



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

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COMMISSIONER



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Dear BARBARA BEELER:

RE: Changes in Texas Immunization Requirements

On March 5, 2009, the Executive Commissioner on Health & Human Services approved several revisions to the "Immunization Requirements for Children and Students in Texas Public and Private Schools" [Title 25, Health Services, Chapter 97, Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §97.61 and §§97.63-97.77].

The changes to the requirements were made in order to update the Texas elementary and secondary school immunization requirements so that they adhere more closely to the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). These changes include:

Hepatitis A Vaccine: Beginning August 1, 2009, all students entering kindergarten, statewide, will be required to have 2 doses of Hepatitis A vaccine.

Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) Vaccine: Beginning August 1, 2009, all students entering kindergarten will be required to have two doses of measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

Varicella Vaccine: Beginning August 1, 2009, all students entering kindergarten and 7th grade will be required to have 2 doses of varicella vaccine. A written statement from a parent (or legal guardian or managing conservator), school nurse, or physician attesting to the child's positive history of varicella disease (chicken pox), or of varicella immunity, is acceptable in lieu of either dose of varicella vaccine.

Tetanus, Diphtheria and acellular pertussis-containing vaccine (Tdap): Beginning August 1, 2009, all students entering the seventh grade will be required to have one dose of Tdap vaccine. Students in the seventh grade will be required to have a booster dose of Tdap only if it has been five years since their last dose of tetanus-containing vaccine. Students in grades 8-12 are required to have a booster dose of Tdap if it has been ten years since their previous dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine. Td is acceptable in lieu of Tdap if a contraindication to pertussis exists.

Meningococcal Vaccine: Beginning August 1, 2009, all students entering 7th grade will be required to have one dose of meningococcal vaccine.

Frequently Asked Questions for 2009/2010 New Vaccine School Requirements

- Q. What are the new vaccine requirements and why are they being added?
- A. Five new vaccine requirements have been added and the vaccines effected are Hepatitis A, MMR, Varicella, Tdap, and Meningococcal. The changes to the requirements were made in order to update the Texas elementary and secondary school immunization requirements so that they adhere more closely to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations.
- Q. When will the new changes for school requirements be effective?
- A. The new school requirements will be effective August 1, 2009. From 3/5/09 through 7/31/09 the present rules will remain in effect.
- Q. What if a student had a previous illness of the varicella disease (chickenpox), will they still need the vaccine?
- A. No. If a student has had chickenpox, they will not need to receive the vaccination. A written statement from a parent (or legal guardian or managing conservator), school nurse, or physician attesting to a child's positive history of varicella disease (chickenpox), or of varicella immunity, is acceptable in lieu of either dose of varicella vaccine.
- Q. What if a student is entering 7th grade and it has been less than 5 years since the last tetanus-containing vaccine, will they still need the Tdap vaccination?
- A. Students in the seventh grade will be required to have a booster dose of Tdap only if it has been five years since their last dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine. Students in grades 8 through 12 will be required to have a booster dose of Tdap vaccine if it has been 10 years since their previous dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine. Td is acceptable in lieu of Tdap if a contraindication to pertussis vaccine exists, i.e., a child has had a previous reaction to pertussis vaccine.
- Q. What if a child already has two doses of measles-containing vaccine and only one dose of rubella, will they still need to get a second dose of MMR or will they need to start over and get two doses of MMR?
- A. No. Students in grades 1 through 12 will remain compliant under the present MMR requirement. Only those students entering kindergarten to start the 2009/2010 school year will need to have two doses of MMR.

