
Immunization Guidelines from ODH

ESC Nursing Services

Immunizations protect not only each individual student but the entire school community, including students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons. When vaccination rates fall, preventable diseases can spread quickly through a school. If an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs, students who are not immunized — including those with exemptions on file — may be excluded from school for the duration of the outbreak at the direction of the health department, as permitted under Ohio law (ORC 3313.671). Keeping immunization records current is the best way to avoid disruption to a student's education.

Ohio Requirements (ORC 3313.671)

- No student may remain in school for more than 14 days after initial entry or the start of the school year without written evidence of the required immunizations (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, varicella, and meningococcal disease at ODH-recommended ages), unless the student is in the process of being immunized or has a valid exemption on file.
- Recognized exemptions: medical contraindication certified by a physician, parent/guardian statement declining for reasons of conscience (including religious convictions), and documented history of natural disease for rubeola, mumps, or chicken pox.
- Students "in the process" of being immunized must provide evidence of each subsequent dose at the intervals prescribed by the ODH Director; a student who does not follow the interval schedule must be excluded on the 15th day of the following school year and may return once evidence of progress is provided.
- ODH sets the required immunization schedule (including the Tdap and meningococcal requirements for 7th grade) and requires schools to report immunization compliance data annually.

Nurse Responsibilities

- Maintain accurate immunization records for every student and verify them against ODH requirements, using ImpactSIS and building health records.
- Identify students who are non-compliant or missing records, and notify parents/guardians of what is needed and by when.
- Track students who are "in the process" and follow up on required dose intervals.
- Review and file exemption documentation.
- Provide the building principal with the list of students subject to exclusion, and complete the annual ODH immunization report.

Building Administrator Responsibilities

- Ensure immunization records are requested at enrollment and support the 14-day timeline.
- Enforce exclusion of non-compliant students as required by ORC 3313.671, in coordination with the nurse's exclusion list.
- Communicate with families as needed to support compliance, and readmit students promptly when evidence is provided.

If you have questions about a specific student or situation, please reach out to your building nurse.

For additional guidance on ODH immunization requirements, the district may also contact:

Kelly A. Smith, BSN, RN, LSN

ODH Region 2 Northeast Ohio School Nurse Consultant

Kelly.Smith@odh.ohio.gov | 380.215.2284 (cell: 614.961.0605)

Our Goal

The goal of ESC Nursing Services is to provide a safe and healthy environment for all students and staff. Keeping students current on required immunizations — through accurate records, timely family communication, and coordination with ODH — is one of the ways we keep our schools healthy and our students learning.

Barbie Ferrell, BSN, RN, NCSN

Director of Nursing Services, Educational Service Center of Medina County

bferrell@medinaesc.org | 330-723-6393 ext. 601534
