

Overview

Minnesota law requires that, in order to enroll or remain enrolled in a child care facility, school-based early childhood program, school, or postsecondary educational institution, an individual must submit a statement that the individual has received the immunizations required in law or, for certain immunizations, has begun the immunization series. An individual may also submit a statement of exemption from one or more immunizations. This publication describes:

- general immunization requirements for an individual to enroll or remain enrolled in a child care facility, school-based early childhood program, elementary school, secondary school, or postsecondary educational institution;
- recommended immunizations;
- exemptions to immunization requirements;
- information that must be provided to immunization recipients;
- the commissioner of health’s authority to modify or suspend immunization requirements; and
- requirements for immunization records and for annual reporting to the commissioner of health.

Contents

General Requirements	2
Required Immunizations.....	3
Recommended Immunizations.....	4
Exemptions.....	5
Information Provided to Recipients.....	6
Changes to the Immunization Schedule	7
Suspension of Immunization Laws.....	8
Immunization Records	8
Annual Reports	9

Note: This publication does not provide information about required or recommended immunizations for specific individuals. For specific immunization requirements and recommendations, individuals should contact their health care provider, child care provider, school, or postsecondary educational institution.

General Requirements

Immunization requirements for children and students are found in [Minnesota Statutes, sections 121A.15](#) and [135A.14](#), and [Minnesota Rules, chapter 4604](#). In order to enroll or remain enrolled in a child care facility, school-based early childhood program, elementary or secondary school, or postsecondary educational institution, an individual must provide a statement that the individual has received the immunizations required in law or, for certain immunizations, has begun the series. An individual may also provide a statement that the individual is exempt from receiving one or more immunizations.

These requirements apply to:

- **Child care facilities:** An individual over two months old enrolling or enrolled in a child care facility. “Child care facility” is defined as including family day care and group family day care homes licensed under [Minnesota Rules, chapter 9502](#), and child care centers licensed under [Minnesota Rules, chapter 9503](#).
- **School-based early childhood programs:** An individual enrolling or enrolled in a school-based early childhood program. A school-based early childhood program provides services to children from birth to the start of kindergarten in a classroom setting, meets at least once a week for six weeks or more per year, and provides instruction to support child learning and development. It does not include drop-in playtime provided by a school-based early childhood program.
- **Elementary and secondary schools:** An individual enrolling or enrolled in an elementary or secondary school. “Elementary or secondary school” is defined as a public school, nonpublic school, church, religious organization, or home school.
- **Children with disabilities receiving services from a school district:** A child with a disability receiving special instruction and services from a school district. This does not include a child with a disability receiving services at the child’s home or in another state.
- **Postsecondary educational institutions:** A student enrolled in a public or private postsecondary educational institution. “Public or private postsecondary educational institution” is defined as any of the following institutions having more than 100 enrolled students during a quarter, term, or semester of the preceding year: the University of Minnesota; the state universities; the state community colleges; public technical colleges; private four-year, professional, and graduate institutions; private two-year colleges; and certain other institutions that offer educational programs in the state for an academic year longer than six consecutive months. “Student” is defined as an individual who (1) was born after 1956 and did not graduate from a Minnesota high school in 1997 or later and (2) is registered for more than one class during an academic term or is housed on campus and registered for one or more classes. Individuals enrolled only in extension classes, correspondence classes, online classes, or weekend adult accelerated programs are not subject to these immunization requirements.

([Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.15](#), subd. 9; [135A.14](#), subd. 1; [Minn. Rules p. 4604.0200](#), subp. 4a)

For an individual enrolling or enrolled in a child care facility, early childhood program, or elementary or secondary school, the statement must be in the form of the Department of Health official record form or a similar document, and must be completed by:

- a physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse, or public clinic which provides immunizations; or
- the individual, or the individual’s parent or guardian if the individual is a minor.

This statement must be provided to the administrator or other person with general control and supervision of the child care facility, early childhood program, or school. ([Minn. Stat. § 121A.15](#), subd. 1; [Minn. Rules p. 4604.0250](#); [4604.0400](#))

An individual enrolled in a postsecondary educational institution must submit either:

- a statement from the individual that the individual received the required immunizations or is exempt from one or more immunizations; or
- the individual’s immunization record maintained by the individual’s secondary school.

This statement or record must be provided within 45 days of the beginning of the term to the administrator or other person with general control and supervision of the postsecondary educational institution. ([Minn. Stat. § 135A.14](#), subds. 2, 5)

Required Immunizations

Required immunizations for children and students are specified in statute and rule, and the immunizations must be obtained according to a schedule consistent with medically acceptable standards.¹ The following table lists required immunizations for children in child care facilities and school-based early childhood programs and for students in elementary schools, secondary schools, and postsecondary educational institutions, unless an exemption applies.

Immunization Required	Child Care Facility or School-Based Early Childhood Program	Kindergarten to Grade 6	Grades 7 to 12	Postsecondary Educational Institution
Diphtheria	✓	✓	✓	✓ (within ten years before registering at institution)
Haemophilus influenzae type B (HIB)	✓ (obtained at or after 12 months of age)	—	—	—

¹ “Medically acceptable standards” means immunization recommendations promulgated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. ([Minn. Rules p. 4604.0200](#), subp. 2a)

Immunization Required	Child Care Facility or School-Based Early Childhood Program	Kindergarten to Grade 6	Grades 7 to 12	Postsecondary Educational Institution
Hepatitis A	✓	—	—	—
Hepatitis B	✓	✓	✓	—
Measles	✓ (after 12 months of age)	✓	✓	✓ (obtained after 12 months of age)
Meningococcal disease	—	—	✓	—
Mumps	✓	✓	✓	✓ (obtained after 12 months of age)
Pertussis (whooping cough)	✓	✓	✓	—
Pneumococcal disease	✓ (for children between two months and 24 months of age)	—	—	—
Poliomyelitis (polio)	✓	✓	✓	—
Rubella (German measles)	✓	✓	✓	✓ (obtained after 12 months of age)
Tetanus	✓	✓	✓	✓ (within ten years before registering at institution)
Varicella (chicken pox)	✓	✓	✓	—

[Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.15](#), subds. 1, 4; [135A.14](#), subd. 2; Minn. Rules p. [4604.0420](#)-4604.0600, [4604.0800](#)-4604.1020

The Department of Health publishes immunization schedules that specify the timing and number of doses for each required immunization.²

Recommended Immunizations

In addition to immunizations required under state law, the Department of Health recommends that children, teenagers, and adults obtain other immunizations recommended by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Some immunizations are recommended for all individuals, and others are recommended only for individuals who are in certain age groups

² Immunization schedules are found at <https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/readycc.pdf> for children in a child care facility or early childhood program and <https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/readyk12.pdf> for students in kindergarten to grade 12.

or meet other requirements. Additionally, some recommended immunizations are not required by state law. For example, immunizations against influenza and COVID-19 are recommended for everyone age six months or older, but state law does not require influenza or COVID-19 immunizations.³

Exemptions

An individual is not required to obtain an immunization if an exemption applies. Exemptions exist based on age, conscientiously held beliefs, medical reasons, and the setting of care or instruction.

Age. Some immunizations are required only for people over a certain age or under a certain age, and people who are outside of the age range for the immunization are exempt from the requirement. For instance, a person under 15 months of age is not required to be immunized against measles, mumps, or rubella, and a person age five or older is not required to be immunized against haemophilus influenzae type b (HIB). ([Minn. Stat. § 121A.15](#), subd. 3, paras. (e), (f))

Conscientiously held beliefs. An individual is not required to obtain an immunization if the individual, or the individual's parent or guardian in the case of a minor, submits a notarized statement that the immunization conflicts with the individual's conscientiously held beliefs, or the beliefs of the individual's parent or guardian in the case of a minor. However, effective July 1, 2024, an exemption due to conscientiously held beliefs is not available for a child over two months of age to enroll or remain enrolled with a child care center or family child care provider, if the center or provider adopts a policy requiring children to either meet the immunization requirements in statute and rules or be exempt based on age, medical reasons, or the presence of adequate immunity to a disease.⁴ ([Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.15](#), subds. 3, para. (d), and 3b; [135A.14](#), subd. 3, para. (b))

Medical reasons. For children in a child care facility or students in an elementary or secondary school, an individual is not required to obtain an immunization if the individual:

- submits a statement signed by a physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse that the immunization is *contraindicated for medical reasons*⁵ or

³ For schedules of immunizations recommended by the CDC for each age group, see <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-schedules/index.html>.

⁴ In general, section [121A.15](#) applies to child care facilities, and that term is defined as including child care centers and family child care providers. Subdivision 3b applies to child care centers and family child care providers.

⁵ According to guidelines from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), contraindications are conditions that increase the risk for a serious adverse reaction to a vaccine. Contraindications include being severely immunocompromised, having experienced a certain reaction to a vaccine in the past, having a specific health condition, or being severely allergic to a vaccine component. Vaccine Recommendations and Guidelines of the ACIP, Contraindications and Precautions, <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-best-practices/contraindications-precautions.html>

- that laboratory confirmation exists of *adequate immunity to the disease* against which the immunization protects; or
- for measles, mumps, rubella, or varicella, provides *documentation of having had the disease*.

([Minn. Stat. § 121A.15](#), subd. 3, para. (c); [Minn. Rules parts 4604.0600, 4604.0900](#))

For students in a postsecondary educational institution, an immunization is not required if the student submits a statement signed by a physician that:

- for *medical reasons*, the student did not receive an immunization;
- the student *experienced the natural disease* against which the immunization protects; or
- a laboratory has confirmed the *presence of adequate immunity*.

([Minn. Stat. § 135A.14](#), subd. 3, para. (a))

Setting of care or instruction. Specific exemptions exist based on the setting in which care or instruction is provided.

- Immunization requirements for *school-based early childhood programs* do not apply to children in a drop-in playtime provided by a school-based early childhood program in a school or classroom.
- An individual is not required to comply with the immunization or statement requirements for *elementary and secondary school* students if the individual is not a Minnesota resident and is enrolled in a Minnesota school online learning program that does not have any instructor contact time or require classroom attendance.
- The immunization requirements for students of a *postsecondary educational institution* do not apply to students enrolled only in extension classes, correspondence classes, online classes, or evening or weekend adult accelerated programs.

([Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.15](#), subd. 3, para. (g); [135A.14](#), subd. 1, para. (c); [Minn. Rules p. 4604.0200](#), subp. 4a)

Information Provided to Recipients

State law requires immunization providers and postsecondary educational institutions to provide recipients of immunizations or their parents or guardians with certain information about immunizations and the diseases against which they protect. Immunization information provided by the Department of Education; Department of Health; Department of Children, Youth and Families; schools; or child care facilities must also meet certain requirements.

- For immunizations required to enroll in a school or child care facility, written information provided by the Department of Education; Department of Health; Department of Children, Youth, and Families; immunization providers; schools; or

- child care facilities must include a description of the exemptions authorized for medical reasons and for conscientiously held beliefs.
- Before immunizing an individual, an immunization provider must provide the following information in writing: a list of immunizations required for enrollment in a school or child care facility, a description of the exemptions from immunizations authorized for medical reasons and for conscientiously held beliefs, a list of additional immunizations recommended by the commissioner of health, and a copy of the vaccine information sheet that lists possible adverse reactions to the vaccine to be provided.
 - Postsecondary educational institutions must provide all first-time enrollees with information on the transmission, treatment, and prevention of hepatitis A, B, and C; the risks of meningococcal disease; and the availability and effectiveness of vaccines for these diseases.

([Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.15](#), subd. 3a; [135A.14](#), subd. 6a)

Changes to the Immunization Schedule

The commissioner of health may adopt rules to modify the immunization requirements in statute. This authority was granted in 2001. In addition to complying with the rulemaking process, the following requirements must be met in order to modify the immunization schedule.

- 1) A proposed modification must be part of the current immunization recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- 2) The commissioner must consult with the commissioner of education; commissioner of human services; chancellor of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities; president of the University of Minnesota; and for changes to requirements for children in child care facilities or students in elementary or secondary schools, specific organizations that focus on natural health, vaccine awareness, or autism treatment, and Minnesota organizations that represent certain health care providers.
- 3) The commissioner must consider certain information about the disease and the vaccine.
- 4) Before adopting a proposed modification, the commissioner must notify the chairs of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over health policy issues. If a legislative hearing on the modification is scheduled within 60 days after receiving notice of the proposed modification, the commissioner cannot adopt the proposed modifications until after the hearing is held.

If the commissioner modifies the immunization schedule by rule, the commissioner must notify immunization providers of the changes in a timely manner.

([Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.15](#), subd. 12; [135A.14](#), subd. 7)

Suspension of Immunization Laws

The commissioner of health must suspend immunization requirements in law if the commissioner determines the requirement must be suspended because of a vaccine shortage or to address an emergency situation in the state. The requirement must be suspended only for as long as necessary based on the vaccine shortage or emergency. The commissioner must post notice of the suspension on the department's website and provide notice to affected schools, child care facilities, and providers. ([Minn. Rules p. 4604.0700](#))

The commissioner also has authority to suspend certain immunization requirements listed in statute for one year if the commissioner finds the immunization is not necessary to protect the public's health. ([Minn. Stat. § 121A.15](#), subd. 4, para. (h))

Immunization Records

Immunization records on file. Each school and child care facility must maintain an immunization record for each individual attending the school or child care facility, and a school must maintain immunization records for at least five years after the subject of the record turns 18. When a student or child transfers to another school or child care facility, the school or facility administrator must help transfer the student's or child's immunization record to the new school or facility within 30 days after the transfer. At the request of a postsecondary educational institution, a school administrator or individual with control or supervision of the school must help transfer a student's immunization record to the postsecondary institution. ([Minn. Stat. § 121A.15](#), subd. 7)

A postsecondary educational institution must maintain an immunization record for each student at the institution for at least one year from the time of original filing. ([Minn. Stat. § 135A.14](#), subd. 4)

Minnesota Immunization Information Connection. The commissioner of health administers the Minnesota Immunization Information Connection (MIIC), a statewide electronic immunization information system.⁶ MIIC was established in 2002. An immunization record is created in MIIC either when the state Office of Vital Records provides birth data to MIIC or when a health care provider or facility submits immunization data to MIIC. Immunization data held in MIIC includes:

- demographic information: the patient's name, address, date of birth and age, gender, and parent's or guardian's name;
- immunization history: for each vaccine, the date received, vaccine type, lot number, and manufacturer; and
- immunization comments, such as whether a patient has a contraindication or adverse reaction indication for a specific immunization.

⁶ Additional information on MIIC is available from MDH at <https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/index.html>.

Health care providers and facilities submit immunization data to MIIC. Under state law, the following entities are permitted to exchange immunization data for patients for whom the entity provides services: health care providers, group purchasers of health care services, elementary and secondary schools⁷, child care facilities, postsecondary educational institutions, community health boards, community action agencies, and the commissioner of health. ([Minn. Stat. § 144.3351](#))

Annual Reports

Schools, child care facilities, and school-based early childhood programs must annually submit to the commissioner of health, immunization data for the children or students attending the school, facility, or program.

- The *school reports* must be made on forms prepared by the commissioner of health and commissioner of education, and must include the number of students attending the school, the number who are not fully immunized, and the number who received an exemption for medical reasons or based on conscientiously held beliefs.
- The *reports from child care facilities or school-based early childhood programs* must be made on forms prepared by the commissioner of health and commissioner of human services, and must include the number of children between two months of age and kindergarten enrolled in the facility or program, the number with no immunizations, the number who are fully or partially immunized, and the number who received an exemption for medical reasons or based on conscientiously held beliefs. Family child care providers, group family child care providers, and certain other child care facilities are not required to submit these reports.

([Minn. Stat. § 121A.15](#), subd. 8; [Minn. Rules p. 4604.0410](#))

The commissioner of health uses data from the school reports to compile the Annual Immunization Status Report, which provides, for each required immunization, information on the percentages of students in kindergarten and seventh grade who are fully vaccinated, are in progress or missing vaccine doses, or have a nonmedical exemption.⁸ This data is available for students statewide and by county, school district, and school. Similarly, data from the reports from child care facilities is used to compile the annual Child Care Immunization Report, which provides, for each required immunization, the percentages of children in child care centers

⁷ School sharing of information in student education records is also governed by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Under FERPA, a school can view immunization data in MIIC on a student but cannot add new data without consent. For information from the Department of Health on FERPA and immunization data, see <https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/privacy/ferpa.html>.

⁸ For the most recent report, see <https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/stats/school/index.html>. Past reports are available in the school immunization data archive.

between 24 months of age and kindergarten who are fully or partially vaccinated or who have a nonmedical exemption.⁹ This data is available statewide, by county, and by child care center.



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⁹ For the most recent report, see <https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/stats/childcare/index.html>. Past reports are available in the child care immunization data archive.