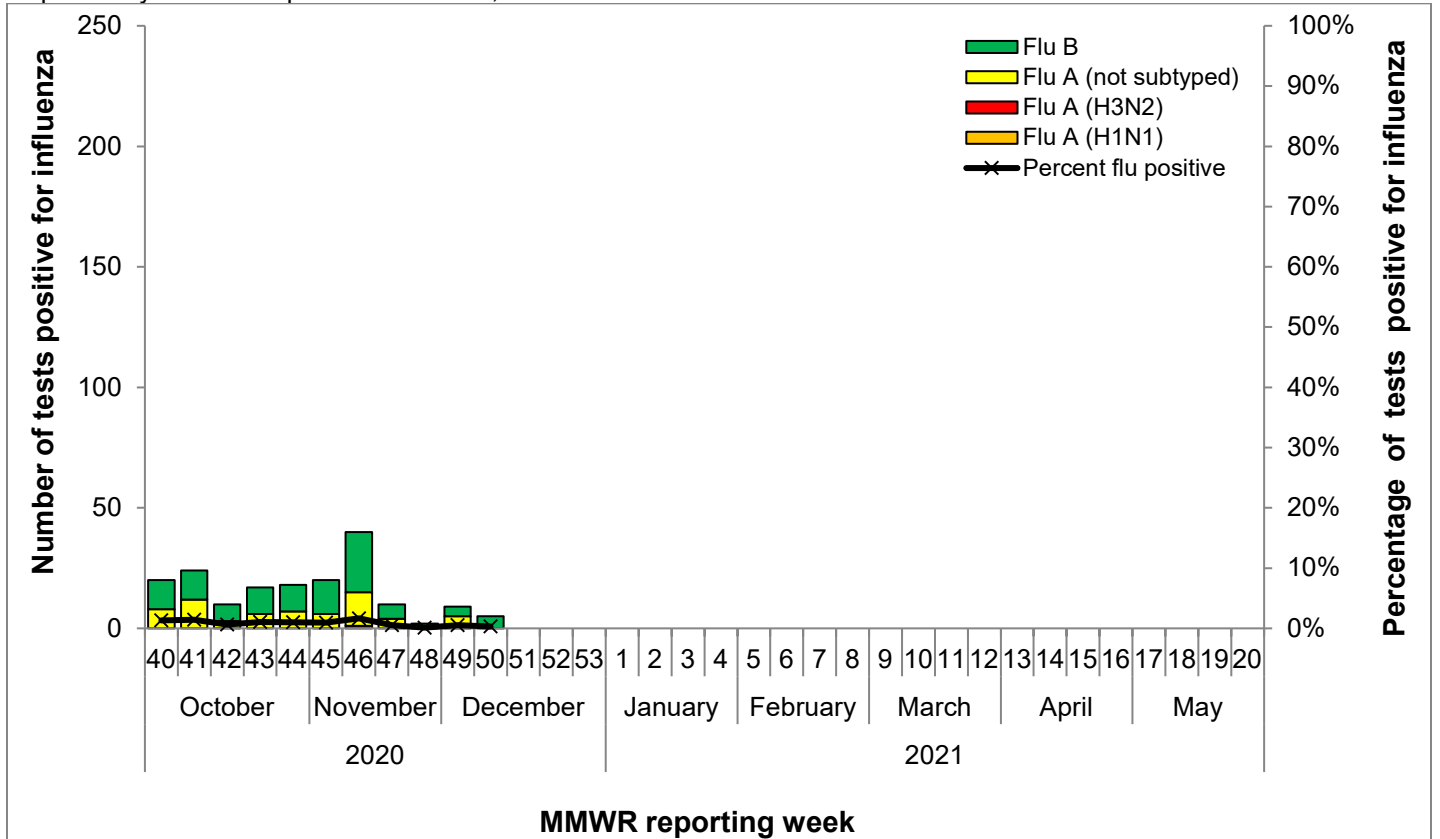
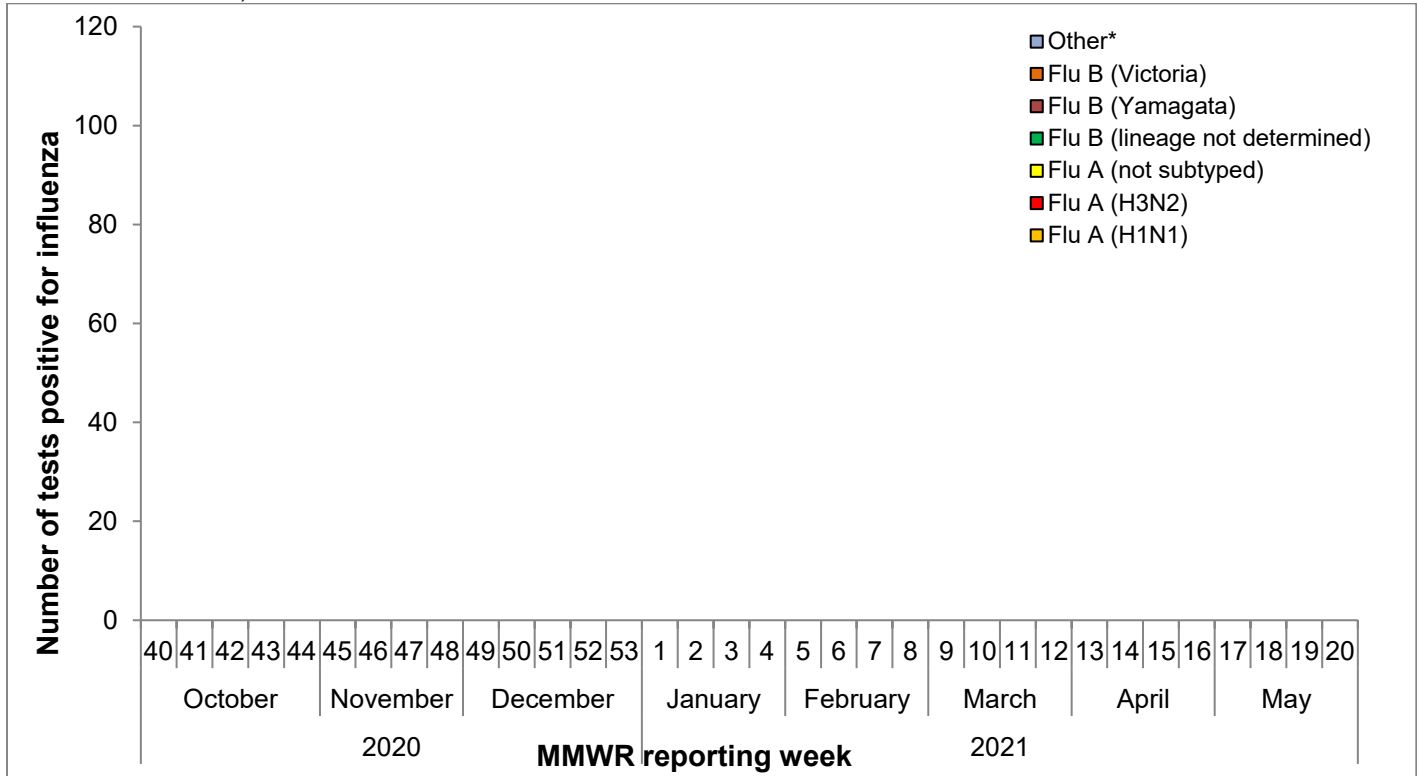


Table 3: Influenza Testing Performed by Texas Public Health Laboratories for the Current Week

	Week 50	Season to Date Week Ending: Dec. 12, 2020
Number of labs reporting flu tests	4	
Number of specimens tested	494	1440
Number of positive specimens (%) <sup>†</sup>	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
<b>Positive specimens by type/subtype/lineage [n (%)]</b>		
<b>Influenza A</b>	<b>0 (0.00%)</b>	<b>0 (0.00%)</b>
Subtyping performed	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
A (H1N1)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
A (H3N2)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Subtyping not performed	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
<b>Influenza B</b>	<b>0 (0.00%)</b>	<b>0 (0.00%)</b>
Lineage testing performed	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
B/Victoria	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
B/Yamagata	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Lineage testing not performed	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
<b>Other</b>	<b>0 (0.00%)</b>	<b>0 (0.00%)</b>

<sup>†</sup>Other denotes specimens with coinfections (i.e. one specimen was positive for both influenza A (H1N1) and influenza A (H3N2))

Figure 2: Number of Tests (PCR) Positive for Influenza by Type, Subtype, and Lineage Reported by Texas Public Health Laboratories, 2020-2021 Season



\*Other denotes specimens with coinfections (i.e. one specimen was positive for both influenza A (H1N1) and influenza A (H3N2))

#### Other Respiratory Viruses

The NREVSS system collects information on a variety of respiratory viruses in addition to influenza including parainfluenza virus, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), rhinovirus, human metapneumovirus (HMPV), seasonal coronavirus, and respiratory adenovirus. The results for the current week are summarized below.

Table 4: Non-Influenza Respiratory Virus Testing Performed by Texas NREVSS Laboratories for the Current Week

Virus	Number of Laboratories Testing	Tests Performed	Positive Tests	Percentage of Tests Positive
Adenovirus (respiratory)	11	570	15	2.63%
HMPV	11	570	18	3.16%
Parainfluenza virus	11	570	0	0.00%
Rhino/enterovirus	11	570	121	21.23%
RSV <sup>†^</sup>	15	977	0	0.00%
Seasonal coronavirus (does not include MERS-CoV or COVID-19)	9	343	0	0.00%

<sup>†</sup>RSV tests displayed in the table are a combination of antigen detection, PCR, and culture tests. Some non-NREVSS reporters also contribute to the RSV data.

<sup>^</sup>Numbers and percentage may differ from the weekly RSV report. The weekly RSV report may be accessed at <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/RSV/disease/rsv-Data.aspx>.

#### Antigenic Characterization

No antigenic characterization data for Texas specimens are available at this time. The DSHS Laboratory sends a representative sample of influenza viruses to the CDC throughout the flu season.

#### Antiviral Resistance

No antiviral resistance testing data for Texas specimens are available presently.

## U.S. Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet)

\* Please note, the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting healthcare seeking behavior. The number of persons and their reasons for seeking care in the outpatient and ED settings is changing. These changes impact data from ILINet in ways that are difficult to differentiate from changes in illness levels, therefore ILINet data should be interpreted with caution.

Table 6: Texas ILINet Reporting and Patient Visit Summary for the Current Week

Week 50	
Number of providers reporting	68
Number of providers reporting patient visits	68
Number (%) of providers with at least one ILI case	56 (82.35%)
Percentage of all visits due to ILI	1.65%
Texas ILINet baseline <sup>‡</sup> , 2020-2021	5.26%

<sup>‡</sup>The baseline is the mean percentage of patient visits for ILI during non-influenza weeks for the previous three seasons plus two standard deviations. A "non-influenza week" is defined as a week that accounted for less than 2% of the season's total number of specimens that tested positive for influenza

Table 7: Percentage of Visits for Influenza-like Illness Reported by Texas ILINet Providers (as of 12/17/2020 2:35 PM)

Week	Providers Reporting	Number of ILI Cases by Age Group (Years)					Total ILI (all ages)	Total Patients	ILI
		0-4	5-24	25-49	50-64	65+			
202040	61	97	203	158	69	38	565	41206	1.37%
202041	75	108	217	230	116	68	739	49293	1.50%
202042	73	138	218	227	104	58	745	48216	1.55%
202043	60	107	201	175	74	46	603	41699	1.45%
202044	73	120	201	244	99	53	717	45437	1.58%
202045	78	141	268	320	109	65	903	49854	1.81%
202046	74	154	285	352	146	99	1036	52209	1.98%
202047	72	136	246	307	121	79	889	47329	1.88%
202048	75	96	195	271	137	68	767	40376	1.90%
202049	66	127	208	284	108	67	794	44393	1.79%
202050	68	117	188	272	115	93	785	47715	1.65%

Figure 3: Percentage of Visits Due to Influenza-like Illness Reported by Texas ILINet Participants, 2020-2021 Season

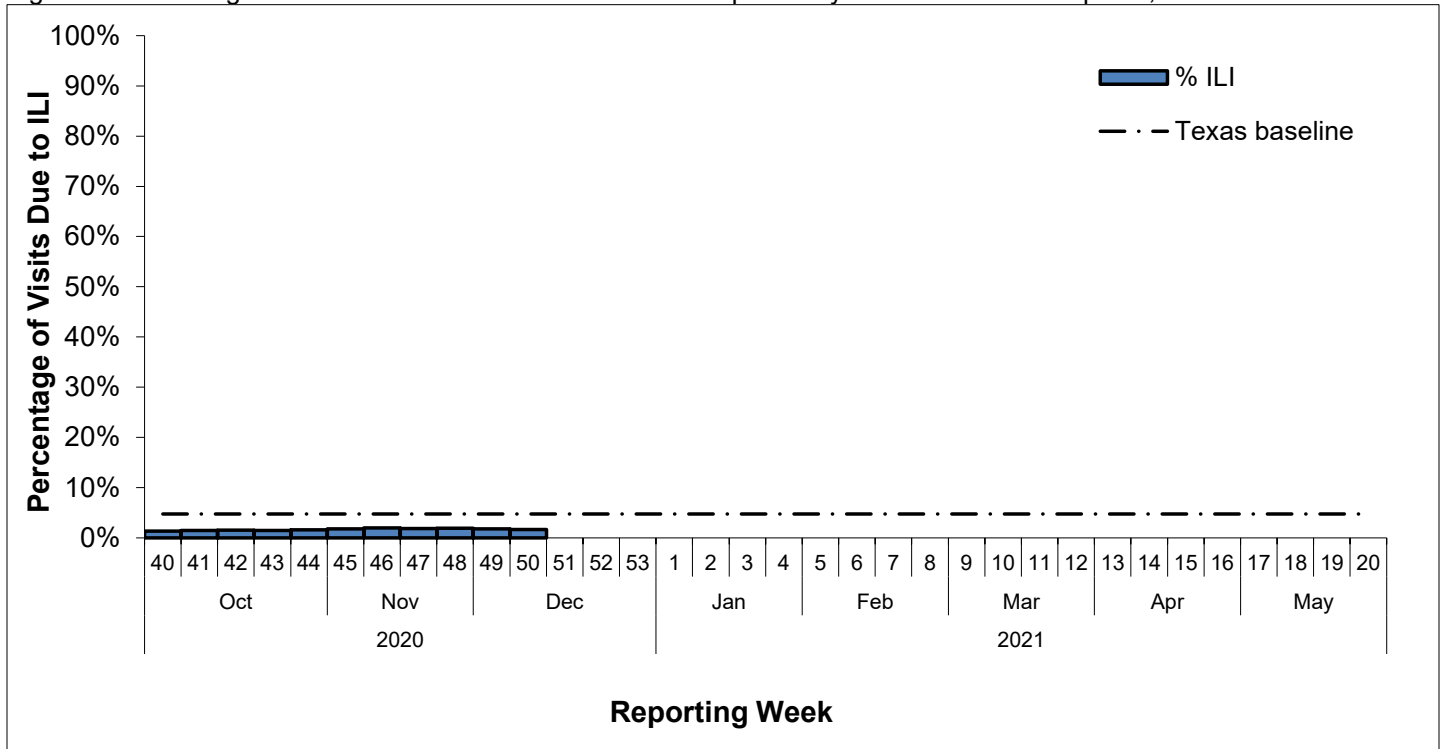
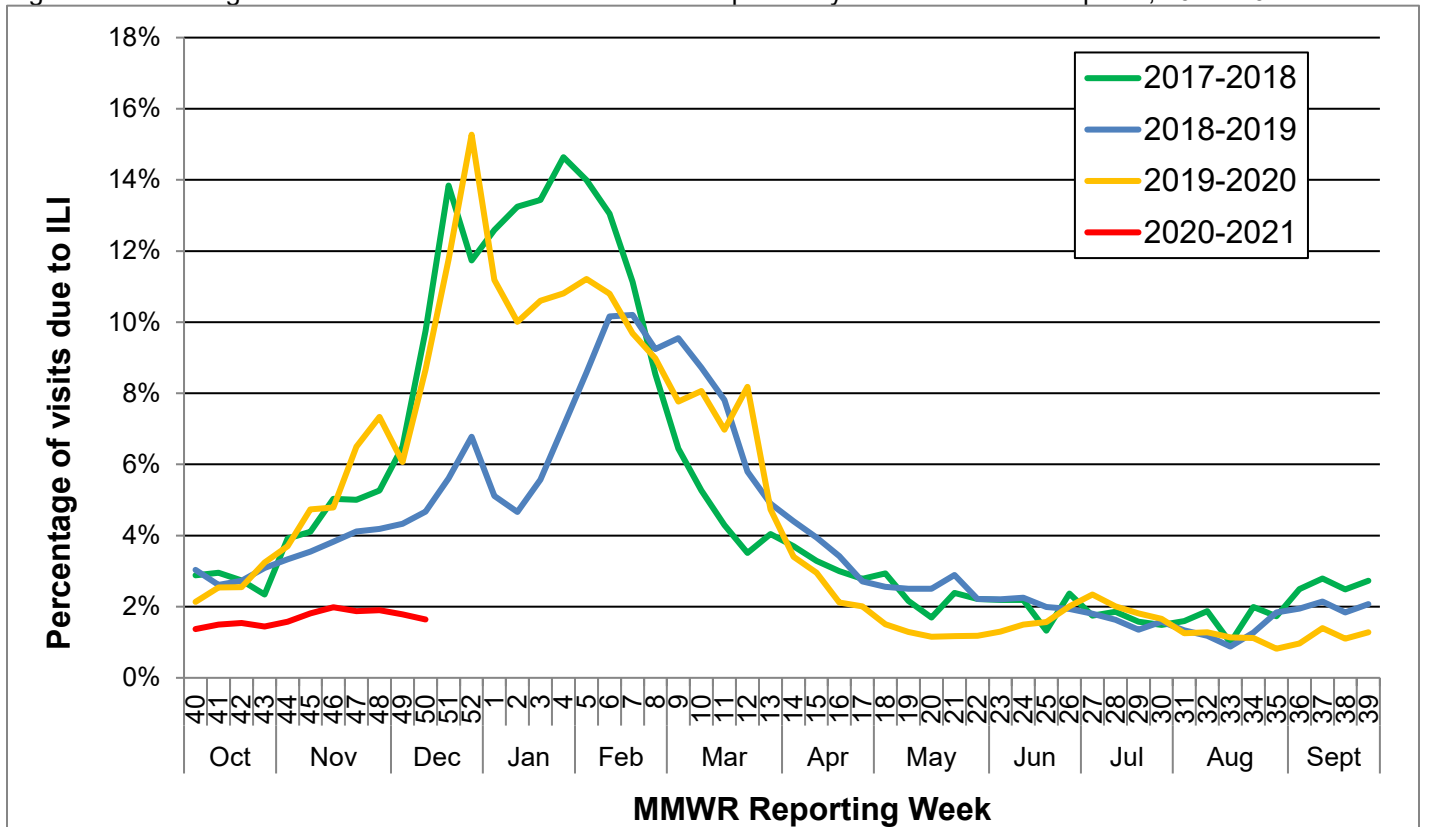


Figure 4: Percentage of Visits Due to Influenza-like Illness Reported by Texas ILINet Participants, 2017–2021 Seasons



## Reports from Health Service Regions

Reports were received from seven Health Service Regions (HSRs) during week 50.

Table 8: Influenza Activity Compared to week 49 by Health Service Region (HSR)

Influenza Activity Comparison	Health Service Region (HSR)
Increased	7 and 11
Same	1, 2/3, 4/5N, 6/5S, and 8
Decreased	
Unsure	

## Variant Influenza Viruses

No variant or novel influenza viruses have been detected in Texas during the 2020-2021 season.

## Institutional Outbreaks and School Closures

No institutional outbreaks or school closures were reported in week 50 during the 2020-2021 season.

## P&I Mortality Surveillance Data

**\*Deaths due to COVID-19 may be classified as pneumonia deaths or influenza deaths (deaths due to “flu” or “flu-like illness”) in the absence of positive SARS-CoV-2 test results.**

Pneumonia and influenza (P&I) death data are obtained from death certificates of Texas residents whose underlying or contributing cause(s) of death is reported as pneumonia or influenza. P&I deaths are identified based on ICD-10 multiple cause of death codes. P&I deaths are based on ICD-10 pneumonia and influenza mortality codes.

One thousand six hundred and ninety-six (1,696) P&I deaths have been reported in Texas during the 2020-2021 influenza season.

Table 8: Texas P&I Deaths Occurring September 27, 2020 – December 11, 2020\* by Age

Age Category (years)	Number of P&I Deaths <sup>+</sup>	Mortality Rate (per 100,000)
0 - 4	<10	0.09
5 - 17	0	0
18 - 49	100	0.74
50 - 64	283	5.37
65 +	1,311	32.66
Overall	1,696	5.55

\*NOTE: Data are provisional and subject to change, errors, and duplicates

<sup>+</sup> If the cell count is less than 10, the number of P&I deaths is suppressed and <10 is written in the cell.

Table 9: Texas P&I Deaths Occurring September 27, 2020 – December 11, 2020\* by Health Service Region (HSR)

HSR	Number of P&I Deaths	Mortality Rate (per 100,000)
1	60	6.37
2/3	509	5.76
4/5N	146	8.82
6/5S	388	4.84
7	174	4.63
8	156	4.95
9/10	100	6.16
11	163	6.37
Unknown	0	0
Overall	1,696	5.55

\*NOTE: Data are provisional and subject to change, errors, and duplicates

## Influenza-Associated Pediatric Mortality

No influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported during week 50.

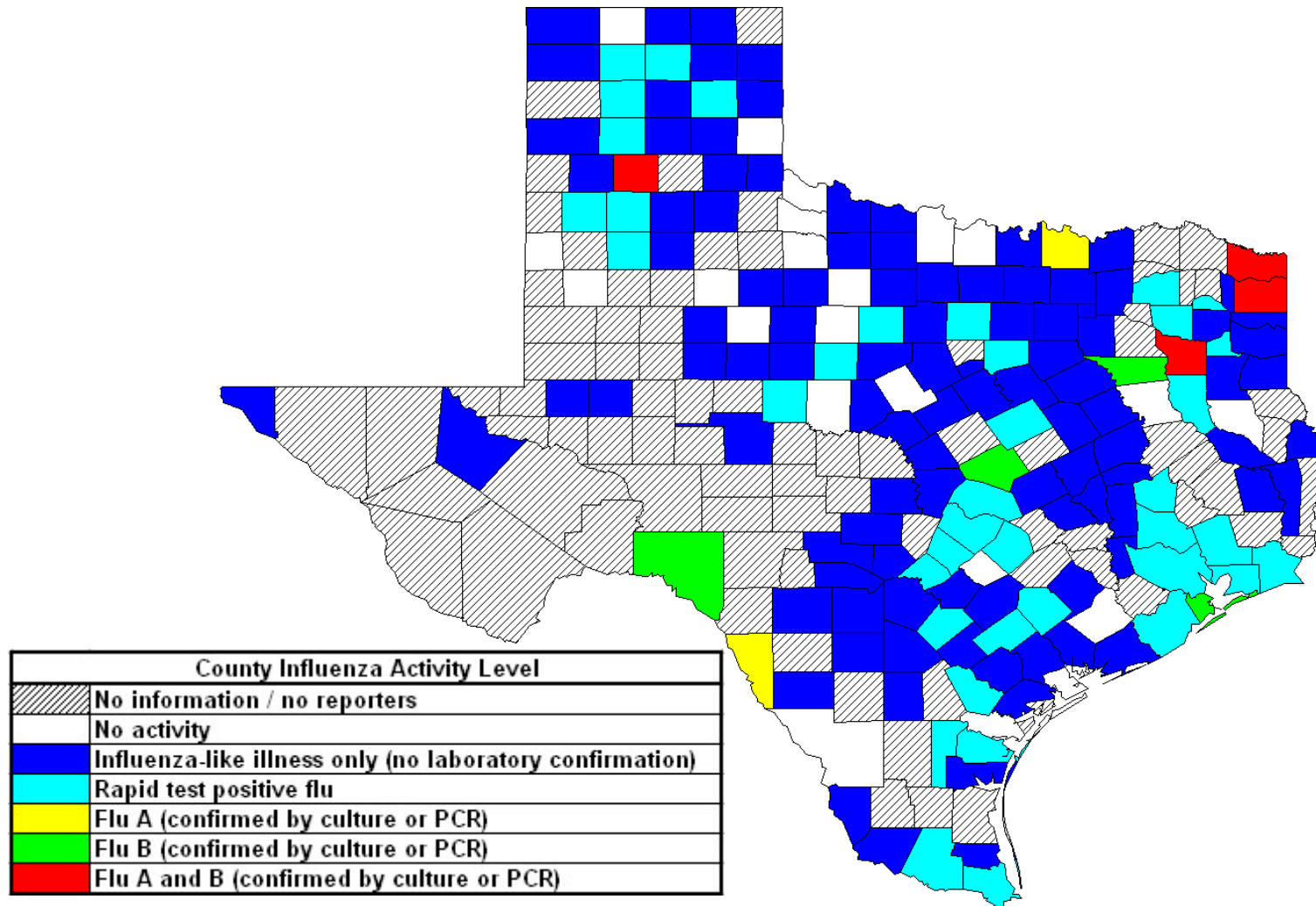
No influenza-associated pediatric mortalities have been reported in Texas during the 2020-2021 influenza season. Cases of influenza-associated pediatric mortality (children <18 years of age) are reportable year-round by law in Texas.

Table 10: Influenza-Associated Pediatric Deaths Reported in Texas during the 2020-2021 Season

Month of Pediatric Death	Influenza A (H1N1)	Influenza A (H3N2)	Influenza A (Not Subtyped)	Influenza B	Influenza, Not Typed / Not Differentiated	Influenza virus co-infection: A (not subtyped) and B	Total, All Influenza Types / Subtypes
<b>2020</b>							
October	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
November	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
December	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## Statewide Influenza Activity Map

Figure 5: Texas Map Displaying the Highest Level of Influenza or ILI Activity Reported by County for the Week Ending Dec. 12, 2020 (MMWR Week 50)



Please note: The majority of influenza cases are not reportable by law in Texas. This map contains data from sentinel sites and only displays influenza and ILI cases that were reported to public health. Positive laboratory results are reported according to specimen collection date, or date received in the laboratory if the former is unknown.



## Texas Influenza Surveillance Components and Measures

Activity codes (see <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/overview.htm>)

Statewide influenza activity level

A code reported weekly by states and territories to CDC indicating the geographic spread of influenza in the state. Levels are no activity, sporadic, local, regional, and widespread.

ILINet Activity Indicator

A statewide level of influenza-like illness intensity (on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the lowest level) assigned to each state weekly by CDC based on data reported through ILINet.

### Morbidity

Novel/variant influenza

Thorough investigations are performed on all cases of novel/variant influenza. *This condition is reportable by law in Texas.*

Texas ILINet

Providers voluntarily report weekly to CDC's ILINet system on the number of outpatient visits for ILI and total outpatient visits. Providers may submit up to 5 specimens per month for influenza testing. See <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/influenza/surveillance/ILINet/> for information on how to become an ILINet provider.

ILI activity

Non-ILINet providers report ILI or influenza data weekly to local or regional health departments.

Outbreaks

Healthcare, schools, childcare, and correctional facilities report ILI and influenza outbreaks to health departments in Texas. *This condition is reportable by law in Texas.*

### Mortality

Pneumonia and Influenza (P&I) Mortality Surveillance

The DSHS Vital Statistics Unit collects death certificate information for all deaths on Texas residents from various partners such as funeral homes and local registrars around the state. The death certificates are then sent to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) where the cause of death and underlying causes of death on the death certificates are coded with ICD-10 mortality codes. Once death certificates are coded, the information is sent back to DSHS Center for Health Statistics (CHS). CHS produces a Weekly Pneumonia and Influenza (P&I) Death Report and sends it to the State Influenza Surveillance Coordinator for inclusion in the Texas Weekly Flu Report. P&I deaths are identified based on ICD-10 multiple cause of death codes, and in particular, pneumonia and influenza mortality codes. Delays inherent in death reporting and coding practices may cause the number of reported P&I deaths to vary considerably each week.

Influenza-associated pediatric deaths

Deaths that are associated with influenza in children < 18 years of age are reported to health departments in Texas. *This condition is reportable by law in Texas.* <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/IAPM/>

### Laboratory

DSHS Austin laboratory

Providers voluntarily submit specimens to the DSHS Austin laboratory for influenza PCR testing throughout the season. Providers sign up for this program through their local health departments.

Laboratory Response Network (LRN) laboratories

Providers voluntarily submit specimens to one of the 9 Texas LRNs for influenza PCR testing throughout the season. Providers sign up for this program through their local health departments.

NREVSS

Laboratories voluntarily report influenza and other respiratory virus data weekly through the CDC's online NREVSS reporting system. **Laboratories sign up for this program by contacting DSHS.** <http://www.cdc.gov/surveillance/nrevss/>

### **Recommended Resources**

*Texas Department of State Health Services*

DSHS influenza page: <http://www.texasflu.org/>

Influenza surveillance data and reports: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/influenza/surveillance/>

Map of Texas Health Service Regions: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/regions/state.shtm>

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

National FluView weekly flu report: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>

Variant influenza viruses: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swineflu/variant.htm>

Avian influenza viruses: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/index.htm>

Swine influenza viruses: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swineflu/index.htm>

Infection Control in Healthcare Facilities: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/>

Seasonal Flu Information for Schools and Childcare Providers: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/school/index.htm>

*World Health Organization*

Influenza page: <http://www.who.int/topics/influenza/en/>

Disease Outbreak News: <http://www.who.int/csr/don/en/>