

Pre-kindergarten (Child Care) and School Immunization Requirements

CALIFORNIA IMMUNIZATION HANDBOOK

For Pre-kindergarten (Child Care) Programs and Schools

Introduction

To protect children against serious infections, the California school immunization law requires them to receive immunizations before entry to pre-kindergarten (child care or preschool) and school. In addition, the law requires pre-kindergarten facilities and schools to enforce immunization requirements, maintain immunization records of all children enrolled, and submit reports to public health agencies. Links to the law are located in Appendix D.

The 10th edition of the California Immunization Handbook reviews school immunization requirements, staff responsibilities, procedures for evaluating immunization requirements, and reporting obligations. This handbook supersedes all earlier versions of the California Immunization Handbook. You can access an electronic version at California's school immunization website, www.ShotsforSchool.org.

The California Immunization Registry (CAIR) can help schools meet immunization requirements. We encourage your school to use CAIR. Visit www.CAIRweb.org for more information.

We salute California schools and pre-kindergarten providers for their conscientious efforts to protect the health of the children they educate.

If you have any questions or would like to order more blue California School Immunization Record cards, please contact your [local health department's Immunization Program](#), the health office of your school, or your school district.



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Steps In Brief

How to Implement Immunization Requirements

Pre-kindergarten (child care or preschool) facility* or school staff must:

1. Obtain each child's personal immunization record, even if the child may qualify for exemptions from immunization requirements. (Personal immunization records may include the yellow California Immunization Record or other printout from a doctor's office or clinic.)

2. Complete a [California School Immunization Record](#) (CSIR/Blue Card/CDPH 286) for each child. Other written or electronic formats to record the information in the Blue Card are allowed. Many children have their immunization records in the California Immunization Registry (CAIR), which can print out filled Blue Cards. If you are instead completing the Blue Card by hand:
 - Enter the child's identifying information on the top portion of the card, if not already done by the parent.
 - Transfer vaccine dates from the child's personal immunization record to a Blue Card or into your computerized student information system.
 - The Tdap sticker may be used to document Tdap vaccine on older versions of the Blue Card (version 01/14 or earlier).

3. Determine if requirements are met.
 - Compare the number of doses on the Blue Card to the tables for [pre-kindergarten](#) and [grades TK/K-12](#) found in Appendix D.
 - For temporary and permanent medical exemptions, see page 14.

4. Complete the Status of Requirements boxes on the Blue Card.

5. Admit only those children who (a) have all required immunizations; (b) are not currently due for any immunizations but have doses due later (conditional admission); or (c) fit in one of the "Other" categories and do not have all required immunizations and do not meet criteria for conditional admission, including a temporary medical exemption.

6. File the completed Blue Card, or equivalent, in the child's cumulative folder or pre-kindergarten file. Schools must keep this immunization information on file in hard copy or electronic format for every child enrolled.
7. Follow up on those children who were not due for any doses when admitted but have pending doses due.
(See page 18 for more information on following up with parents.)
8. Every fall, submit Immunization Assessment Reports for [pre-kindergarten](#), [kindergarten](#), and [7th grade](#) (page 23).

* Pre-kindergarten facilities are defined to include child care centers, family day care homes, nursery schools, day nurseries, preschools, and development centers.

The Basic Procedures

Obtain the Child’s Personal Immunization Record

Before children under age 18 years are admitted to any pre-kindergarten facility¹ or (TK/K-12) school² in California, either public or private, California law³ requires that a parent or guardian present an immunization record to staff. Usually, this is the child’s personal immunization record given to parents by the doctor or clinic. The personal immunization record must:

- ✓ identify the student by name and date of birth
- ✓ show the date (month, day, and year) each required vaccine dose was received
- ✓ have the type of vaccine received
- ✓ include the name of the physician or agency who gave the vaccine.

In some cases, it will be a yellow California Immunization Record (Figure 1) or similar form given to parents by their doctors. Records accessed through [CAIR](#) or from other states and countries are also acceptable.

Staff should refer parents without records to their regular doctor; if a child does not have a health care provider, parents may be referred to the [local health department](#).

Figure 1. California Immunization Record

¹ Pre-kindergarten facilities include child-care facilities, child-care centers, day nurseries, nursery schools, family day care homes (also known as family child care homes), or development centers. There is an exemption from immunization requirements for children attending “drop-in” day care centers ([AB 3049, 2002](#)). Parents do not sign a contract with the center for ongoing care, but use these centers on an “ad hoc” basis.

² Home schools are subject to the same immunization record keeping requirements as other schools or pre-kindergarten facilities (see [California Education Code, Title 2, Sections 33190-48222](#)).

³ [17 CCR section 6065](#)

Complete a Blue Card (or Equivalent)

In California, the blue [California School Immunization Record](#) card is a tool pre-kindergarten facilities and schools can use to record information required to be on file for every child enrolled. This record card is sometimes referred to by its initials (CSIR), number (CDPH 286), or color (blue). For simplicity, in this Handbook it is called the “Blue Card.”

The [Blue Card](#) may be filled out and saved electronically or printed and filled in by hand. Blue paper is not required. Free copies may be available from the [local health department](#) in your area. Blue Cards may also be printed with a student’s immunization information from the California Immunization Registry (CAIR). See www.CAIRweb.org for additional information on CAIR.

In completing the Blue Card, or equivalent record, pre-kindergarten providers or school staff must enter all immunization dates. Staff must record all vaccine dates (month, day, and year) from the child’s personal immunization record and complete the status of requirements section. For transfer students, you may use the previous school’s Blue Card if it is available.

Guidance for completing the Blue Card is on the back of the card, and a link is provided in Appendix B.

The completed Blue Card, or equivalent immunization information, is part of the child’s mandatory pupil record (cumulative folder) for school or file for pre-kindergarten. School immunization records may also be computerized (see page 22). Only one Blue Card should be in the student’s cumulative folder. If there are several, a school may update one to make it complete, and either discard all others or staple all others behind the new Blue Card.

Transfers at Pre-kindergarten (Child Care or Preschool) Level

Sometimes pre-kindergarten facilities forward Blue Cards when children transfer or move on to kindergarten. In these cases, the prior Blue Card may be used in the new center or elementary school.

Transfers between Schools

For children transferring from another school in California or another state, **the new school must review the student's immunization records** to make sure all immunization requirements have been met. A valid record can be any of the following if it includes dates for all immunizations: the Blue Card or equivalent record, CAIR (California Immunization Registry) record, another state's school record, or the child's personal immunization record.

When a child transfers from another school, **we encourage schools to ask parents to bring their child's personal immunization record from the doctor or clinic to registration** rather than wait for the cumulative folder (containing the immunization record) to arrive from the former school. Staff may admit transfer students without an immunization record for up to 30 school days of attendance while waiting for their former school's cumulative folder (or other immunization record) to arrive.¹ Your school or district may set a shorter time frame or have no grace period at all.

When the record is received from the other school:

- If the child does not have the required immunization doses, allow no more than 10 (0-10) school days for the parents to submit records for any remaining doses due. Notify the parent of this deadline.
- If you do not receive documentation of receipt of the doses due after the 10 (or fewer) school days, the child must be excluded from attendance until proper documentation is submitted to the school.²

When the record is NOT received from the other school at the end of the 30-school-day (or fewer) grace period

- You will have to contact the parents and follow up. The parents must present their child's personal immunization record to show that their child has met all immunization requirements. If not, staff will need to exclude that child until proper documentation is submitted.¹

Students transferring after July 1, 2019, must meet the latest immunization requirements (Appendix D).

For students from another state, follow Basic Procedures (page 5) to complete a new Blue Card. Follow up on any students who were not due for any doses upon admission but still need additional immunization doses.

Admitting Homeless or Foster Transfer Students

The federal [McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#) requires schools to enroll new students who are homeless even if their immunization records are missing or unavailable at the time of enrollment. California law requires schools to immediately **enroll foster children transferring to their school even if a foster child is unable to produce immunization records** normally required for school entry.³ Once a homeless student or a foster child is enrolled, school staff should work with the foster family or school where the student was transferred from to obtain the student's immunization records quickly. The school staff should also work with their local health department to ensure these students receive any vaccinations they need. **The law still requires that the school obtain the student's immunization record and ensure that these students meet all immunization requirements.**

For foster students, Education Code section 48853.5 requires that within two business days of the foster child's request for school enrollment, the educational liaison for the new school shall contact the school last attended by the foster child to obtain all academic and other records.⁴ The educational liaison for the school last attended shall provide all records to the new school within two business days of receiving the request.

Admitting Students from another Country

For children entering school from another country, you will need to obtain immunization records from the parents. Do not wait for a record from the previous country. Do not allow any grace period, but refer families without personal records or with foreign records that you cannot understand to their physician or [local health department](#). A list of foreign [vaccine names](#) is included in Appendix B. For transfer students from Mexico, see the [Binational Immunization Resource Tool](#) (Appendix B).

1 [The California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Division 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 8, Article 3, section 6035\(d\)](#)

2 [The California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Division 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 8, Article 3, section 6040](#)

3 [Health and Safety Code, Division 105, Part 2, Chapter 1, section 120341\(b\)](#)

4 [Education Code, Division 4, Part 27, Chapter 5.5, section 48853.5\(f\)\(8\)\(C\)](#)

Determining if Requirements Are Met

The immunization requirements you must enforce are detailed in the Health and Safety Code sections 120325-120375 and California Code of Regulations sections 6000-6075, including Tables A-D (Appendix D).^{1, 2} The [Guide to Immunization Requirements for Pre-Kindergarten](#) and the [Guide to Immunization Requirements for K-12th Grade](#) (Appendix B) are also user-friendly resources to the required immunizations. For school staff, notes provided on versions of the Blue Card since 2019 can help you determine if the child has met school requirements. For transitional kindergarten, children must have met and provided documentation of required kindergarten immunizations prior to admission.

The image shows two overlapping pages from the California Immunization Handbook. The top page is titled "CALIFORNIA IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN" and the bottom page is titled "CALIFORNIA IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR K - 12TH GRADE". Both pages include tables showing the number of doses required for various immunizations and detailed instructions for school staff.

Using Tables A or B (Appendix D), compare the child's number of vaccine doses to the requirements and determine if all requirements are met. The **timing** of the following doses needs to be checked to meet requirements:

Pre-kindergarten, ages 15 months and older

Hib: At least one dose needs to be given on after the 1st birthday.

Pre-kindergarten and TK/K-12

MMR: Doses need to be given on or after the 1st birthday.

TK/K-12

DTaP:

- If a child has had 5 doses, requirement met - no need to check the timing.
- If a child has only had 4 doses, the last dose needs to be given on or after the 4th birthday.
- If a child has only had 3 doses, at least 1 dose must be Tdap, DTaP, or DTP given on or after the 7th birthday.

Polio:

- If a child has had 4 doses, requirement met - no need to check the timing.
- If a child has had 3 doses, the last dose needs to be given on or after the 4th birthday.

Doses received 4 days or fewer before the birthday are considered valid.

Personal beliefs exemptions (PBEs) filed at a California school or child-care facility before January 1, 2016, will remain valid until the student enrolls in the next grade span, typically at kindergarten (or transitional kindergarten) or 7th grade.

Potential Scenario: Joe is in 5th grade and recently transferred to your school from Texas. A PBE for him was filed at a school in Texas in 2013. Is the PBE valid in California?

No. Even though his PBE was filed before 2016, it was **not** filed in a California school before 2016 and therefore **not** valid. Joe must meet all immunization requirements for his grade.

A child can also meet requirements if his/her parent or guardian submits a medical exemption for one or more required vaccines along with the immunization record showing that the child has met all requirements for age or grade for vaccines not included in the medical exemption.

In addition, starting January 1, 2016, students are no longer required to have immunizations for entry if they attend a home-based private school or an independent study program and do not receive classroom-based instruction. However, parents or guardians must continue to provide immunization records for these students to their schools, and schools must continue to maintain records of immunizations for these students and report their immunization status. The immunization requirements do not prohibit students from accessing special education and related services required by their individualized education programs.

See Appendix A for answers to FAQs on [immunizations](#), [transitional kindergarten](#), [conditional admission](#), [exemptions](#), and the All Vaccines Required (AVR) [rate](#).

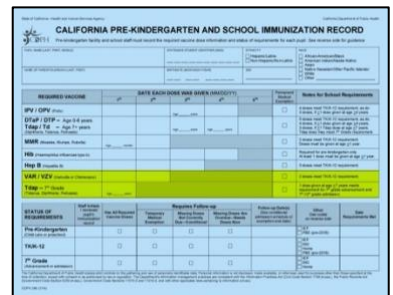
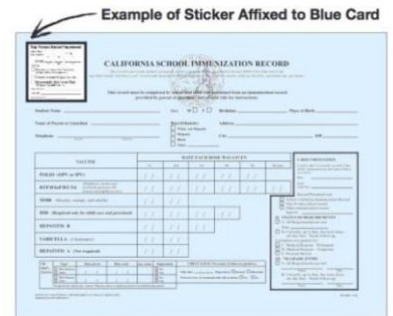
¹ [Health and Safety Code, Division 105, Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 120325-120375](#)

² [The California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Division 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 8, Sections 6000-6075](#)

7th Grade Requirement: Tdap and Varicella

California law requires that all students entering 7th grade receive a Tdap booster shot and two chickenpox (varicella) shots.¹ Schools with 7th grade must review the child’s personal immunization record and record the immunization dates:

- If using the student’s existing Blue Card (a version dated before 2019), the Tdap sticker [PM 286 S (01/11)] may be affixed to the Blue Card to document Tdap vaccination in the student’s cumulative folder. For more details on using the Tdap sticker, see the [Guide for School Staff](#) (Appendix B) and the example shown to the right. The Tdap sticker is available for ordering from your [local health department](#).
- If using a Blue Card version dated 2019 or later, record the date of Tdap vaccination in the “Tdap-7th Grade” row at the bottom of the “Required Vaccine” table on the Blue Card (instead of using the Tdap sticker).
- If using the California Immunization Registry (CAIR), Tdap vaccination information will be included in the “Tdap-7th Grade” row.
- To document chickenpox (varicella) vaccination, there is space for two dates on all versions of the Blue Card and in CAIR.



Schools may also find the customizable [Missing Records Letter to Parents of Rising 6th Graders](#) or [Phone Script](#) helpful in notifying parents of the requirements (Appendix B).

If Requirements Are Met

If all the requirements are met, school staff must complete the Status of Requirements boxes on the Blue Card, or similar, following guidance on the back. Add the Blue Card, or similar, to the child’s cumulative folder or pre-kindergarten file along with any exemption documentation. (Refer to the Exemptions to Requirements section beginning on page 13 for information on valid documentation.)

¹ [The California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Division 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 8, Article 2, Section 6025](#)

If Requirements Are Not Met

If the child does not meet immunization requirements, alert the parents and refer them to their doctor or clinic. You cannot allow the child to attend a pre-kindergarten facility or school unless the child has met all requirements or is not currently due for any immunizations but has doses due later. To avoid confusion, provide the parent with a written notice indicating what doses the child needs. Sample notices in English and Spanish ([Letter to Parents: Immunizations Needed](#) | [Spanish](#), Appendix C) may be copied onto the school's or facility's letterhead.

Depending on the requirement, you may admit children on condition that they receive the remaining dose(s) when due, according to the schedules shown in [Tables C and D: Conditional Admission Immunization Schedule](#) (Appendix D) only if the deadlines for next doses have not passed at the time of admission. See Admitting Children “On Condition” (page 15).

NOTICE OF IMMUNIZATIONS NEEDED	
Dear Parent/Guardian of _____	
Our records show that your child needs the following immunization(s) (shot/s) to meet the requirements of the California School Immunization Law, Health and Safety Code Sections 103229-103232:	
VACCINE	MISSING DOSE(S) MARKED BELOW:
Polio	<input type="checkbox"/> #1 <input type="checkbox"/> #2 <input type="checkbox"/> #3 <input type="checkbox"/> #4
DTaP (Tdap or Td if age 7 years or older)	<input type="checkbox"/> #1 <input type="checkbox"/> #2 <input type="checkbox"/> #3 <input type="checkbox"/> #4 <input type="checkbox"/> #5
MMR	<input type="checkbox"/> #1 <input type="checkbox"/> #2
Hib (5 Hib conjugate/season only)	<input type="checkbox"/> #1 <input type="checkbox"/> #2 <input type="checkbox"/> #3 <input type="checkbox"/> #4
Hepatitis B	<input type="checkbox"/> #1 <input type="checkbox"/> #2 <input type="checkbox"/> #3
Varicella (chickenpox)	<input type="checkbox"/> #1 <input type="checkbox"/> #2
Tdap (for 7th-12th grade)	<input type="checkbox"/> #1
YOU NEED TO DO ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING IMMEDIATELY:	
1. If your child has already received all of these immunizations marked above, bring us the immunization record so that we can update our files. Your child's record must include a date for the immunizations checked above and the doctor/clinic's name.	
2. If your child has not already received all of the immunizations marked above, bring this form along with your child's immunization record to your doctor or local health department to get the immunization(s) marked above. Bring us your child's updated immunization record after every immunization visit until all of the required immunizations have been received.	
3. If any of these immunizations were not given to your child because of medical reasons, please bring us a medical exemption letter signed by your child's doctor (MD or DO licensed in California).	
According to state law, we cannot allow your child to attend unless we receive evidence that the above requirements are met by this date: _____	
For more information on pre-kindergarten (shot/s due or preschool) and school immunization requirements, visit www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Imz.aspx	
If you have any questions or require additional information, please call _____.	
Sincerely,	

Potential Scenario: Wendy is entering TK. She receives her first-ever dose of varicella vaccine a month before the first day of school. She has received all of the doses for the other vaccines required for TK. May Wendy be admitted?

Yes. According to the conditional admission schedule [[Tables C and D: Conditional Admission Immunization Schedule](#) (Appendix D)], Wendy is not due yet for her 2nd dose of varicella vaccine. The 2nd dose of varicella vaccine can be given as early as 3 months but no later than 4 months after the 1st dose. You may admit her to TK on the condition that she presents documentation of her 2nd varicella vaccine dose no later than 4 months after the 1st dose.

If an Unmet Requirement is Found After Admission

If, after a child is admitted, he or she is discovered to lack one or more immunizations, the parent must be notified. In this circumstance, state regulations¹ **allow no more than 10 school days after you notify the parent** for the parent to present a record of the child's immunization. The school or pre-kindergarten facility may set a deadline of fewer than 10 school days. After the deadline of 10 or fewer school days, you must exclude the child from further attendance if he or she has not come into compliance with the requirements.

¹ [The California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Division 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 8, Article 3, Section 6040](#)

Exemptions to Requirements

Personal Beliefs Exemptions (PBE)

Starting in 2016, a law enacted by Senate Bill 277¹ eliminates the option of PBEs. Parents or guardians of students in any school or pre-kindergarten facility, whether public or private, are no longer allowed to submit a PBE to a currently-required vaccine.

However, valid PBEs filed at a California school or pre-kindergarten facility **before** January 1, 2016 remain valid until the student enrolls in the next grade span, typically at kindergarten (or transitional kindergarten) or 7th grade.

A PBE filed before 2016 at:	Remains valid until...
A pre-kindergarten facility	First entry between TK/K through 6 th grade
TK/K through 6 th grade	Completion of 6 th grade
Entry between 7 th -12 th grade	Completion of 12th grade

PBEs filed in 2014 and 2015 are only valid when signed by both an authorized health care practitioner and a parent/guardian no more than 6 months prior to the child's first entry into school or child care or a new grade span. (If "religious beliefs" box is checked, then practitioner signature is not required.)

Criteria for a valid PBE:

Filed before 2014:

- ✓ Personal Beliefs Affidavit on back of Blue Card, or similar PBE affidavit (including Tdap PBE form CDPH 8261), signed and dated by parent/guardian.
- ✓ Accompanying immunization record for doses received

Filed in 2014 or 2015: Completed PBE form (CDPH 8262), including:

- ✓ Student's name and date of birth
- ✓ Parent/guardian's name and address
- ✓ Section A.: Signature of an authorized health care practitioner licensed or credentialed in California and date of signing (not required if exemption was based on religious beliefs)
- ✓ Section B.I.: Checkmark to indicate either *receipt of information* from practitioner or *religious beliefs*
 - o Signature of parent/guardian and date of signing
- ✓ Section B.II.: Checkmark(s) to indicate which vaccines are being exempted
 - o Signature of parent/guardian and date of signing
- ✓ Accompanying immunization record for doses received

¹ [SB 277 \(Pan\), Chapter 35, Statutes of 2015](#)

PBEs may be transferred between pre-kindergarten facilities or between schools in California, both within and across school districts. However, if the PBE documentation is no longer available, students must meet immunization requirements based on their age or grade. Alternatively, school children can enroll in a home-based private school or an independent study program and not receive classroom-based instruction.

Children with a PBE filed before 2016 who enter a new grade span (transitional kindergarten/ kindergarten or 7th grade) will have to meet all immunization requirements based on grade. Children must receive the required vaccines before entering or meet the conditional admission requirements.

Therefore, in order to begin 7th grade, children who had a PBE filed before 2016 need to meet all [requirements for K-12 admission](#), including the 7th grade requirements for 1 dose of Tdap and 2 doses of chickenpox (varicella) vaccine.

For more information on PBEs visit www.ShotsforSchool.org.

Medical Exemptions

A temporary or permanent medical exemption to one or more of the immunizations may be granted under certain circumstances if a **physician (MD or DO) licensed in California provides a signed, written statement** which states:

- The specific nature of the physical condition or medical circumstance for which the licensed physician does not recommend immunization;
- Each specific required vaccine that is being exempted.
- Whether the medical exemption is permanent or temporary.
- An expiration date no more than 12 calendar months from the date of signing, if the exemption is temporary.

This is also discussed at www.ShotsforSchool.org under [exemptions](#). The physician's written statement must be added to the child's cumulative folder or file along with the Blue Card, or equivalent record.

Students with temporary medical exemptions (page 17) must be followed up to confirm that either

- they have received exempted doses by the time the exemption expires, or that
- a temporary exemption has been extended by a physician licensed in California.

Admitting Children “On Condition”

In limited circumstances, some children who have not received one or more of the required immunizations may attend child care or school while they catch up on these immunizations. If children have received at least the first dose of each required vaccine and are not due for the next doses at the time of admission, they may be admitted on the condition that they will receive still-needed doses as they become due in the future. The school or child-care provider must follow up (see [Following Up with Parents](#), page 18) by notifying parents, checking documentation that the needed immunizations were received (usually by reviewing the child’s updated personal immunization record), and updating the Blue Card with the dates for the catch-up immunizations once they have been received.

[California Code of Regulations \(CCR\) Section 6035\(b\)](#) states that “The governing authority shall **review records** of any pupil admitted conditionally to a school **at least every 30 days from the date of admission**, inform the parent or guardian of the remaining required vaccine doses until all required immunizations are received or an exemption is filed, and update the immunization information in the pupil’s record.”

If a child has NOT received all immunization doses which are currently due, the child must NOT be admitted until all doses currently due are received and documentation is provided. [Tables C and D, Section 6035](#) show the intervals when doses are due. If a child has not received any dose of a required vaccine, **a first dose MUST be received prior to admission.**

Examples of children who may attend child care or school under conditional admission include the following:

- **Children younger than 18 months who have met all the requirements for admission** are required to receive additional vaccine doses as they become older (see [Table A, Section 6025](#)). These children may be conditionally admitted but must complete the remaining doses when they become due ([Table A, Section 6025](#)). The child-care facility must notify the parent or guardian of the date by which the child must complete the remaining doses.

Potential scenario: You admitted Amy into your child-care facility at 3 months of age after she had received all doses required for her age (1 polio, 1 DTaP, 1 Hib, 1 Hepatitis B). When do you need to check her immunization record again and what doses does she need next?

According to [Table A, Section 6025](#), Amy is due for additional immunizations when she turns 4 months of age. Notify Amy's parents that she will need one additional dose of each vaccine (second doses of each: polio, DTaP, Hib, and Hepatitis B). Amy's parents have 30 days from when Amy turns 4 months old to share updated immunization records for these doses. If her parents do not provide proper documentation for these immunizations by 30 days after she turns 4 months old, you must exclude Amy from attendance until you receive it.

- **Children who are NOT CURRENTLY DUE for any immunizations at the time of admission but have doses due later.** These children may be conditionally admitted but must complete the remaining doses in accordance with [Table C or D, Section 6035](#). The child-care facility or school must notify the parent or guardian of the date by which the pupil must complete all the required immunizations in accordance with [Table C or D](#).
- **Children admitted with a temporary medical exemption** to one or more immunization(s) as documented by a physician (MD or DO) licensed in California prior to admission. To attend child care or school, these children must receive all vaccines except those listed in the exemption. The **physician documentation must include the date by which the exemption expires and can be no longer than 12 calendar months** from the date the exemption is issued. Once this expiration date has occurred, the child may continue in attendance only after the school or child care receives documentation of receipt of the temporarily exempted vaccines or a new medical exemption.

Establishing Deadlines for the Next Dose

Most of the vaccines given to children require a series of several doses. Certain time intervals are recommended between doses. You do not need to consider intervals between doses that have already been received. Only the interval for the next needed immunization(s) should be taken into consideration.

In [Tables C and D: Conditional Admission Schedule](#) (Appendix D), time intervals are given for the next dose of the vaccine series. The child should not receive the next dose until the first day of the time interval (the "Earliest Dose May be Given" column). The last day of the interval (the "Exclude if not Given by" column) is the deadline. Up until that deadline, the child may be admitted "on condition" that all remaining doses are received by their deadlines. If the next and remaining doses are not received by the deadline, the child must be excluded.

When you admit a child conditionally, the parent must be advised of the time interval and encouraged to have their child receive the next dose at the beginning of the time interval. Here is an example based on the intervals shown in [Table D](#) (Appendix D).

Potential scenario: Emma, a 5-year-old student, received her first dose of Hep B vaccine on 5/15 and the second dose on 8/31. When is she due for the third dose of Hep B vaccine?

- Table D shows that Emma can get the third dose as soon as 8 weeks after the second dose, or on 10/26 in this example. Also, the third dose should not be given earlier than 4 months after the 1st dose, on or after 9/15. Let Emma’s parents know that Emma should receive the third dose on 10/26 or later. However, the maximum time allowed is twelve months, or 8/31 of the following year.
- Recommend that Emma get the dose on 10/26 or shortly thereafter.
- Use the twelve-month deadline date to determine the exclusion date. Advise parents that Emma will be excluded the day after the deadline date, 9/1 of the following year in this example, unless they provide documentation that she received the third dose.

Pre-kindergarten (Child Care or Preschool): Children Younger Than Age 18 Months

Children younger than age 18 months may still be in the process of completing their basic immunization series. The child-care provider must follow up on each of these children until they receive all necessary shots. If they currently are up to date, they can be admitted “on condition” that they receive the next shots due as they age into new requirements, as shown in Table A (Appendix D).

Temporary Medical Exemptions

A child whose **California-licensed physician** decides to postpone one or more immunizations because of a physical condition or medical circumstance may be admitted “on condition” that the needed dose(s) be obtained and an updated immunization record for the needed doses be submitted by the time the exemption expires. The California-licensed physician must indicate in writing:

- The **specific nature** of the physical condition or medical circumstance for which the physician does not recommend immunization
- Each **specified required immunization** that is being exempted
- The date the exemption expires. **The exemption cannot exceed 12 calendar months from the date it is signed.**

See [exemptions](#) on www.ShotsforSchool.org for additional information. (See page 14 for more information on medical exemptions.)

Following Up with Parents

It is the responsibility of school and child-care staff to follow up on all children that need required immunizations in the future. Schools also need to follow up on transfer students when awaiting arrival of records from prior schools. This means that each child-care facility or school must develop a follow-up system for these children and employ it consistently.

The first key to success is being very clear with parents or guardians that you must enforce the law and the basic rule of, **“No shots? No records? No school.”** (See poster available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).)

Your follow-up system should include:

1. **Keeping lists of unimmunized** (exempt or conditionally admitted) children to refer to in case of disease outbreak.
2. **Reviewing your records monthly** (see Systems 1-4 on the following pages).
3. Helping other schools by making sure you **forward cumulative folders to the new schools** in a timely manner. [Education Code Section 49068](#) requires schools to send cumulative folders within 10 school days following the request from the new school. For **foster students**, [Education Code Section 48853.5 \(f\)\(8\)\(C\)](#) requires the educational liaison of the new school contact the foster child’s school last attended to obtain all records; this must occur within 2 business days of the foster child’s request for enrollment. The educational liaison of the school last attended shall provide all records to the new school within 2 business days of receiving the request.
4. **Using the shortest interval** to complete immunizations **is encouraged** but not required (see [Tables C and D](#), Appendix D). For example, when a conditionally admitted child is in the 6- to 12-month interval between doses of DTaP, target the 6 months date for receiving the next dose rather than using the maximum 12 months. Notify parents of when the next dose is due, but also recommend not to get the dose before the minimum interval is reached.
5. **Keep in contact with the parents.** If immunizations are needed, parents should be sent a [Letter to Parents: Immunizations Needed](#) | [Spanish](#) (Appendix B) letter at the beginning of the month in which shots or records are due. Encourage parents to have their child receive the next dose during the beginning of the time interval. The exclusion date is the day after the deadline date and must be noted on the letter. Students may continue in attendance only if they provide documentation of having received the doses that are due. If the parent does not submit documentation showing the child has received the doses due, the law requires that the child (unless exempt) be excluded from further school/child care attendance until proof of adequate immunization is presented.

NOTICE OF IMMUNIZATIONS NEEDED	
Dear Parent/Guardian of: _____	
Our records show that your child needs the following immunization(s) (shots) to meet the requirements of the California School Immunization Law, Health and Safety Code Sections 103235-103237:	
VACCINE	MISSING DOSE(S) MARKED BELOW:
Polio	<input type="checkbox"/> #1 <input type="checkbox"/> #2 <input type="checkbox"/> #3 <input type="checkbox"/> #4
DTaP (Tdap or Td if age 7 years or older)	<input type="checkbox"/> #1 <input type="checkbox"/> #2 <input type="checkbox"/> #3 <input type="checkbox"/> #4 <input type="checkbox"/> #5
MMR	<input type="checkbox"/> #1 <input type="checkbox"/> #2
Hib (child care/school only)	<input type="checkbox"/> #1 <input type="checkbox"/> #2 <input type="checkbox"/> #3 <input type="checkbox"/> #4
Hepatitis B	<input type="checkbox"/> #1 <input type="checkbox"/> #2 <input type="checkbox"/> #3
Varicella (chickenpox)	<input type="checkbox"/> #1 <input type="checkbox"/> #2
Tdap (for 7th-12th grade)	<input type="checkbox"/> #1
YOU NEED TO DO ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING IMMEDIATELY:	
1. If your child has already received all of these immunizations marked above, bring us the immunization records so that we can update our files. Your child's record must include a date for the immunizations checked above and the doctor/clinic's name.	
2. If your child has not already received all of the immunizations marked above, bring this form along with your child's immunization record to your doctor or local health department to get the immunization(s) marked above. Bring us your child's updated immunization record after every immunization visit until all of the required immunizations have been received.	
3. If any of these immunizations were not given to your child because of medical reasons, please bring us a medical exemption letter signed by your child's doctor (MD) or DO licensed in California.	
According to state law, we cannot allow your child to attend unless we receive evidence that the above requirements are met by this date: _____	
For more information on pre-kindergarten (child care or preschool) and school immunization requirements, visit www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OPA/Pages/NR1000000000.aspx	
If you have any questions or require additional information, please call: _____	
Sincerely,	

6. **Exclude children who do not meet requirements by the exclusion date.** Almost all parents comply with requirements when they know their child must be excluded. If you need to exclude a child, usually the student's family quickly comes into compliance with the requirements, and the child is back in school as a result. However, the Letter to Parents: Immunizations Needed and documentation of your follow-up efforts will provide the information you need for due process.

Follow-Up System Examples

Described below are four systems currently used in various California child-care facilities and schools. Choose whichever system is best for you.

System 1 – Blue Card Folder

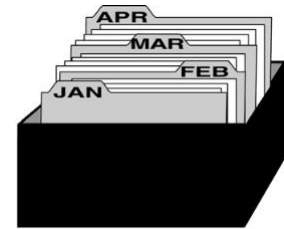
- Keep a separate file of the Blue Cards of children needing follow up. For schools, however, because the Blue Card or equivalent record is part of the child's permanent scholastic record, make sure that it is transferred with the cumulative folder if the child changes schools.
- Clip a note with the due date of each shot due onto the Blue Card.
- At the beginning of each month, call or send parents a letter (see [Letter to Parents: Immunizations Needed](#) | [Spanish](#), Appendix B) to remind them that shots are due and of the deadline date. Encourage parents to have their child receive the next dose at the beginning of the time interval. Note that the child must be excluded on the day after your deadline date if not immunized.
- Enter immunization dates on the Blue Card when the parents present the doctor or clinic record to verify the child's immunization status.
- Repeat the steps above if additional immunizations will be needed in the future, until all requirements are met.
- Exclude students who do not provide evidence of receiving the next doses due by the exclusion date.
- If a school or child-care facility later discovers that a conditionally admitted student has not complied in meeting the conditional admission requirements and previously had not been appropriately notified, the school or child care may allow up to 10 school days after notification to receive all vaccines currently due and provide documentation of these doses before excluding the student.
- When no more vaccine doses are needed, remove the Blue Card from the follow-up file, and return it to the student's cumulative folder or the child-care file for that child.



NOTICE OF IMMUNIZATIONS NEEDED				
Dear Parent/Guardian of _____				
Our records show that your child needs the following immunization(s) (shots) to meet the requirements of the California School Immunization Law, Health and Safety Code Sections 120328-120376:				
VACCINE	MISSING DOSES/ MARKED BELOW:			
Polio	<input type="checkbox"/> 01	<input type="checkbox"/> 02	<input type="checkbox"/> 03	<input type="checkbox"/> 04
DTaP (Tdap or Td if age 7 years or older)	<input type="checkbox"/> 01	<input type="checkbox"/> 02	<input type="checkbox"/> 03	<input type="checkbox"/> 04
MMR	<input type="checkbox"/> 01	<input type="checkbox"/> 02		
Hb (child care/pre-school only)	<input type="checkbox"/> 01	<input type="checkbox"/> 02	<input type="checkbox"/> 03	<input type="checkbox"/> 04
Hepatitis B	<input type="checkbox"/> 01	<input type="checkbox"/> 02	<input type="checkbox"/> 03	
Varicella (chickenpox)	<input type="checkbox"/> 01	<input type="checkbox"/> 02		
Tdap (or 7th-12th grade)	<input type="checkbox"/> 01			
YOU NEED TO DO ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING IMMEDIATELY:				
1. If your child has already received all of these immunizations marked above, bring us the immunization record so that we can update our file. Your child's record must include a date for the immunizations checked above and the doctor/clinic's name.				
2. If your child has not already received all of the immunizations marked above, bring this form along with your child's immunization record to your doctor or local health department to get the immunizations marked above. Bring us your child's updated immunization record after every immunization call until all of the required immunizations have been received.				
3. If any of these immunizations were not given to your child because of medical reasons, please bring us a medical exemption letter signed by your child's doctor (MD or DO licensed in California).				
According to state law, we cannot allow your child to attend unless we receive evidence that the above requirements are met by this date: _____				
For more information on pre-kindergarten (child care or preschool) and school immunization requirements, visit www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Imz/Pages/Child-Care-Pre-K-5.aspx				
If you have any questions or require additional information, please call _____.				
Sincerely,				

- When waiting for another school to send a cumulative folder and immunization record or Blue Card, include a blank Blue Card (with a note with the child's name attached to it) in the follow-up file. Write the deadline date for receipt of the record from the prior school (within the student's first 30 school days at your school). When the cumulative folder arrives from the prior school, review the Blue Card to make sure all required immunizations have been received. Indicate that review was done in the Status of Requirements section. If the transfer student is from out-of-state, complete a new Blue Card. (Note: When students leave your school, forward the cumulative folder with the Blue Card to the new school in a timely manner.)

System 2 – Index Card File



- A card file includes index cards, a box to hold them, and a set of month index cards (January-December).
- For a child needing future immunizations, enter his or her name on an index card and list all doses which will be needed. Using the [Guide to Immunization Requirements for Pre-Kindergarten](#) or [Guide to Immunization Requirements for K-12th Grade](#) (Appendix B), determine the earliest date the child can receive the next dose and note the due date on the upper right-hand corner of the follow-up card.
- For a child whose immunization record is in transit from another school, enter the child's name and the deadline date for your school to receive the record (within 30 school days) in the upper right-hand corner of the follow-up card.
- File each follow-up card by the month the immunization or transfer record is due.
- At the beginning of each month, call or send parents a letter (see [Letter to Parents: Immunizations Needed | Spanish](#), Appendix B) to remind them that shots are due and of the deadline date. Encourage parents to have their child receive the next dose at the beginning of the time interval. Note the exclusion date as the day after the deadline date. Be sure to document on the index card the date the notice was sent.
- Enter immunization dates on the Blue Card when the parents present the doctor or clinic record to verify the child's immunization status.
- Repeat the steps above if additional immunizations will be needed in the future until all requirements are met.
- Exclude children who do not provide evidence of up-to-date immunizations by the exclusion date.
- When no more immunizations are needed, remove the card from the file box.

System 3 – Calendar

A calendar system may work well in a family child-care home or in a small school or center. Use a calendar with large spaces for each day to note the name of the child on the first day of the time interval an immunization is first due. To preserve confidentiality, the calendar should not be hung where it is visible to parents or the public.

Child-care facilities and schools may also choose to set reminders within their electronic or Internet-based calendars such as Microsoft Outlook Calendar.

System 4 – Computerized Student Information Systems

Schools with computerized student information systems (see page 22) can run reports or create lists of students due for immunizations. Capabilities will vary according to the system being used. Contact your system administrator for details.

Transferring and Storing Immunization Records

For school children, the Blue Card is part of the mandatory permanent pupil record as defined in [Section 430, Title 5, California Code of Regulations](#).¹ Whenever a student leaves your school, you will need to send the Blue Card, or equivalent record, in the cumulative folder to the new school.² The sending district or school also must keep a copy of the mandatory permanent record including the Blue Card, or equivalent record.³ (Information about computerizing school immunization records is on page 23).

When the student graduates from high school or terminates schooling earlier, the Blue Card, or equivalent record, must be kept with the student's mandatory permanent record permanently.⁴ It can be archived, computerized, or microfilmed with the scholastic record, depending on the procedure for record retention used by the school.

For child-care providers and facilities, the Blue Card, or equivalent record, must be kept with the child's file during the period of enrollment and for three years after the child leaves your care, as required by the California Department of Social Services.

¹ [California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Division 1, Chapter 2, Subchapter 2, Article 3, Section 430](#)

² [California Education Code section 49068](#)

³ [California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Division 1, Chapter 2, Subchapter 2, Article 3, Section 438\(a\)](#)

⁴ [California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Division 1, Chapter 2, Subchapter 2, Article 3, Section 437](#)

Computerizing School Immunization Records

Schools, school districts, and pre-kindergarten facilities may computerize their immunization record-keeping systems. The computerized systems must contain at a minimum the information outlined in regulation section 6070¹. Please contact ImmunizationBranch@cdph.ca.gov or Immunization Branch, California Department of Public Health, 850 Marina Bay Pkwy, Richmond, CA 94804 if you need assistance.

A back-up electronic or manual copy of all records is recommended in case the original version is inadvertently lost or destroyed.

1. A complete hard copy of the Blue Card, or equivalent record, must be included in the mandatory cumulative folders of all students transferring from your school to another school in California.
2. For pupils admitted before January 1, 2014, a hard copy of the Blue Card must be kept on file for children with Personal Beliefs Exemptions (PBEs) to the immunization requirements. The PBE affidavit on the back of the Blue Card (version PM 286), or similar PBE affidavit, must be signed by the parent or guardian. For pupils who advanced or were admitted to the 7th grade with a PBE to Tdap from July 1, 2011 through December 31, 2013, the Tdap PBE form (CDPH 8261), or similar PBE affidavit, must be kept on file. For PBEs filed in 2014 and 2015, the PBE form (CDPH 8262) must be kept on file.
3. For children with medical exemptions to the requirements, the physician's written statement regarding the exemption(s) must be kept on file.
4. Hard copies of the Blue Cards or equivalent records of each child's immunization record (i.e., all immunization dates) must be made available to health department personnel as needed for auditing purposes. [Health and Safety Code Section 120375\(c\)-\(d\)](#) grants local health departments access to these records.

A pdf fill-in version of the Blue Card can be saved and printed (<http://eziz.org/assets/docs/shotsforschool/CDPH-286.pdf>). Free copies of the Blue Card may also be available from your [local health department](#).

¹ [California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Division 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 8, section 6070](#)

Annual Reports and Special Surveys

Annual Immunization Reports

All child-care facilities, schools with kindergartens, and schools with 7th grades in California, whether public or private, are required to report the immunization status of children admitted each fall. Guidance and deadlines for completing the annual immunization report can be found for [pre-kindergarten](#), [kindergarten](#), and [7th grades](#) online at www.ShotsforSchool.org.

Special On-Site Surveys

Each year, usually in the spring, CDPH and local health department staff visit schools and child-care facilities to check understanding of and compliance with immunization requirements and effectiveness of follow up. Other visits may be made or reports may be required when disease outbreaks or other problems relating to immunizations occur. [Health and Safety Code Section 120375\(c\)-\(d\)](#) grants local health departments access to child-care or school immunization records.

Disease Reporting Requirements

Reporting Communicable Diseases

Suspected cases or outbreaks of chickenpox, measles, pertussis and meningitis are amongst the diseases that must be reported by school or pre-kindergarten personnel to the [local health department](#) according to the [California Code of Regulations](#) Sections 2500, 2593, 2641-2643, and 2800-2812.

Note that some of these diseases must be reported immediately by phone. Please do not wait until the child returns to pre-kindergarten or school before contacting the [local health department](#).

Tuberculosis (TB) Screening Requirements

Tuberculosis (TB) screening is not part of the California school immunization law. If you have questions regarding TB or TB screening requirements, please contact your local health department's [TB control program](#). Pre-kindergarten providers should check with their local childcare licensing agency.

Useful Websites

California State Information:

California Department of Public Health, Immunization Branch, Shots for School
www.ShotsforSchool.org

California Immunization Registry (CAIR) cairweb.org/

California Department of Public Health, Immunization Branch
www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/immunize.aspx

California State Laws leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/

California Code of Regulations govt.westlaw.com/calregs/

School Information:

California Department of Education www.cde.ca.gov

Child Care Information:

California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division
www.cclid.ca.gov/

California Child Care Resource & Referral Network www.rrnetwork.org

General Immunization Information:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Vaccines www.cdc.gov/vaccines/

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) www.aap.org/en-us/Pages/Default.aspx

Immunization Action Coalition www.immunize.org

Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) vaers.hhs.gov/

College Information:

American College Health Association (ACHA) www.acha.org/

California's Local Health Departments:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Local-Health-Department.aspx>

Appendix A:

Frequently Asked Questions

- [New Regulations \(July 1, 2019\)](#)
- [About Immunizations](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Transitional Kindergarten](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Exemptions](#)
- [Conditional Admission](#)
- [All Required Vaccines \(ARV\) Rate](#)

Appendix B:

Resources to Help You Implement the Law

Records & Guides

- [California School Immunization Record](#)
- [Guide to Immunization Requirements for Pre-kindergarten \(Child Care\)](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Guide to Immunization Requirements for K-12th Grade](#) | [Spanish](#)

7th Grade Immunization Requirements Materials

- [Tdap Requirement Sticker Guide for School Staff](#)
- [Missing Records Letter to Parents of Rising 6th Graders](#)
- [Missing Records Phone Script for Parents of Rising 6th Graders](#)
- [Provider Immunization Recall Template Letter for 7th Grade Entry](#)

Other tools

- [Binational Immunization Resource Tool \(Mexico/USA\)](#)
- [California Immunization Registry \(CAIR\) Information for Schools and Child Care](#)
- [CAIR training videos for schools](#)
- [CDC Foreign Language Terms for Vaccines](#)
- [Vaccine Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)
- [“No Shots? No Records? No School.” poster](#) | [Spanish](#)

Appendix C:

Samples and Materials for Parents and Students

- [Letter to Parents: Immunizations Needed](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Parents' Guide to Immunizations Required for School Entry](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Parents' Guide to Immunizations Required for Pre-kindergarten \(Child Care\)](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Recommended Immunizations Brochure for Parents of Young Children](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Vaccine Recommendations for 11- and 12-year-olds](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Educational Flyer for Parents & Students – 7th Grade Requirements](#)
- [Vaccine Safety: Answers to Parents' Top Questions](#) | [Spanish](#)

Appendix D:

California Statutes and Regulations

Statutes - California Health and Safety Code

- [Educational and Child Care Facility Immunization Requirements](#), Division 105, Part 2, Chapter 1
- [Immunization of College-Age Students](#), Division 105, Part 2, Chapter 1.5
- [Meningococcal Immunization](#), Division 105, Part 2, Chapter 1.7
- [Administration of Child Day Care Licensing](#), Division 2, Chapter 3.4, Article 2 (see §1596.813)
- [Day Care Centers Administration](#)
- [Family Day Care Homes](#), Division 2, Chapter 3.6 (see §1597.541)

Regulations

[California Code of Regulations Title 17, Division 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 8](#)

- Table A: Immunization Requirements for Pre-kindergarten
- Table B: Immunization Requirements for Grades K-12
- Table C: Conditional Admission Schedule for Pre-kindergarten
- Table D: Conditional Admission Schedule for Grades K-12

[Reportable Diseases and Conditions](#)