



## NJ Department of Health Vaccine Preventable Disease Program

New Jersey Minimum Immunization Requirements for Kindergarten-Grade 12 Attendance  
N.J.A.C. 8:57-4 Immunization of Pupils in School

### Guide for checking compliance

Step 1: Each child attending/enrolling must present proof of immunity or valid medical or religious exemption to vaccines. In order to allow a child to enter school, he/she must have at least one dose of each age-appropriate required vaccine.

Step 2: Determine child's present grade level.

Step 3: Compare the child's record with the requirements listed on the chart below.

Grade/level child enters school:	Minimum Number of Doses for Each Vaccine						
	DTaP Diphtheria, Tetanus, acellular Pertussis	Polio Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV)	MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)	Varicella (Chickenpox)	Hepatitis B	Meningococcal	Tdap (Tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis)
<b>Kindergarten – 1<sup>st</sup> grade</b>	A total of 4 doses with one of these doses on or after the 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday <u>OR</u> any 5 doses*	A total of 3 doses with one of these doses given on or after the 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday <u>OR</u> any 4 doses*	2 doses <sup>†</sup>	1 dose <sup>§</sup>	3 doses	None	None
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	3 doses <i>NOTE: Children 7 years of age and older, who have not been previously vaccinated with the primary DTaP series, should receive 3 doses of Tetanus, diphtheria (Td)</i>	3 doses	2 doses	1 dose	3 doses	None	None
<b>6<sup>th</sup> grade and higher</b>	3 doses	3 doses	2 doses	1 dose required for children born on or after 1/1/98 <sup>§</sup>	3 doses <sup>¶</sup>	1 dose required for children born on or after 1/1/97 <u>given no earlier than ten years of age</u> <sup>**</sup>	1 dose required for children born on or after 1/1/97 <sup>**</sup>

Additional vaccines are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The chart above lists only the vaccines that are required for school attendance in NJ. For the complete CDC Recommended Immunization Schedule, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html>.

\* **DTaP:** Children who previously attended child care/preschool should have received 4 doses since the requirement to receive the fourth birthday booster dose (5<sup>th</sup> dose) does not apply until the child attends Kindergarten. However, if one of these 4 doses was given after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, this child will not need an additional dose for Kindergarten. Children will need 5 doses if all doses were administered prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday in order to enter Kindergarten.

**Polio:** Children who previously attended child care/preschool should have 3 doses since the requirement to receive the fourth birthday booster dose (4<sup>th</sup> dose) does not apply until the child attends Kindergarten. However, if one of these 3 doses was given after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, this child will not need an additional dose for Kindergarten.

Children will need 4 doses if all doses were administered prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday.

† A child is required to receive two doses of measles, one dose of mumps, and one dose of rubella once he/she enters Kindergarten. Since single antigen (separate components of the vaccine) is not readily available, most children will have two MMR vaccines.

The Antibody Titer Law (Holly's Law, NJSA 26:2N-8-11), passed on January 14, 2004, requires the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) to accept serologic evidence of protective immunity to measles, mumps and rubella in lieu of the second ACIP recommended measles, mumps and rubella vaccine. For more information, please visit [http://nj.gov/health/cd/documents/antibody\\_titer\\_law.pdf](http://nj.gov/health/cd/documents/antibody_titer_law.pdf).

§ Varicella vaccine is only required for children born on or after January 1, 1998. A child will not have to receive the varicella vaccine if he/she previously had chickenpox as long as a parent can provide the school with one of the following: 1. Documented laboratory evidence showing immunity (protection) from chickenpox, 2. A physician's written statement that the child previously had chickenpox, or 3. A parent's written statement that the child previously had chickenpox.

¶ Two doses of hepatitis B vaccine is acceptable if child received the vaccine between 11 – 15 years of age AND vaccine is identified as Adolescent Formulation. Children who present documented laboratory evidence of hepatitis B disease or immunity, shall not be required to receive hepatitis B vaccine.

\*\* Tdap and Meningococcal vaccines are required for all entering 6<sup>th</sup> graders who are 11 years of age or older; 6th graders < 11 years must receive Tdap and meningococcal vaccines once age 11 is reached.

## Technical Guidance for Immunization Record Auditing

### Exemptions

#### **Q: What should be included in an acceptable religious exemption?**

A: A religious exemption is not the same as a philosophical, moral or conscientious exemption. A religious exemption does not have to include the name of the religion, nor does it need to be notarized nor does it need to be signed by a religious leader. It can be filed by a parent or guardian of a minor or by an adult individual. All schools, child care centers, and local health officers may be advised that the religious exemption extends to private, parochial, and public institutions. When a parent or guardian submits their written religious exemption to immunization, which contains some religious reference, those persons charged with implementing administrative rules at N.J.A.C. 8:57-4.4, should not question whether the parent's professed religious statement or stated belief is reasonable, acceptable, sincere and bona fide. In practice, if the written statement contains the word "religion" or "religious" or some reference thereto, then the statement should be accepted and the religious exemption of mandatory immunization(s) granted. Please note, religious-affiliated schools cannot be challenged on their decision.

#### **Q: What is a medical exemption?**

A: Only a physician licensed to practice medicine/osteopathic medicine and a nurse practitioner can write a medical exemption. A medical exemption must indicate a specific period of time in which the child cannot receive specific vaccinations. Reason(s) for medical contraindication must be enumerated by the ACIP and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Precautions to receiving a vaccine are not contraindications but a provider must take into consideration. Please see the following link to view the "Guide to Vaccine Contraindications and Precautions": <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/vac-admin/contraindications-vacc.htm>.

#### **Q: Can unvaccinated children be excluded from school during a vaccine preventable disease outbreak?**

A: Yes. Children without proof of immunity as defined by ACIP, including those with medical and religious exemptions, may be excluded from a school, preschool, or child care facility during a vaccine preventable disease outbreak or threatened outbreak as determined by the Commissioner, Department of Health or his or her designee. In addition, anybody having control of a school may, on account of the prevalence of any communicable disease, or to prevent the spread of communicable disease, prohibit the attendance of any teacher or pupil of any school under their control and specify the time during which the teacher or scholar shall remain away from school. The Department of Health shall provide guidance to the school of the appropriateness of any such prohibition.

### Immunization Compliance

#### **Q: Can lab evidence of immunity (titers/blood tests) be used to prove immunity so that children do not need to receive vaccines?**

A: Serologic evidence of immunity (titer testing) is only accepted as proof of immunity when no vaccination documentation can be provided or prior history is questionable. It cannot be used in lieu of receiving the vaccinations required for attendance in NJ schools, preschools, and child care centers. The Antibody Titer law is an exception to this rule (See "*What is the Antibody Titer Law*"?)

**Please Note: Serologic tests are not available for all vaccines. A list of ACIP approved serologic tests for school immunization requirements is available in the NJ Immunization Requirements Frequently Asked Questions.**

#### **Q: What is the Antibody Titer Law?**

A: The Antibody Titer Law (Holly's Law, NJSA 26:2N-8-11), passed on January 14, 2004, requires the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) to accept serologic evidence of protective immunity to measles, mumps and rubella in lieu of the second ACIP recommended measles, mumps and rubella vaccine. For more information, please visit [http://nj.gov/health/cd/documents/antibody\\_titer\\_law.pdf](http://nj.gov/health/cd/documents/antibody_titer_law.pdf).

**Q: Is it acceptable for a child to receive single antigen measles, mumps, rubella vaccines rather than MMR vaccine?**

A: Single antigen measles, mumps, and/or rubella vaccine is no longer produced for the U.S. market but it may still be available in foreign countries. A child is required to receive two doses of measles, one dose of mumps, and one dose of rubella once he/she enters Kindergarten. Since single antigen vaccine is not readily available, most children will have two MMR vaccines.

**Grace Periods and Provisional Admission**

**Q: Can you please explain the Four-Day Grace Period?**

A: All vaccines administered less than or equal to 4 days before either the specified minimum age or dose spacing intervals shall be counted as valid and shall not require revaccination in order to enter or remain in a school, preschool, or child care facility. Please note that ACIP does not recommend applying the four-day grace period for the dose spacing interval between two live vaccines. However, for auditing purposes, this will be acceptable.

**Q: How do I determine the minimum dose spacing intervals between vaccinations?**

A: NJ follows CDC/ACIP Recommend Catch-Up Immunization Schedule. Please see the following link for guidance:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/child/catchup-schedule-pr.pdf>.

**Q: Can you please explain the 30-day grace period?**

A: Students entering a NJ school from out of state or out of country are allowed up to 30 days to provide proof of immunization history before their provisional status begins.

**Please review the following scenarios for further clarification:**

If after the 30 days have elapsed and no documentation of previous vaccination is provided; the child may not attend school until one dose of all age-appropriate required vaccines are received before being provisionally admitted.

If schools are notified within the 30 days that documentation cannot be provided; the child may continue attending school since the 30 days have not elapsed. However, it is the responsibility of the school nurse or person in charge of the school to inform the parents that their child must receive one dose of all age-appropriate required vaccines before provisional status begins. Please reference below for clarification of provisional admission.

**Q: To whom does the 30-Day Grace Period apply?**

A: According to the New Jersey immunization regulations, the 30-day grace period only applies to transfer students, coming from out of state/out of country. This does not apply to *in-state* transfer students.

**Q: What is Provisional Admission?**

A: Provisional admission allows a child to enter/attend school after having received a minimum of one dose of each of the required vaccines. Pupils must be actively in the process of completing the series and on schedule to receive subsequent doses as rapidly as medically feasible. A school nurse or school administrator shall review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled student every 30 days to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of vaccine(s).

**For the complete list of “NJ Immunization Requirements Frequently Asked Questions”, please visit <http://nj.gov/health/cd/imm.shtml>.**