

IMMUNIZATION OF SCHOOL PUPILS ACT (ISPA)

Key Facts for Primary Care Providers

WHAT IS ISPA?

A law in Ontario that requires students to be vaccinated against certain diseases to attend school. This includes elementary and secondary students in publicly funded and private schools.

Parents are required to report their child’s vaccinations to Public Health or provide a valid philosophical (statement of conscience) or medical exemption. This program protects individual students, keeps schools safe from outbreaks, and helps to maintain community immunity.

REQUIRED VACCINES

- Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (DTaP/Tdap)
- Polio
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
- Meningococcal disease (Men-C-C/Men-C-ACYW)
- Varicella (for children born in 2010 or later)



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What happens if a student does not report their records to Public Health or provide a valid exemption?

A: Students who have incomplete vaccine records with Public Health will receive at least two notifications requesting that they update their records prior to the start of the suspension period:

1. A Request for Vaccination Record notice
2. A Suspension Order

If students continue to have incomplete records they may be suspended from school for up to 20 days or until their records are brought up to date.

Notifications include a copy of the vaccine record on file with Public Health and state the disease(s) that the student requires vaccination against. For the specific vaccine antigen(s) required, please refer to the [Publicly Funded Immunization Schedule](#).

Q: Why would a student have incomplete vaccine records with Public Health?

A: Students may receive a Request for Vaccination Record notice or Suspension Order for one of the following reasons:

Possible Reason	Health Care Provider Action
They have received vaccines that have not been reported to Public Health for entry into the provincial database	Instruct the parent (or student if 16 years or older) to report vaccines to Public Health at regionofwaterloo.ca/vaccines
They are overdue for one or more vaccines according to the Publicly Funded Immunization Schedule	Book an appointment with the child and provide the required vaccine(s). After the appointment, instruct the parent (or student if 16 years or older) to report vaccines to Public Health at regionofwaterloo.ca/vaccines
One or more of their vaccinations is invalid (e.g. doses given too early or less than 28 days apart, or the wrong antigen was administered)	
They are unable to receive one or more required vaccines for medical reasons but do not have a valid medical exemption on file with Public Health	Book an appointment with the child and complete a Statement of Medical Exemption . Instruct the parent to submit the completed form to Public Health online at regionofwaterloo.ca/vaccines
They have chosen not to receive one or more required vaccines due to philosophical or religious reasons, but do not have a valid non-medical exemption on file with Public Health	Advise the parent (or student if 16 years or older), that to receive an exemption for non-medical reasons, they must complete an Immunization Education Session and submit a notarized Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief to Public Health. Details can be found at regionofwaterloo.ca/vaccines
Their submitted vaccine record and/or exemption form was processed after the Request for Vaccination Record notice or Suspension Order was sent	Once records have been processed, parents (or students if 16 years or older) will receive confirmation from Public Health that the record is now up to date for their age or if additional vaccines are required. Instruct the parent to refer to this email confirmation from Public Health and, if necessary, book an appointment to provide the required vaccine(s)

MORE QUESTIONS?

Visit the [Vaccine Information for Primary Care](#) webpage for information on publicly funded vaccines, resources to assist with assessing records, and vaccine ordering.