

**School Immunization Requirement FAQs
Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH)
2008-2009 School Year**

- 1. Are immunizations required for all children enrolled in school?**
 - A. Yes. Students in all grades are required to meet the minimum immunization requirements as described on the document "MINIMUM IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL ENTRY 2008-2009." Immunization requirements extend to children ages 3 through 5 attending special education programs, child care, or preschool within the school. School nurses are required to verify the immunization status of each student in all grades.

- 2. Do schools provide summary reports to ISDH on the immunization status of students in all grades?**
 - A. While **all** students enrolled in school are required to be up-to-date on **all** required immunizations, schools only provide summary immunization data to ISDH on students enrolled in kindergarten, first, and sixth grades at this time. School nurses will use the Children and Hoosier's Immunization Registry Program (CHIRP) as the mechanism to report and record the immunization data for students enrolled in kindergarten, first and sixth grades. This report is due to the ISDH by November 1, 2008.

- 3. Do schools need to report immunization data for 6th grade Hepatitis B and Varicella immunizations?**
 - A. Yes.

- 4. Is there a deadline for reporting school immunization data?**
 - A. Yes, the deadline for reporting school immunization data is November 1, 2008.

- 5. Why does the Quick Reference Guide indicate immunizations for all grades if we only need to report kindergarten, first, and sixth grades?**
 - A. While reporting is only required for kindergarten, first, and sixth grades, schools are required by law (IC 20-34-4-2) to ensure that all students have received all immunizations required by the Indiana State Department of Health.

- 6. Does the Indiana State Department of Health determine if a child is excluded from school?**
 - A. No, school exclusion is determined by the school according to IC 20-34-4-5. For questions regarding exclusion from school, please contact Phyllis Lewis at the Department of Education at 317-232-9142.
 - B. For questions regarding required immunizations, please contact ISDH Immunization Program at 1-800-701-0704.

- 7. What information must be included on the physician's statement to document immunization?**
 - A. The statement must include the student's date of birth and the day, month and year of each immunization.

- 8. What immunization education materials must be provided to the parents of enrolled students?**
 - A. Meningococcal disease—all grades; Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Infection—6th grade girls.

- 9. Are schools required to collect the response form included with the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Infection educational materials?**
- A. Yes. Schools are required to collect HPV response forms from parents of sixth grade girls. However, it is recommended that the forms should not include the student's name or parent's signature and should **not** be returned to ISDH. Schools will complete a summary report of responses received from HPV forms and submit the report to ISDH along with the other immunization reports. Schools have the option of creating a tracking system for their own purposes.
- 10. What is the four-day grace period and when can it be used?**
- A. CDC and ACIP allow a 4-day grace period. If a vaccine is given up to 4 days before the minimum recommended age for administration of the vaccine, it can be counted as valid a dose. However, this does not change the recommended schedule for routine vaccine administration. The vaccine forecasting component of CHIRP provides updated information on immunization schedules, including the 4-day grace period.
- 11. Why are only 3 doses of DTaP/DT/Td required for second grade and above when 5 are required for first grade?**
- A. DTaP/DTP/DT are licensed for children 6 years of age and younger. Some children if immunized on time will have had 5 valid doses of DTaP/DTP/DT. Td is used for children 7 years and above. If a child presents for vaccination for the first time at 7 years of age, only three doses of Td are required to bring that child up to date. Because of this, the school can only hold the child responsible for the minimum requirement (3 Td).
- 12. What are the age and interval requirements for a valid fourth dose of DTaP/DT?**
- A. The fourth dose must be given at age 12 months or older to be valid, and it must be given at least 6 months after the previous (3rd) dose.
- 13. When are 3 doses of Polio vaccine acceptable?**
- A. Three doses of Polio vaccine are acceptable if ONLY IPV or OPV are used and the third dose was given on or after the child's fourth birthday.
- 14. When are 4 doses of Polio vaccine required?**
- A. Four doses of any combination of IPV and OPV, given after six weeks of age, and at least 4 weeks apart, even if completed before the 4th birthday, are consider a complete series.
- 15. If a child has received 4 doses of Polio vaccine before the age of 4 is the series complete?**
- A. Yes. If a child has 4 doses of polio vaccine before the age of 4 and the minimum intervals are met (4 weeks between doses), then the series is complete.
- 16. What are the minimum intervals for Hepatitis B vaccine?**
- A. The minimum intervals between vaccine doses are:
- i. Dose 1 and 2 is 4 weeks (28 days)
 - ii. Dose 2 and 3 is 8 weeks (56 days)
- Note: The 3rd dose of Hepatitis B vaccine should be administered at age 24 weeks (164 days) or later and at least 16 weeks after the 1st dose was given.
- 17. If there is an extended interval between doses of Hepatitis B, does the student need to start over with the series or have additional doses of the vaccine?**
- A. No. There are no maximum intervals for Hepatitis B vaccine administration. The only required intervals are the minimum intervals listed above.
- 18. What must be included in a child's immunization record?**

A. The record must contain the child's name, date of birth, and a date for each immunization (month/day/year).

19. What is considered adequate documentation of an immunization history?

A. Adequate documentation is as follows: a physician's written documentation, an immunization record from another school corporation, or a record maintained by the parent. This documentation must include the month, day and year on which **each dose** of vaccine was administered.

20. What is the minimum age for MMR vaccine to be counted as a valid dose?

A. For the MMR to be counted as a valid dose, it must have been given on or after the first birthday; thus, documentation for this vaccine must contain month/day/year (exception: 4-day grace period).

21. May a chiropractor give a medical exemption for vaccination?

A. No. Only a licensed physician (M.D. or D.O.) can provide a medical exemption. A nurse practitioner or a physician's assistant under a physician's supervision can also give a medical exemption.

22. What must a medical exemption contain?

A. A physician's certification that a particular immunization is **detrimental** to the child's health. It must be in writing and must be resubmitted to the school each year.

23. What must a religious objection contain?

A. A religious objection must be in writing and state that the objection to immunization is based on religious grounds; signed by the child's parent; and delivered to the school. There is no requirement of proof. The written objection must be resubmitted to the school each year.

24. Is there a philosophical objection allowed in Indiana?

A. **No.** There are only two exemptions allowed: religious and medical.

25. If a child does not present an immunization record or is not up to date with his/her immunizations, may they enroll in school?

A. Yes. The Indiana Code (IC 20-34-4-5) states that a child is **not permitted to attend** school beyond the first day without furnishing a written record, unless

- iii. The school gives a waiver (for a period not to exceed 20 days); or
- iv. The local health department or a physician determines that the child's immunizations have been delayed due to extreme circumstances and that the required immunizations will not be completed by the first day of school. The parent must furnish a written statement and a time schedule approved by a physician or health department; or
- v. A medical or religious exemption is on file.

Note: Some flexibility should be allowed if a student is in the process of obtaining the immunizations needed.

26. Is a doctor's statement required as proof of chickenpox disease?

A. No, documentation from a parent is sufficient. A written statement should include the date of the disease, a parent's signature, and date of signature. Example: If a parent cannot recall exact dates, something as simple as stating that disease occurred in the spring of 2000 is acceptable.

27. Is a second dose of varicella required?

A. A second dose of varicella will not be required this year; however, it is highly recommended.

28. If a child has an exemption on file, may he/she be counted as complete?

A. No. If a child has an exemption on file for any immunization, he/she cannot be considered complete on immunizations even if all other immunizations for which no exemption exists are complete. Parents should be informed that a child with an exemption on file will be excluded from school in the event of an outbreak of the disease for which the child is unvaccinated.

29. *Why are two doses of mumps required for all students from kindergarten to twelfth grade?*

A. Two doses of mumps are required for all grades starting with kindergarten due to increased outbreaks in recent year. The Indiana State Department of Health Immunization Program has the authority to make changes to these requirements based upon IC 20-34-4-2 (C).

Additional questions on immunization requirements can be directed to the Immunization Program at (800) 701-0704.