



Date: September 30, 2024

To: Superintendents and Admitting Officials for Iowa Schools

From: Bethany Kintigh RN, BSN, Immunization Program Manager

RE: School 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 or a provisional certificate, unless a valid certificate of religious or medical exemption has been submitted.

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.

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)).

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 Shelly Jensen, Nurse Consultant 1-800-831-6293 or Shelly.Jensen@hhs.iowa.gov.