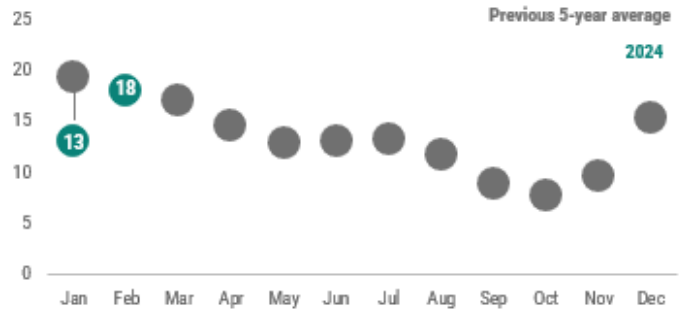
Pertussis Surveillance

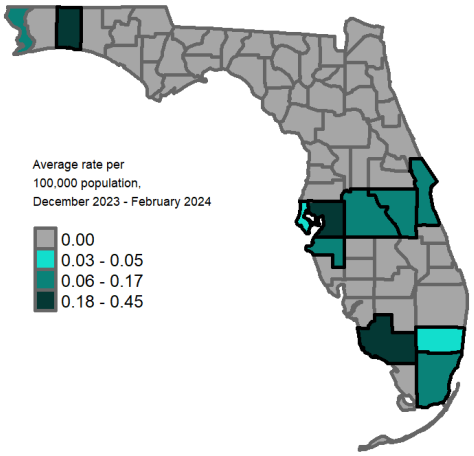
February Key Points

- 18 cases
- 69 cases in the past 6 months
- No new outbreaks
- <1 year olds had the highest 6 month average incidence

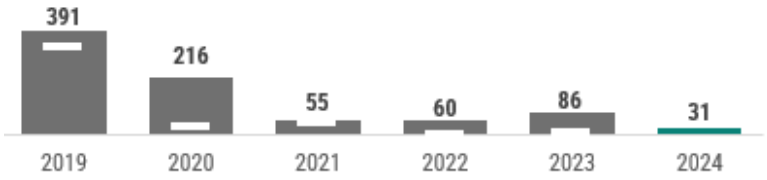
The number of pertussis cases reported in February increased from the previous month and was consistent with the previous 5-year average.



In February 2024, **18 pertussis cases** were reported in **10 counties,** outlined in black in the map below. From December 2023 through February 2024 the average county rates were lowest in northeast Florida.

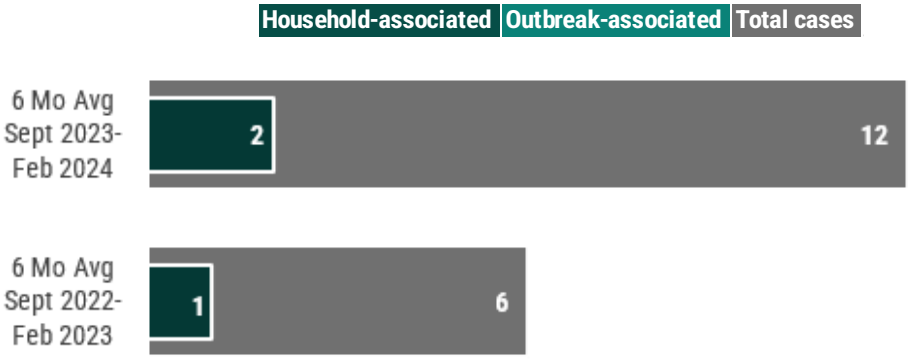


In 2024, 31 pertussis cases were reported. There was a **77% increase** in the number of pertussis cases reported between September 2023—February 2024 (n=69) compared to September 2022—February 2023 (n=39).



*The white bars indicate the total number of cases as of February for each year

In February 2024, two pertussis cases were household-associated. No pertussis cases were outbreak-associated. In the past 6 months, there was an average of **2 household-associated cases,** an average **of 0 outbreak-associated cases** and an average of **12 total cases**. From September 2022 to February 2023, there was an average of **1 household-associated cases,** an average **of 0 outbreak-associated cases** and an average of **6 total cases**. For most pertussis cases, exposure to other known cases is not identified and are not able to be linked to outbreaks.



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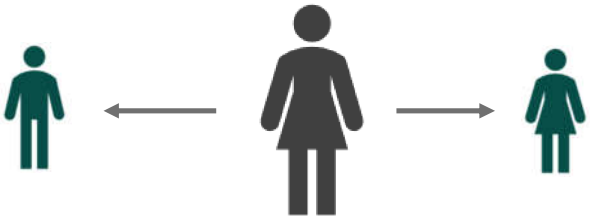
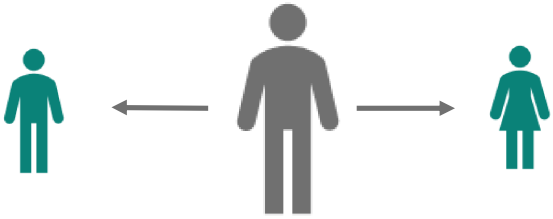
There was an average of 2 contacts per case between September 2022 and February 2023 and between September 2023 and February 2024. Contacts are classified as people whom antibiotics were recommended to prevent illness. Antibiotics can shorten the amount of time cases are contagious and can also be used to prevent illness in those exposed. Understanding pertussis transmission is a key factor in decreasing pertussis infections. In Florida, transmission setting is not routinely identified for non-outbreak cases, resulting in **77%** of cases reporting unknown setting in 2024.

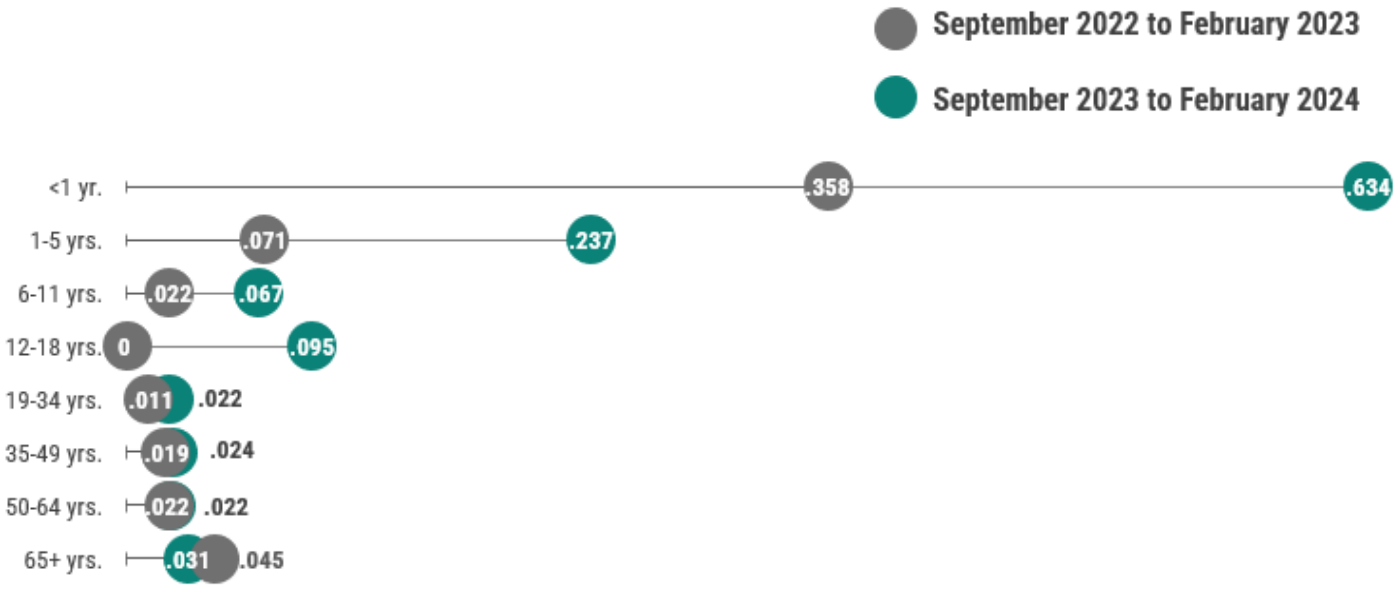
September 2022 to February 2023



September 2023 to February 2024



The average incidence rate was highest among <1 year olds at 0.634 cases per 100,000 population between September 2023 and February 2024. Infants experience the greatest burden of pertussis infections, not only in number of cases but also in severity. Infants <2 months old are too young to receive vaccinations against pertussis, which is why vaccination of parents, siblings, grandparents, and other age groups is important in infection prevention among infants.



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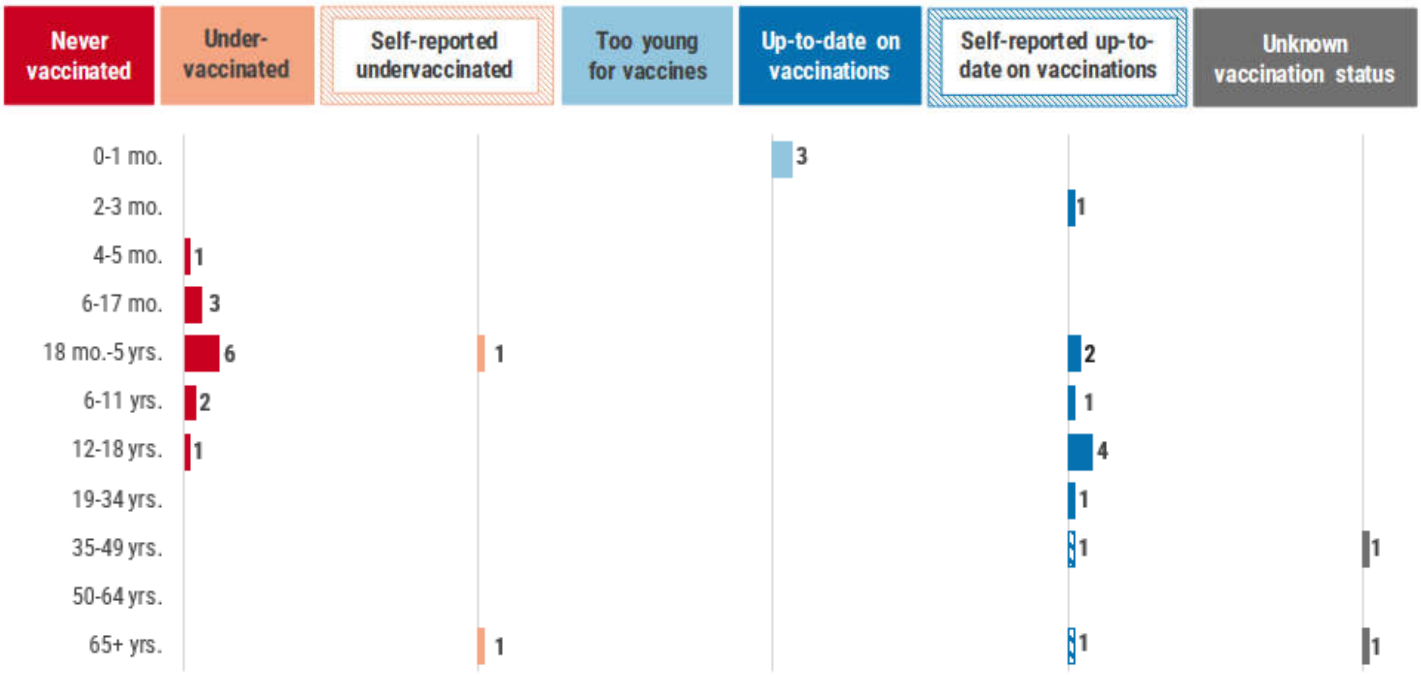
In 2024, over half of cases reported were not up-to-date on their pertussis vaccinations. **In general, those who have received at least one pertussis vaccination have less severe outcomes than those who have never been vaccinated.** If a person was born before January 1st, 1982, the current pertussis immunization recommendation would not have been implemented when they were receiving their childhood immunizations. Based on the case's age, **3 cases** would not have been vaccinated under the current childhood immunization recommendations.



National activity

The number of pertussis cases gradually increased since the 1980s, peaking in 2012 at levels not seen since the 1950s. Since 2012, the number of pertussis cases started gradually decreasing. Pertussis incidence has remained highest among infants <1 year old and lowest among adults ≥20 years old since the 1990s.

Pertussis surveillance goals

- Identify cases to limit transmission in settings with infants or others who may transmit pertussis to infants
- Identify and prevent outbreaks
- Identify transmission settings in non-outbreak cases to prevent the spread of sporadic cases
- Identify contacts of cases and recommend appropriate prevention measures, including exclusion, antibiotic prophylaxis, and immunization
- Monitor the effectiveness of immunization programs and vaccines

To learn more about pertussis, please visit FloridaHealth.gov/Pertussis. For more information on the data sources used in Florida for pertussis surveillance, see the last page of this report.