



COLORADO

**Department of Public
Health & Environment**

August 2, 2019

Dear Parents of Incoming Kindergarten Students for the 2019-20 School Year:

Kindergarten starts soon, and we know you're thinking of all the things you need to do to make sure your child is ready. Getting vaccinated is an important part of their kindergarten readiness. Vaccinations keep your children from catching and spreading diseases that can make them sick.

If there is a disease outbreak or case in your child's school and they have not received the vaccine for that disease, they may be excluded from school until it is safe for them to return. That could mean lost learning time for them and lost work and wages for you. For example, if your child has not received an measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, they may be excluded from school for 21 days after the last exposure.

Please read on to find out what you need to know to keep your child protected.

Required and recommended vaccines

- Colorado law requires students who attend a public, private or parochial kindergarten through 12th grade school to be vaccinated against many of the diseases vaccines can prevent, unless you file an exemption. Vaccines required to enter kindergarten are:
 - Hepatitis B
 - Diphtheria, tetanus & pertussis (DTaP)
 - Polio (IPV)
 - Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)
 - Varicella (chickenpox)
- Colorado follows the number and spacing of vaccines set by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). In Colorado, students should receive their final DTaP, IPV, MMR and Varicella vaccinations before they start kindergarten.
- We recommend vaccines for hepatitis A and influenza, but they are not required for school.

Vaccination records

- Take your child's updated vaccination record to school every time they receive a vaccination so your school has the correct information.
- If you can't find their record, find out how to get one at www.COVaxRecords.org.



Paying for vaccinations

- If you need help finding free or low-cost vaccines and providers who give them, go to COVax4Kids.org, contact your local public health agency, or call the state health department's Family Health Line at 1-303-692-2229 or 1-800-688-7777. You can find your local public health agency at colorado.gov/cdphe/find-your-local-public-health-agency.

Exemptions

- If your child cannot get vaccines because of medical reasons, you must file a medical exemption with your school. The exemption must be signed by a health care provider licensed to give vaccines. You only need to submit this form once, unless your child's information or school changes. You can get the form at colorado.gov/vaccineexemption.
- If you choose not to have your child vaccinated for personal belief or religious reasons, you must file a non-medical exemption with your school. You need to submit non-medical exemptions annually. Find out how to file a non-medical exemption at colorado.gov/vaccineexemption.

How's your school doing on vaccinations?

Finally, a healthy school setting gives all students the best chance to learn and grow. You can find vaccination and exemption rates for your child's school at COVaxRates.org.

Starting kindergarten is such an exciting time, and we wish you and your child a healthy school year!

