

Childcare Provider Information for Minnesota's Immunization Law

Minnesota law requires that all licensed childcare and early childhood program providers help make sure young children are immunized against serious diseases. A number of childhood diseases, like measles, pertussis (whooping cough), and varicella (chickenpox), can still spread rapidly among children who haven't received the proper shots.

These diseases can cause serious illness, brain damage, and even death. If a parent enrolls a child in your facility or program who is not appropriately immunized, you cannot admit that child until they have received the minimum shots required by law or filed a medical or non-medical exemption. Children who have not had all their shots are at risk of serious illness. They also pose a risk to the health of other children in your care.

Immunization requirements

Childcare and early childhood program providers must have records on file showing that each child 2 months of age and older has been appropriately immunized against certain diseases or has a medical or non-medical exemption. These diseases include diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, Hib (*Haemophilus influenzae* type b), hepatitis A and B, chickenpox, and pneumococcal disease. Rotavirus and flu vaccines are recommended for all infants and young children, but they are not required. Visit [Vaccines for Infants, Children, and Adolescents \(www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/kids.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/kids.html) to see immunization schedules.

Documentation you must have on file at your facility or program

All parents or legal guardians of children in your care need to submit immunization documentation or a medical or non-medical exemption. We suggest you give parents the MDH Childcare or Early Childhood Program Immunization Form found on [Vaccines for Infants, Children, and Adolescents \(www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/kids.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/kids.html). These forms will help you collect all required information. Make sure parents follow all instructions on the forms including obtaining the correct signatures. Keeping good records is important. The childcare licenser from the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) will review these forms during a site visit.

In addition, all Rule 3 facilities must complete a "Childcare Immunization Report" by December 1 each year, which summarizes the immunization status of enrolled children. The summary report is not required for Rule 2, early childhood programs or "drop-in" centers.

How to keep track of shots children at your facility or program receive

The Minnesota Immunization Information Connection (MIIC) is a statewide, confidential system that stores immunization histories and helps ensure correct and timely immunizations. Minnesota childcares can use MIIC to find immunization records for children at their facilities.

- **Childcare Center License (DCYF Rule 3)** licensed childcare centers can access MIIC directly to look up immunization records. You can also use MIIC to complete your annual Childcare Immunization

Report. Contact the MIIC Help Desk at health.miichelp@state.mn.us for assistance or visit [MIIC and Childcare Resources \(www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/train/childcareres.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/train/childcareres.html).

- **Family Childcare and Group Family Childcare License (DCYF Rule 2)** licensed childcares can request immunization records through the MIIC Help Desk at health.miichelp@state.mn.us with your DCYF license number.

Tips for childcare and early childhood program providers

Not only is it the law, it's also one of the most important things we can do to protect children from serious illness.

As a licensed childcare or early childhood program provider, you play a key role in ensuring that the children you care for receive the life-saving protection of shots. Making sure that all students have their shots will reduce the likelihood of an outbreak occurring in your center. When outbreaks occur, children who are not immunized often have to remain out of childcare for many days. Extended absences can lead to disruptions to the child's education and development.

Tips:

- Document each child's immunizations or a medical or non-medical exemption before they enroll.
- Keep track of dates when each child's shots are due so you can be sure they complete them. Give parents regular reminders, such as when children move from the infant to toddler room. MIIC, the state immunization information system, can help with this.
- Keep an immunization schedule at your center. Find one on [Vaccines for Infants, Children, and Adolescents \(www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/kids.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/kids.html). Be sure to get an updated version each year because the schedule does change often.

Children who do not have documentation for all required immunizations

Children who have not received all required immunizations have 18 months from their initial enrollment date to complete them or get a medical or non-medical exemption. You should exclude a child from your facility or program if they do not have complete documentation after 18 months.

To avoid this, make sure the immunization records you have on file for each child are up to date, and regularly remind parents when shots are due.

Children who do not have to be immunized before attending childcare or early childhood programs

- Children with a medical reason for not receiving a shot or who are immune to a disease must submit a signed statement from their doctor.
- Children whose parents' or legal guardians' personal beliefs prohibit them from allowing their children to receive any or all immunizations must submit a signed, notarized statement to that effect.

- Children in the following special living situations are allowed to enroll without showing immunization records because of federal policy:
 - Homeless.
 - In foster care.
 - Waiting to be placed in foster care. Visit [Immunization Requirement for Homeless and Foster Children \(www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/ed/homeless.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/ed/homeless.html).

For parents who are concerned about the cost of shots

Children who do not have health insurance or whose insurance does not cover the cost of vaccines can get free or low-cost shots. Get more information on [Free or Low-Cost Shots for Children \(www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/howpay.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/howpay.html).

More information

- [Immunization \(www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/index.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/index.html)
- [Find a local or tribal health department or community health board \(www.health.state.mn.us/communities/practice/connect/findlph.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/practice/connect/findlph.html)
- The requirements different for “drop-in” childcare centers. For more information, call 651-201-5503.

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651-201-5503 or 1-800-657-3970
health.childcare@state.mn.us
www.health.state.mn.us/immunize

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To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5414.