



February 15, 2019

To Whom it May Concern:

Please review the South Carolina Immunization Requirements for Childcare and School for the 2019-2020 school year. Included you will find general guidance and specific requirements for childcare and school attendance.

Childcare and school immunization requirements are minimum requirements. Several other vaccines are recommended for all children but are not required. We encourage you to recommend all age-appropriate vaccines for children.

Changes for the 2019-2020 School Year:

5th grade has been added to the requirement for (2) doses of varicella. A child with a positive history of the disease is considered immune and is exempt from this requirement.

7th grade has been added to the requirement for three (3) doses of oral and/or inactivated polio vaccine with at least one (1) dose received on or after the fourth birthday.

The requirement for measles, mumps and rubella vaccination has been updated to refer to MMR vaccine, as it is the only available vaccine in the US. Requirements are: 1 dose of MMR vaccine on or after the first birthday for childcare and 2 doses of MMR vaccine on or after the first birthday for school.

A new Hepatitis A vaccine requirement for childcare will begin July 1, 2020, and will begin for 5K with the 2020-2021 school year.

- Childcare: 2 doses of Hepatitis A vaccine with both doses received on or after the first birthday and separated by at least 6 months for any child born on or after January 1, 2019.
- School: 2 doses of Hepatitis A vaccine with both doses received on or after the first birthday and separated by at least 6 months for 5K and an additional grade added each school year.

Doses documented on the SC Certificate of Immunization must be valid according to accepted practice standards. DHEC supports the provision of all Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended vaccines according to current ACIP schedules, recommendations and CDC General Best Practice Guidelines for Immunization.

We appreciate your continuing efforts to protect South Carolina children from vaccine-preventable diseases. Any questions may be directed to DHEC's Immunization Division at 800-277-4687 or immunize@dhec.sc.gov.

Sincerely,

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General Guidance for South Carolina Immunization Requirements

A valid South Carolina Certificate of Immunization for all enrolled children, 3 months of age and older, must be maintained by public and private childcare facilities (as defined in SC Code of Laws Section 63-13-20); public, private, and parochial schools, grades kindergarten through 12th grade; and child development programs under the control of the Department of Education.

[South Carolina state law](#) requires a valid SC Certificate of Immunization or valid exemption. Children without a valid certificate or exemption will not be allowed to attend childcare and/or school. Failure to comply with this law may result in audits and/or legal action.

Doses documented on the immunization certificate must be valid doses according to accepted practice standards for the [minimum age\(s\) and intervals](#), as well as all [ACIP vaccine specific recommendations](#) and [CDC General Best Practice Guidelines for Immunization](#).

For unvaccinated or incompletely vaccinated children, refer to currently published ACIP Catch-Up Schedule for number of doses necessary to complete the vaccine series and meet the requirement.

Pursuant to Section 44-29-180, South Carolina Code of Laws, and South Carolina Regulation 61-8, students may be exempt from these immunization requirements for the following reasons:

Medical Exemption: The Medical Exemption section of the SC Certificate of Immunization should only be completed when a child has a permanent or temporary medical reason for exclusion from receipt of vaccine(s). The Medical Exemption section must be completed by a licensed Physician (MD or DO) or his/her authorized representative (e.g. Physician's Assistant or Advanced Practice Registered Nurse). For temporary medical exemptions, an expiration date in the future is documented when next immunizations are due.

Religious Exemption: A religious exemption may be granted to any student whose parents, parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis signs the appropriate section of the South Carolina Certificate of Religious Exemption stating that one or more immunizations conflicts with their religious beliefs. The South Carolina Certificate of Religious Exemption can only be obtained from a DHEC health department. The parent or guardian must sign the DHEC form in the presence of a notary.

Special Exemptions: A SC Certificate of Special Exemption may be issued by the school to a student that has been unable to secure immunizations or documentation of immunizations already received. This exemption is only valid for 30 calendar days for the current enrollment and may be issued only once.

Resources:

ACIP vaccine recommendations: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/index.html>

ACIP schedules <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/index.html>

CDC General Best Practice Guidelines for Immunization:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/general-recs/index.html>

Minimum ages and intervals

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/A/age-interval-table.pdf>

South Carolina Immunization Requirements for Childcare 2019-2020

The following minimum requirements are necessary for childcare. These requirements will be effective as of July 1, 2019. This includes preschool attendance for 4K programs and younger. A SC Certificate of Immunization with an expiration date is acceptable to allow for age-appropriate completion of vaccination series. No child can attend childcare or preschool for more than 30 days past the expiration date of the certificate.

Vaccine	Requirement
Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis	Four (4) doses of any combination of DTP, DT, or DTaP vaccine
Polio	Three (3) doses of any combination of oral or inactivated polio vaccine
Haemophilus influenza Type b (Hib)	Current, age-appropriate Hib vaccination according to the currently published immunization schedule. For children 15-59 months of age who have not yet completed age-appropriate Hib vaccination, one (1) dose of Hib vaccine at or after 15 months of age is required. Hib vaccine is not required for children 5 years of age and older.
Measles, Mumps and Rubella	One (1) dose of MMR vaccine received on or after the first birthday
Hepatitis B	Three (3) doses of hepatitis B vaccine with the third dose received ≥ 24 weeks of age and at least 16 weeks after the first dose
Varicella	One (1) dose of varicella vaccine received on or after the first birthday or positive history of disease
Pneumococcal	Current, age-appropriate pneumococcal vaccination according to the currently published immunization schedule. For children aged 24-59 months who have not yet completed any age-appropriate pneumococcal vaccination, one (1) dose of PCV13 on or after the 2nd birthday is required. Pneumococcal vaccine is not required for children 5 years of age and older.

Please note: Children enrolled in grade 5K or greater and enrolled in a childcare facility (e.g., after school and/or summer program) must meet school immunization requirements and have a valid SC Certificate of Immunization on file at the childcare and school facility.

Pursuant to Section 44-29-180, South Carolina Code of Laws, "...no owner or operator of a public or private childcare facility as defined in Section 63-13-20 may...enroll or retain a child or person who cannot produce satisfactory evidence of having been vaccinated or immunized so often as directed by the Department of Health and Environmental Control. Records of vaccinations or immunizations must be maintained by the institution, school or day care facility to which the child or person has been admitted."

South Carolina Immunization Requirements for School 2019-2020

The following minimum immunization requirements are necessary for a child to be admitted to any public, private, or parochial school, grades 5K-12:

Vaccine	Grade	Grade Level Requirement
Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis	5K-12	Four (4) doses of any combination of DTP, DT, DTaP, Td, or Tdap vaccine with at least one (1) dose received on or after the fourth birthday
Tdap Booster	7-12	One (1) dose of Tdap vaccine received on or after the 7 th birthday This dose of Tdap may be included as one of the doses needed to meet the requirement for Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis.
Polio	5K-7	Three (3) doses of oral and/or inactivated polio vaccine with at least one (1) dose received on or after the fourth birthday
	8-12	Three (3) doses of oral and/or inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) with at least one (1) dose received on or after the 4 th birthday OR four (4) doses of oral and/or inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) before 4 th birthday (if all doses separated by at least 4 weeks) Follow CDC recommendations for students 18 years of age and older
Measles, Mumps and Rubella	5K - 12	Two (2) doses of MMR vaccine with both doses received on or after the first birthday and separated by at least 4 weeks
Hepatitis B	5K - 12	Three (3) doses of hepatitis B vaccine, with the third dose received ≥ 24 weeks of age and at least 16 weeks after the first dose
Varicella	5K - 5	Two (2) doses of varicella vaccine with both doses received on or after the first birthday and separated by at least 4 weeks or a positive history of disease.
	6-12	One (1) dose of varicella vaccine received on or after the first birthday or positive history of disease

Please note:

- Children enrolled in 4K programs and younger must meet Childcare Requirements, even if attendance is in a school setting.
- Children enrolled in 5K through Grade 12 must meet School Requirements.

Pursuant to Section 44-29-180, South Carolina Code of Laws, and South Carolina Regulation 61-8, "no superintendent of an institution of learning, no school board or principal of a school...may...enroll or retain a child or person who cannot produce satisfactory evidence of having been vaccinated or immunized so often as directed by the Department of Health and Environmental Control.... Records of vaccinations or immunizations must be maintained by the institution, school or day care facility to which the child or person has been admitted."



FAQs: New Hepatitis A Vaccine Childcare and School Requirement for 2020-2021 School Year

What is hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a virus that causes serious liver infection and can spread from person to person. It can cause symptoms like fever, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain and jaundice (skin or eyes look yellow). Children under 6 years old often have no symptoms.

What do I need to know about the hepatitis A vaccine?

Children need 2 doses of the hepatitis A vaccine for full protection. The first dose is given as early as age 12 months and the second dose is given at least 6 months later. The vaccine is safe and highly effective at preventing hepatitis A infections.

Why a new requirement for hepatitis A vaccine?

Vaccination requirements for child care and school aged children promote higher rates of vaccination coverage, an important need given increasing reports of vaccine preventable disease outbreaks. Many states are experiencing years-long hepatitis A outbreaks, and South Carolina is now seeing increases in hepatitis A cases. Vaccinating children against hepatitis A virus can help stop hepatitis A spread in communities, and also prevent future outbreaks.

What children will be required to get the vaccine under the new requirement?

- Childcare: Any child born on or after January 1, 2019
- School: Any child starting 5K in the 2020-2021 school year

When does the new requirement start?

- Childcare: effective July 1, 2020
- School: effective for the 2020-2021 school year. Each school year an additional grade levels will be added to the requirement.

How many children in South Carolina have had the hepatitis A vaccine?

Data from the CDC shows that about 85% of children under age 3 have had 1 dose of hepatitis A vaccine and almost 60% have had 2 doses.

Where can children get the hepatitis A vaccine?

Children can get hepatitis A vaccine and other vaccines from their health care provider or local health department. For a DHEC appointment, call 855-472-3432.

Where can parents/guardians get more information?

Parents/guardians should talk to their child's health care provider or local health department. To learn more, go to: [cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/)

Hepatitis A and the Vaccine (Shot) to Prevent It

Last updated August 2018

The best way to protect against hepatitis A is by getting the hepatitis A vaccine. Doctors recommend that all children get the vaccine.

Why should my child get the hepatitis A shot?

The hepatitis A shot:

- Protects your child against hepatitis A, a potentially serious disease.
- Protects other people from the disease because children under 6 years old with hepatitis A usually don't have symptoms, but they often pass the disease to others without anyone knowing they were infected.
- Keeps your child from missing school or child care (and keeps you from missing work to care for your sick child).

Is the hepatitis A shot safe?

The hepatitis A vaccine is very safe, and it is effective at preventing the hepatitis A disease. Vaccines, like any medicine, can have side effects. These are usually mild and go away on their own.

What are the side effects?

The most common side effects are usually mild and last 1 or 2 days. They include the following:

- Sore arm from the shot
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Fever
- Loss of appetite (not wanting to eat)

What is hepatitis A?

Hepatitis A is a serious liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus. Children with the virus often don't

have symptoms, but they often pass the disease to others, including their unvaccinated parents or caregivers. These individuals can get very sick.

What are the symptoms of hepatitis A?

Children under 6 years old often have no symptoms.

Older children and adults feel very sick and weak.

Symptoms usually appear 2 to 6 weeks after a person gets the virus. The symptoms may include the following:

- Fever
- Loss of appetite (not wanting to eat)
- Tiredness
- Stomach pain
- Vomiting
- Dark urine
- Yellow skin and eyes



Doctors recommend that your child get two doses of the hepatitis A shot for best protection. He or she should get the first dose at 12 through 23 months. He or she will need the second dose 6 months after the last dose.

Is it serious?

Older children, adolescents and adults often feel sick and symptoms can last for up to 6 months. There is no specific treatment for hepatitis A. Some people with hepatitis A get so sick that they need care in the hospital.

How does hepatitis A spread?

Hepatitis A virus is found in the stool (poop) of a person who has the virus. It spreads when a person puts something in his or her mouth that has the hepatitis A virus on it. Even if the item looks clean, it can still have virus on it that can spread to others. The amount of stool can be so tiny that it cannot be seen with the naked eye. You can get it by touching objects such as doorknobs or diapers or eating food that has the virus on it.

Where can I learn more about the hepatitis A vaccine and my child?

To learn more about the hepatitis A vaccine, talk to your child's doctor, call 1-800-CDC-INFO or visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents.