

SCHOOL-ENTRY HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

The Department of Health (DOH) publication “Immunization Guidelines for Florida Schools, Child Care Facilities, and Family Day Care Homes” is the current source of information regarding immunization requirements for school enrollment. It is periodically updated and available through the DOH Bureau of Immunization web page (see attachment D-I).

Schools at all grade levels are often the setting for outbreaks of vaccine-preventable disease. In recent years, shifting epidemiologic patterns have extended the at-risk populations from school age children to junior college and college-age groups for some vaccine-preventable diseases. High levels of immunization have prevented many infections, but disease transmission has continued in many instances because levels are not high enough to limit disease spread. Until such levels are achieved, schools will remain places where there is a risk for disease transmission and spread. Florida's school immunization law requires all students in public or nonpublic schools in kindergarten-12th grade and public pre-school, including foreign exchange students to have documentation of proper immunization or exemption to attend school.

Priority should be given to the following objectives:

- Certification of immunization or exemption is required of all students prior to admittance or attendance in the public or nonpublic school.
- Acceptable forms for school admittance include: DOH Form 680 Part A (completed immunization), B (temporary medical exemption), or C (permanent medical exemption), DH Form 680- Certification of Immunization (attachment D-II); DOH Form 681- Religious Exemption from Immunization (attachment D-III).
- Mandatory exclusion from school is required by law in Florida until acceptable immunization documentation (as listed above) is presented.
- See page D-7 for exception regarding students who are identified as homeless.
- Identification and subsequent follow-up should be done on students who have temporary medical exemptions or 30 day temporary waivers due to homelessness until proper documentation of immunizations is obtained.
- Students with temporary medical exemptions, permanent medical exemptions or religious exemptions must be temporarily excluded from school during vaccine preventable disease emergencies, if the student is not immunized against the particular disease present in the school population.
- Surveillance should be maintained for the identification of all suspect and/or confirmed cases of vaccine-preventable disease.
- Immediate reporting of all suspected and/or confirmed cases of vaccine-preventable disease to the Department of Health.
- Information should be provided to school faculty, staff, parents and students regarding the need for maintaining up-to-date immunizations.
- Immunization of adults (teachers, administrative personnel, lunchroom staff, and bus drivers) is also strongly recommended.

When a new student enrolls, it is DCPS staff responsibility to notify the DOH School Nurse of the student's enrollment. The Nurse will then review the cumulative folder for immunization and physical compliance as well as to determine if the child has any chronic health issues.

School-Entry Immunization Requirements

For the current school year, form DH 680 (Certification of Immunization) and form DH 681 (Religious Exemption) are the only acceptable immunization certifications for admittance to a public or non-public school, grades Pre-K-12. These new requirements apply only to **first time students** entering into the Florida School System in grades Pre-K-12.

Students who are currently enrolled with proper documentation, who transfer from one school to another; from public to private school; from one county system to another within the State of Florida, etc., do not need new certification, but will be required to present a copy of their old DH 680 **prior to entering**. The DH 680 forms will be screened for proper documentation. There will be selected cases that will require the parent to contact their private physician, NAS Jax or the Department of Health in Duval County for correction or completion of the DH 680. **THESE REQUIREMENTS APPLY TO SUMMER SCHOOL ENTRIES ALSO.**

If the family has a copy of the student's immunization record (DH 680), this will ensure that their child will not be delayed in enrolling in a new school because of the lack of immunization certification.

If there is a question about the spacing of immunizations or if dates of immunizations are missing refer the parent to their private physician or the Department of Health in Duval County. You may also contact your DOH School Nurse for assistance with record review.

It is the responsibility of DCPS staff to input into the student's electronic record their immunization history and update immunization code or exemption date as appropriate. The DOH School Nurse will help to answer compliance questions.

Florida SHOTS™

Florida SHOTS™ (State Health Online Tracking System) is a free, statewide, centralized online immunization registry that helps health-care providers and schools keep track of immunization records. This helps ensure that children receive all vaccinations needed to protect them from dangerous vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, mumps, diphtheria, polio, varicella and others. Download the user agreement (Form DH-2115) and fax the completed application form with a copy of the requested documents to **850-412-5801**. Registration information can be found: <https://www.flshots.com/enrollment/school.html>.

Florida SHOTS helps ensure that the required immunization records for child-care and school attendance are easy to locate no matter where children go within Florida. And in case of disaster, those records remain protected and available. All records secretaries and health room staff will register with Florida SHOTS™ to access electronic 680s.

IMMUNIZATION

PROCEDURES FOR ADMITTING TRANSFER STUDENTS FROM ANOTHER FLORIDA COUNTY UNDER THE (30) SCHOOL-DAY TEMPORARY EXEMPTION PROVISION OF THE LAW

The following are procedures for admitting transfer students from another county in Florida who do not present proof of immunization at the time of enrollment:

- Immediately notify the parent of the thirty (30) school-day temporary exemption provision of the immunization law. Florida Statutes authorize school officials to permit transfer students up to thirty (30) school days to attend school until their records can be obtained, unless transferring into grade covered by a specific immunization policy.
- It is extremely important that you make your usual (FASTER) request for the student's records on the same day the student enrolls since the thirty (30) school-day count begins on that day.
- If a response from the school indicates that it does not have the student's immunization records, notify the parent immediately. Remember that it is ultimately the parent's responsibility to provide required immunization documents.
- At the end of the exemption period, when exclusion becomes mandatory, implement immunization exclusion plan as approved by your assistant superintendent.
- Once a student has been excluded, the school should make every effort to see that the student is in compliance. We suggest that the following steps be taken:
 - Determine that the parent has received the "Parental Notice of Student Exclusion from School" form.
 - Provide clarifying information to parents regarding immunization requirements.
 - Provide information on special clinic times and locations.
 - Determine parent's intent to comply.
 - Request Alternative Education Programs and Behavioral Support assistance if necessary. (See attachment D-IV).

School-Entry Health Examinations

Section 1003.22, F.S. requires each child who is entitled to admittance to kindergarten or any other initial entrance into a public or private school in Florida to present a certification of school-entry health exam performed within one year prior to enrollment in school. This statute also gives each district school board and governing authority of each private school, permission to establish a policy permitting a student up to 30 school days to present the certification of exam. Since enforcement of compliance with this requirement is difficult after a student has been admitted to school, some counties choose not to allow the 30 day exemption. **Duval County does allow the 30 day exemption.**

Chapter 6A-6.024, F.A.C. specifies that any health professional licensed in Florida or the state where the student resided at the time of the examination, and is authorized to perform a general health examination, is acceptable to certify completion of the examination. Although not mandated to certify the school entry examination, the rule incorporates DH 3040, School Entry Health Exam (attachment D-V), by reference as acceptable documentation. Since DH 3040 is available for this purpose its use is recommended.

A completed Florida High School Athletic Association Preparticipation Physical Evaluation form is also acceptable. Other signed statements or certifications of completion by an authorized health professional would need to be locally approved on a case-by-case basis to determine if the minimum components have been included.

It is the responsibility of DCPS staff to input into the student's electronic record their health examination date and compliance code. The DOH School Nurse will help to answer compliance questions.

**SCHOOL-ENTRY HEALTH EXAMINATION
PROCEDURES FOR ADMITTING OUT-OF-STATE TRANSFER STUDENTS
UNDER THE 30 SCHOOL-DAY EXEMPTION PROVISION OF THE LAW**

When admitting transfer students from another state who do not present certification of school-entry health examination performed within one year prior to enrollment, or a written request by the parent or guardian stating objections on religious grounds as required by Section 1003.22, Florida Statutes, the following procedures will be used by school personnel:

- Allow up to 30 school days in accordance with the provisions of this law, for certification of school-entry health examination to be presented. Maintain a record of the student's name, date of enrollment, and exemption expiration date. The Temporary Exemption Log in the School Health Services Policy and Procedural Manual may be used for this purpose.
- Inform parents or guardians of the requirements of the school-entry health examination law, expiration date of the 30 school-day exemption, and their responsibility to comply within the exemption period (Parental notice of Exemption, School Health Services Policy and Procedural Manual).
- Request the student's certification of school-entry health examination from the out-of-state school last attended when the parents or guardians indicate that a current certification is on file. Notify the parents or guardians if the certification is not received in 15 days and inform them again of their responsibility in presenting this document.
- Direct parents or guardians to their private physician, Department of Health clinic or other medical agency for the school-entry health examination.
- When certification of school-entry health examination is not presented to the school by the end of the exemption period, implement the school's exclusion plan. We suggest that the following steps be taken:
 1. Officially notify the parents or guardians of the student's exclusion from school prior to the date of exclusion (see Exclusion Notice, attachment D-VI).
 2. Provide clarifying information to parents or guardians regarding school-entry health examination requirements.
- Once a student has been excluded, the school should make every effort to see that the student is in compliance:
 1. Determine parent's or guardian's intent to comply.
 2. Use "Request for Alternative Education Programs and Behavioral Support Assistance Form" (see attachment D-IV).

Student Exemption for Entrance Documentation Requirements

Students who are experiencing homelessness shall be given a temporary exemption for 30 school days to comply with school entrance documentation requirements (i.e. birth certificate, immunizations, physical exam) (s. 1003.22 (2), F.S.).

Annual Immunization Reports and Surveys

As provided for in s. 1003.22, F.S. each public and private school, including public and private kindergarten programs shall be required to submit an annual report of compliance with immunization mandates. Reports are to be completed on forms provided by the DOH for each kindergarten and 7th grade, unless a specific county has been approved for electronic reporting. Random audits of immunization records may be conducted by the DOH immunization program staff each year. Counties will be notified as to the schools being surveyed and the expected date of the audit.

Parent Notification Requirements

The Family and School Partnership for Student Achievement, s. 1002.23, F.S., requires the Florida Department of Education and all Florida Public School Districts to develop guidelines for parents which must include school-entry requirements, including required immunizations and the recommended immunization schedule. This statute further requires each school district to develop and disseminate a parent guide to successful student achievement consistent with the guidelines of the Department of Education. It should address what parents need to know about their child's educational progress and how parents can help their child to succeed in school. The guide also provides information on the importance of student health and available immunizations and vaccinations, including, but not limited to:

- A recommended immunization schedule in accordance with United State Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations.
- Detailed information regarding the causes, symptoms, and transmission of meningococcal disease and the availability, effectiveness, known contraindications, and appropriate age for the administration of any required or recommended vaccine against meningococcal disease, in accordance with the recommendations of the "Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention."

The 2011 Florida Statutes

[Title XLVIII Chapter 1003](#)
PUBLIC K-12 EDUCATION
Chapter 1003
K-20 EDUCATION CODE

[Title XLVIII](#)
K-20 EDUCATION CODE

[Chapter 1003](#)
PUBLIC K-12 EDUCATION

1003.22 School-entry health examinations; immunization against communicable diseases; exemptions; duties of Department of Health.—

(1) Each district school board and the governing authority of each private school shall require that each child who is entitled to admittance to kindergarten, or is entitled to any other initial entrance into a public or private school in this state, present a certification of a school-entry health examination performed within 1 year before enrollment in school. Each district school board, and the governing authority of each private school, may establish a policy that permits a student up to 30 school days to present a certification of a school-entry health examination. Children and youths who are experiencing homelessness and children who are known to the department, as defined in s. 39.0016, shall be given a temporary exemption for 30 school days. Any district school board that establishes such a policy shall include provisions in its local school health services plan to assist students in obtaining the health examinations. However, a child shall be exempted from the requirement of a health examination upon written request of the parent of the child stating objections to the examination on religious grounds.

(2) The State Board of Education, subject to the concurrence of the Department of Health, shall adopt rules to govern medical examinations and immunizations performed under this section.

(3) The Department of Health may adopt rules necessary to administer and enforce this section. The Department of Health, after consultation with the Department of Education, shall adopt rules governing the immunization of children against, the testing for, and the control of preventable communicable diseases. The rules must include procedures for exempting a child from immunization requirements. Immunizations shall be required for poliomyelitis, diphtheria, rubeola, rubella, pertussis, mumps, tetanus, and other communicable diseases as determined by rules of the Department of Health. The manner and frequency of administration of the immunization or testing shall conform to recognized standards of medical practice. The Department of Health shall supervise and secure the enforcement of the required immunization. Immunizations required by this section shall be available at no cost from the county health departments.

(4) Each district school board and the governing authority of each private school shall establish and enforce as policy that, prior to admittance to or attendance in a public or private school, grades kindergarten through 12, or any other initial entrance into a Florida public or private school, each child present or have on file with the school a certification of immunization for the prevention of those communicable diseases for which immunization is required by the Department of Health and further shall provide for appropriate screening of its students for scoliosis at the proper age. Such certification shall be made on forms approved and provided by the Department of Health and shall become a part of each student's permanent record, to be transferred when the student transfers, is promoted, or

changes schools. The transfer of such immunization certification by Florida public schools shall be accomplished using the Florida Automated System for Transferring Education Records and shall be deemed to meet the requirements of this section.

- (5) The provisions of this section shall not apply if:
- (a) The parent of the child objects in writing that the administration of immunizing agents conflicts with his or her religious tenets or practices;
 - (b) A physician licensed under the provisions of chapter 458 or chapter 459 certifies in writing, on a form approved and provided by the Department of Health, that the child should be permanently exempt from the required immunization for medical reasons stated in writing, based upon valid clinical reasoning or evidence, demonstrating the need for the permanent exemption;
 - (c) A physician licensed under the provisions of chapter 458, chapter 459, or chapter 460 certifies in writing, on a form approved and provided by the Department of Health, that the child has received as many immunizations as are medically indicated at the time and is in the process of completing necessary immunizations;
 - (d) The Department of Health determines that, according to recognized standards of medical practice, any required immunization is unnecessary or hazardous; or
 - (e) An authorized school official issues a temporary exemption, for a period not to exceed 30 school days, to permit a student who transfers into a new county to attend class until his or her records can be obtained. Children and youths who are experiencing homelessness and children who are known to the department, as defined in s. 39.0016, shall be given a temporary exemption for 30 school days. The public school health nurse or authorized private school official is responsible for follow-up of each such student until proper documentation or immunizations are obtained. An exemption for 30 days may be issued for a student who enters a juvenile justice program to permit the student to attend class until his or her records can be obtained or until the immunizations can be obtained. An authorized juvenile justice official is responsible for follow-up of each student who enters a juvenile justice program until proper documentation or immunizations are obtained.
- (6)(a) No person licensed by this state as a physician or nurse shall be liable for any injury caused by his or her action or failure to act in the administration of a vaccine or other immunizing agent pursuant to the provisions of this section if the person acts as a reasonably prudent person with similar professional training would have acted under the same or similar circumstances.
- (b) No member of a district school board, or any of its employees, or member of a governing board of a private school, or any of its employees, shall be liable for any injury caused by the administration of a vaccine to any student who is required to be so immunized or for a failure to diagnose scoliosis pursuant to the provisions of this section.
- (7) The parents of any child admitted to or in attendance at a Florida public or private school, grades pre-kindergarten through 12, are responsible for assuring that the child is in compliance with the provisions of this section.

- (8) Each public school, including public kindergarten, and each private school, including private kindergarten, shall be required to provide to the county health department director or administrator annual reports of compliance with the provisions of this section. Reports shall be completed on forms provided by the Department of Health for each kindergarten, and other grade as specified; and the reports shall include the status of children who were admitted at the beginning of the school year. After consultation with the Department of Education, the Department of Health shall establish by administrative rule the dates for submission of these reports, the grades for which the reports shall be required, and the forms to be used.
- (9) The presence of any of the communicable diseases for which immunization is required by the Department of Health in a Florida public or private school shall permit the county health department director or administrator or the State Health Officer to declare a communicable disease emergency. The declaration of such emergency shall mandate that all students in attendance in the school who are not in compliance with the provisions of this section be identified by the district school board or by the governing authority of the private school; and the school health and immunization records of such children shall be made available to the county health department director or administrator. Those children identified as not being immunized against the disease for which the emergency has been declared shall be temporarily excluded from school by the district school board, or the governing authority of the private school, until such time as is specified by the county health department director or administrator.
- (10) Each district school board and the governing authority of each private school shall:
- (a) Refuse admittance to any child otherwise entitled to admittance to kindergarten, or any other initial entrance into a Florida public or private school, who is not in compliance with the provisions of subsection (4).
 - (b) Temporarily exclude from attendance any student who is not in compliance with the provisions of subsection (4).
- (11) The provisions of this section do not apply to those persons admitted to or attending adult education classes unless the adult students are under 21 years of age.

Additional Resources Included as Attachments:

- Immunization and School-Entry Health Exam Records Request (attachment D-VII)
- Temporary Exemption Follow-up and Exclusion Log (attachment D-VIII)
- 10 Day Letter- Request for Health Information (attachment D-IX)
- Final Letter- Request for Health Information (attachment D-X)
- Immunization and School-Entry Health Examination Clinic Information (attachment D-XI)
- Students Refused Admittance and Did Not Return to School (attachment D-XII)
- 2015-2016 Immunization Cheat Sheet (attachment D-XIII)
- 2015-2016 Immunization Guidelines Flyer (attachment D-XIV)