



Advancing Colorado's health and protecting the places we live, learn, work

and play

## Dear parents/guardians of students attending Colorado kindergarten - 12<sup>th</sup> grade schools for the 2024-25 school year:

We know there's nothing more important than making sure your children stay healthy and learning all year long. Getting vaccinated is an important part of keeping kids in school, as it prevents them from catching and spreading diseases that can make them sick. This letter includes important information about Colorado's school vaccine requirements, as well as other resources.

### Required and recommended vaccines

Colorado law requires students who attend a public, private, or parochial kindergarten - 12th grade school to be vaccinated against many of the diseases vaccines can prevent, unless a Certificate of Exemption is filed. For more information, visit [cdphe.colorado.gov/schoolrequiredvaccines](https://cdphe.colorado.gov/schoolrequiredvaccines).

To attend school, your child must be vaccinated against:

- Polio (IPV)
- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTaP, Tdap)
- Hepatitis B (HepB)
- Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)
- Varicella (chickenpox)

Colorado follows recommendations set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices](#). This committee is a group of medical and public health experts who study vaccines and recommend them for the public. **Before starting kindergarten**, students must receive their final doses of DTaP, IPV, MMR, and varicella. **Before starting sixth grade**, students must receive one dose of Tdap vaccine, even if the student is age 10. View recommended vaccine schedules at: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/child-easyread.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/child-easyread.html) (birth through 6 years) or [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/adolescent-easyread.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/adolescent-easyread.html) (7 to 18 years).

CDC also recommends vaccines for COVID-19, hepatitis A (HepA), human papillomavirus (HPV), influenza (flu), and meningococcal disease (MenACWY and MenB) for the K-12 population, but these are not required for school entry in Colorado.

This recommended schedule is safe and effective. It's based on how your child's immune system responds to vaccines at various ages, and how likely your child is to be exposed to a particular disease.

### Exclusion from school

Your child may be excluded if their school does not have an up-to-date Certificate of Immunization, Certificate of Exemption, or an in-process plan on file for your child.

If someone is sick or there is an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease at your child's school, and your child has not received the vaccine for that disease, they may be excluded from school activities. That could mean lost learning time for them and lost work and wages for you. For example, if your child has not received a MMR vaccine, they may need to stay home from school for 21 days after someone gets sick with measles.

### Have questions?

Talk with a health care provider or your local public health agency to ask questions and find out which vaccines your child needs. Find a vaccine provider at [cdphe.colorado.gov/get-vaccinated](https://cdphe.colorado.gov/get-vaccinated). Read about the safety and importance of vaccines at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/FAQs.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/FAQs.html), [childvaccineco.org](https://childvaccineco.org), [immunizeforgood.com](https://immunizeforgood.com), and [cdphe.colorado.gov/immunization-education](https://cdphe.colorado.gov/immunization-education).

Staying up to date on routine immunizations is important for adults as well as children. It's never too late for families to get back on track! Learn more at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/index.html).

### Paying for vaccinations

If you need help finding free or low-cost vaccines, go to [COVax4Kids.org](https://COVax4Kids.org), contact your local public health agency ([cdphe.colorado.gov/find-your-local-public-health-agency](https://cdphe.colorado.gov/find-your-local-public-health-agency)), or dial [2-1-1](https://2-1-1) for information on Health First Colorado (Medicaid) and vaccine clinics in your area.

### Vaccination records

Share your child's updated Certificate of Immunization with their school every time they receive a vaccine.

Need to find your student's vaccine record? It may be available from the [Colorado Immunization Information System \(CIIS\)](#). Visit [COVaxRecords.org](https://COVaxRecords.org) for more information, including directions on how to view and print your student's vaccine record.

### Exemptions

If your student cannot get vaccines for [medical reasons](#), you must submit a Certificate of Medical Exemption to your school,

signed by an advanced practice nurse (APN), physician (MD, DO), or physician assistant (PA) licensed to practice in any state or territory in the United States. You only need to submit this certificate once, unless your student's school or information changes. Get the form at [cdphe.colorado.gov/vaccine-exemptions](http://cdphe.colorado.gov/vaccine-exemptions).

If you choose not to have your student vaccinated according to Colorado's school vaccine requirements for nonmedical reasons, you must submit a Certificate of Nonmedical Exemption to your school. Nonmedical exemptions must be submitted on an annual basis. There are two ways to obtain a nonmedical exemption.

1. Submit the Certificate of Nonmedical Exemption *signed by* an advanced practice nurse (APN), pharmacist, physician (MD, DO), physician assistant (PA), or registered nurse (RN), licensed in Colorado, or
2. Submit the Certificate of Nonmedical Exemption you will be able to access upon completion of the state's Online Immunization Education Module.

Find certificates and the Online Immunization Education Module at [cdphe.colorado.gov/vaccine-exemptions](http://cdphe.colorado.gov/vaccine-exemptions).

#### How's your school doing on vaccinations?

Annually, schools must report immunization and exemption numbers (but not student names or birthdates) to the state health department. Schools do not control their specific immunization and exemption rates or establish the Vaccinated Children Standard described in [§25-4-911, CRS](#).

Your child's school's immunization rates from the 2022-23 school year. Find previous years' data at <a href="http://COVaxRates.org">COVaxRates.org</a> .		
School name	2022-23 MMR immunization rate (required)	2022-23 MMR exemption rate (required)
Wheat Ridge High School	95.97%	0.76%
Schools may choose to include rates for other school-required vaccines		
Vaccinated Children Standard 95% immunization rate for all school-required vaccines	2022-23 DTaP immunization rate	2022-23 DTaP exemption rate
	2022-23 Tdap immunization rate (for grades 6-12)	2022-23 Tdap exemption rate (for grades 6-12)
	2022-23 HepB immunization rate	2022-23 HepB exemption rate
	2022-23 Polio immunization rate	2022-23 Polio exemption rate
	2022-23 varicella immunization rate	2022-23 varicella exemption rate

