



November 12, 2019

Dear Colleague,

The New York City (NYC) Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), Bureau of Immunization, would like to make sure you are aware of some updates, clarifications and reminders regarding child care and school immunization requirements.

- 1) Children who are not fully immunized must receive routine and catch-up doses of immunizations within 14 days after the minimum interval identified by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) [catch-up schedule](#). Child care programs and schools are expected to exclude students from school who do not receive catch-up doses within this time-frame.
- 2) Children who are in the process of receiving the required immunizations, but are not yet in compliance, are required to provide documentation to the child care program or school of a medical appointment(s) to receive the next age-appropriate dose within each vaccine series. **Follow-up appointment dates and administration of immunizations must be within 14 days after the minimum interval identified by the ACIP catch-up schedule.** Please provide this information to the parent so the child can remain in the school or child care.
- 3) Alternative schedules, spacing out of vaccines, and delayed appointments are not allowed.
- 4) Provider diagnosis of varicella disease and laboratory evidence of immunity to measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, and hepatitis B are acceptable in lieu of documentation of immunization. A child who is obtaining serologic tests to confirm immunity to measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, and hepatitis B is permitted to remain in school within 14 days of when such testing is requested, while awaiting results. If a child has laboratory evidence of immunity, you must provide the parent with a copy of the laboratory report showing the positive results; to facilitate the review process, please also include a completed and signed copy of the [Serology or Documentation of Varicella Disease form](#). The same form may be used for children with varicella disease history.
- 5) Polio serology is no longer acceptable in lieu of polio vaccination for school immunization requirements. Serology for diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus have never been acceptable in lieu of vaccination, and remain so.
- 6) In general, if a child is listed as complete for a vaccine series in the NYC [Citywide Immunization Registry \(CIR\)](#), they are compliant with school and child care requirements for that vaccine series.
- 7) NYS-licensed physicians may submit requests for medical exemptions for children attending child care programs and school and only if they have [valid contraindications](#) to immunizations in accordance with ACIP. These medical exemption requests are subject to review, and additional supporting medical documentation may be requested. Medical exemption requests must be resubmitted annually on a medical exemption form approved by [NYC](#) or [NYS](#). As a reminder, mild illness is not a contraindication to any vaccine. If you would like to discuss a child's medical condition or have questions before completing a medical exemption request, please call the Bureau of Immunization and ask to speak with the doctor of the week at 347-396-2400.

For questions about immunization requirements, please call (347) 396-2400. Thank you for your continuing efforts to protect children in NYC from vaccine-preventable illnesses.

Sincerely,

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc
Assistant Commissioner
Bureau of Immunization