



## Superintendent's Circular

NUMBER:  
SHS-06  
Version 01

### IMMUNIZATION LAW

*This circular will remain in effect unless rescinded or superseded by a subsequent version*

#### THE IMMUNIZATION REGULATIONS

It is the policy of the Boston Public Schools to enforce [the School Immunization Law, Chapter 76, Section 15, of the Massachusetts General Laws](#):

"No child shall, except as hereinafter provided, be admitted to school except upon presentation of a physician's certificate that the child has been successfully immunized against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles and poliomyelitis and such other communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the department of public health. A child shall be admitted to school upon certification by a physician that he has personally examined such child and that in his opinion, the physical condition of the child is such that his health would be endangered by such vaccination or by any of such immunizations. Such certification shall be submitted at the beginning of each school year to the physician in charge of the school health program. If the physician in charge of the school health program does not agree with the opinion of the child's physician, the matter shall be referred to the department of public health, whose decision will be final. In the absence of an emergency or epidemic of disease declared by the department of public health, no child whose parent or guardian states in writing

that vaccination or immunization conflicts with his sincere religious beliefs shall be required to present said physician's certificate in order to be admitted to school.”

## **MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT**

Under the [McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#), state and local educational agencies must ensure that homeless children and youths have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths. Children and youth who are homeless are to be enrolled in school, even if the child or youth is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation. If the child or youth needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the enrolling school shall immediately refer the parent or guardian of the child or youth to the local educational agency liaison who shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations or medical records.

## **PROTOCOL FOR ENFORCING IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

**New students, during the priority registration period:**

- Parents must bring proof of immunizations upon registering for school at all Welcome Center locations.
- It is preferred that all students be up to date with all state-required immunizations at the time of registration for the upcoming school year. If the child's medical appointment

falls between the priority registration period and September of the upcoming school year, the parent must provide a valid appointment card with *all* the following information on it:

- registering student's full name
- registering student's date of birth
- name of the clinic/hospital where the appointment is scheduled.
- date of the registering student's appointment for vaccination and/or physical exam
- If the student does not have the appropriate immunizations during the priority registration period, the student will be registered but will not be allowed to attend until the immunization documents are submitted to either the Welcome Center or the student's assigned school prior to the start of school.
- The type and number of immunizations vary with age and whether the student-initiated the immunization process after the age of 7 years or before. See attached state guidelines.

**New students, current rolling registration:**

- Parents must bring proof of immunizations upon registering for school at all Welcome Center locations.
- All students must have all state-required immunizations at the time of registration in order to attend school during the current school year. In the event the child's physical examination appointment falls after the date of registration, the parent must provide a valid appointment card with *all* the following information on it:

- registering student's full name
- registering student's date of birth
- name of the clinic/hospital where the appointment is scheduled.
- date of the registering student's appointment for vaccination and/or physical exam
- If the student is not up to date with immunizations prior to starting the current school year, the student will be registered but will not be allowed to attend until the immunization documents are submitted to either the Welcome Center, the Health Services Department, or the student's assigned school.
- The type and number of immunizations vary with age and whether the student-initiated the immunization process after the age of 7 years or before. See attached state guidelines.

### **Continuing students:**

- All continuing students who are identified as being behind on immunizations will be notified that they will be excluded from school if there is no compliance with immunization updating. This is a necessary action because if there is a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak at the school (i.e., measles), all susceptible students and staff (i.e., those with no record of vaccination, disease, or blood test for immunity) **MUST** be excluded from school for the duration of the disease outbreak per the MA Department of Public Health and Boston Public Health Commission.
- It is important to note that students whose immunization

schedule has been interrupted and are in the process of being immunized (i.e., awaiting the next DPT/TD or polio dose and in the specified time interval between doses) may remain in school until the next dose is given.

## EXCEPTIONS

**ALL EXEMPTIONS RELIGIOUS/MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS MUST BE RENEWED ANNUALLY BY PARENT/GUARDIAN.**

- Students at any level whose parent or guardian provides a statement in writing that all immunizations or a specific immunization conflict with their sincere religious beliefs.
- Students at any level who present a physician's certificate exempting a child from an immunization(s) due to a medical contraindication: the reason why an individual cannot medically receive the vaccine(s).

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has immunization recommendations based on grade. Please refer to [the MDPH website](#) for the current schedule and detailed immunization guidelines.

Department	Contact Information
Health Services	Office: 617-635-6788      Fax: 617-635-7937
Welcome Services	Office: 617-635-9085      Fax: 617-635-9703

Date	Activity
September	All new students and students entering grades, K2, 1, 4, 6, 10, 11 will be asked to provide an updated immunization record prior to the start of the school year in compliance with current Massachusetts Department of Public Health requirements.
Monthly	Letters will be sent to parents/guardians requesting immunization records for students with missing immunizations.

For more information about this circular, contact:

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Mary Skipper, Superintendent