



Date: August 15, 2025
To: Superintendents and Admitting Officials for Iowa Schools
From: Iowa Immunization Program
RE: School Immunization Requirements

The following provides information regarding school immunization requirements for students and the duty of the admitting officials to assure compliance with applicable Iowa administrative code.

Immunization Requirements

Iowa Code [139A.8](#) requires all students enrolling in an Iowa school to submit proof of immunizations to the admitting official using an Iowa Department of Health and Human Services Certificate of Immunization.

Documentation of a valid Certificate of Immunization Exemption (Religious or Medical) or Provisional Certificate of Immunization may be submitted in lieu of a Certificate of Immunization. Requirements for valid exemptions may be found in [139A.8](#) and Iowa Administrative Code [641-7](#). Refer to [House File 299](#) regarding immunization exemption communication requirements.

Immunization Certificates

The law authorizes medical and religious exemptions to immunizations and provides for provisional enrollment of a child for up to 60 calendar days if the child has begun the required immunizations. Iowa Code § [139A.8\(4\), \(5\)](#); [641 IAC 7.3, 7.7](#).

Medical Exemption

A medical exemption to immunization may be granted to a student when the required immunizations would be injurious to the health and well-being of the applicant or any member of the applicant's family or household or the required vaccine would violate minimum interval spacing.

Religious Exemption

A religious exemption to immunization may be granted when immunizations conflict with a genuine and sincere religious belief, and is not based merely on philosophical, scientific, moral, personal or medical opposition to immunizations. Religious exemptions should not be utilized to prevent truancy issues with students not presenting a valid immunization certificate to enroll in school.

Provisional Enrollment

A student may be provisionally enrolled if they have received at least one dose of each of the required vaccines, or they are a transfer student from another U.S. school system. In such cases, a provisional certificate must be issued for a medically feasible amount of time in which vaccines needed to qualify for a certificate of immunization can be administered, not to exceed 60 calendar days ([IAC 641-7.7\(2\)](#)). It is the responsibility of the applicant, parent or guardian to ensure the applicant receives all necessary immunizations during the provisional enrollment period and submit a certificate of immunization to the admitting official at the end of the provisional enrollment period ([IAC 641-7.7\(3\)](#)). If at the end of the 60 days, the applicant has not completed the required immunizations due to a minimum interval requirement, a new provisional certificate must be submitted to the admitting official. All provisional certificates must be maintained by the admitting official until a certificate of immunization has been submitted ([IAC 641-7.7\(6\)](#)).

At the end of a provisional enrollment period, if an enrollee has not submitted a certificate of immunization, the admitting official shall immediately exclude the applicant from the benefits, activities and opportunities of the school until the applicant submits a valid certificate of immunization ([IAC 641-7.7\(5\)](#)).

Compliance - Duty of Admitting Official

It is the duty of the admitting official to ensure a valid certificate is on file for each student in their schools (Iowa Administrative Code ([IAC 641-7.8\(1\)](#))). Applicants without proper evidence of immunization or exemption are not entitled to enrollment in an elementary or secondary school. It shall be the duty of the admitting official to deny enrollment to students who do not comply with requirements for proof of immunization or immunization exemption ([IAC 641-7.10](#)). This duty commences on the first day of a child's attendance at an elementary or secondary school and continues throughout the child's enrollment at such school.

Local public health departments are required to audit elementary and secondary school records annually to report the number of valid certificates on file ([IAC 641-7.8\(2\)](#)). Links to Iowa Code, chapter [139A.8](#), Iowa Administrative Code, and certificates of immunization are available at <https://hhs.iowa.gov/immunization>.

Please direct questions regarding immunization requirements to iowaimmunizationprogram@iowa.hhs.gov.