

Dear Healthcare Providers,

The Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) and the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (AzCLPPP) are collaborating to address lead exposure in Arizona's children and enhance blood lead screening rates. According to AzCLPPP's 2022 data, only 6.1% of children at 12 and 24 months were screened for lead, with 461 children had blood lead levels at or above the [CDC Blood Lead Reference Value](#) (BLRV) of 3.5 micrograms per deciliter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ). Additionally, only 37% of AHCCCS beneficiaries in this age group were tested for lead. These low screening rates limit our ability to assess the burden of pediatric lead poisoning and to take effective interventions. Increasing testing is crucial to protect children from lead exposure's harmful effects.

**Blood Lead Testing Recommendations for Children in Arizona:** ADHS strongly recommends that all children in Arizona receive blood lead testing through capillary test or venous draw at 12 months, again at 24 months, and between 24 to 72 months if they have not been tested before.

**AHCCCS Lead Screening Requirements** ([AHCCCS AMPM Chapter 400](#)) :

- **Blood lead testing is required for all members at 12 months and 24 months of age.** Members between 24 months and six years must be tested if they have not been previously tested or missed earlier tests. Blood lead levels may be measured at times other than those specified if thought to be medically indicated.
- Use a venous blood sample to confirm results when finger stick samples indicate blood lead levels greater than or equal to BLRV of 3.5  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ . Follow-up and care coordination is required for members with blood lead results above 3.5  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ .
- Laboratories and Medical providers must report all lead results to the [AzCLPPP](#).

**Additional Recommendation for Refugee Children:** In addition to AHCCCS requirements, we encourage you to follow the [CDC's screening recommendations for refugee children](#) to further enhance lead testing efforts:

- **Initial Testing:** Test all refugee children  $\leq 16$  years of age within 90 days of their arrival.
- **Follow-Up Testing:** All refugee children  $\leq 6$  years of age should have **follow-up lead tests 3 to 6 months after resettlement**, regardless of the initial test results.

We need your help to improve lead testing rates and ensure prompt intervention for at-risk children in Arizona by testing all eligible children for lead exposure. Testing is the only way to detect exposure, as lead poisoning often does not have symptoms. Thank you for your dedication to the well-being of our state's children. If you have questions, you can contact the [AzCLPPP](#) at [healthyhomes@azdhs.gov](mailto:healthyhomes@azdhs.gov).



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