

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ADMISSION/ENTRY

1. What are the minimum immunization requirements for school entry?

To enroll in or attend a public, private, or parochial school in Idaho, children born after Sept. 1, 2005 must receive the following immunizations: 5 doses of DTaP, 4 Polio, 2 MMR, 3 Hepatitis B, 2 Hepatitis A, and 2 Varicella. Visit ImmunizeIdahoSchools.com for the school immunization requirements for children born on or before Sept. 1, 2005.

2. What are the 7th grade immunization requirements?

Children admitted to the 7th through 12th grade must meet the following minimum immunization requirements in addition to school entry requirements:

- (1) Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap) booster
- (1) Meningococcal vaccine

3. What must an immunization record include to be considered valid?

A valid immunization record must include the following information:

- a) the name of each required vaccine;
- b) the date (month/day/year) of each dose received;
- c) confirmation of all doses by a licensed health care professional (this could include records that are signed, stamped, on official letterhead or printed from an immunization registry such as IRIS).

4. How can a student be conditionally admitted to school?

To be eligible for conditional attendance, a child must have received at least one dose of each required vaccine and currently be on schedule for subsequent immunizations following the ACIP Accelerated Schedule.

5. Why aren't Tdap or Meningococcal on the School Conditional Admission form?

To enter the 7th grade, students are required to have one dose of Tdap and one dose of Meningococcal vaccine; because a child must have received at least one dose of each required vaccine to be eligible for conditional admission, Tdap and Meningococcal are not included on the Idaho Conditional Admission to School form.

6. Are transfer students required to provide immunization documentation before being admitted into a new school?

Yes. Before entry, all children transferring from one Idaho school to another or from schools outside Idaho to an Idaho school are required to provide the new school with the appropriate immunization information.

7. What about homeless students?

Homeless students are like any other student in your school. They are also required to have immunization records. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (re-authorized Dec. 2001) offers guidelines to assist you.

- a) The school selected shall immediately enroll the child/youth in school, even if the child or youth lacks records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency or other documentation [Sec. 722 (g)(3)(C)(i)].
- b) If a child or youth lacks immunizations or immunization records, the enrolling school must refer the parent/guardian to the liaison who shall help obtain necessary immunizations or immunization records [Sec. 722 (g)(3)(C)(iii)].



IRIS & CONSENT

1. What is IRIS?

IRIS (Idaho's Immunization Reminder Information System) is a statewide system designed to help families and healthcare providers keep track of immunization records. Schools can save time by using IRIS to look up and print copies of children's vaccination records.

2. How can I enroll in IRIS?

You can enroll in IRIS by completing the online enrollment form. To locate the form, please visit ImmunizeIdahoSchools.com and complete the following:

- a) Select the "School Request an IRIS Account" button on the left side of the screen.
- b) Fill out all required fields marked with an asterisk (*) and click Submit.
- c) Your request will be processed within 5 calendar days.

3. What should I do if I can't log into IRIS? I've tried logging in and I'm getting a Validation Error that says, "Your account is not active at this time. Please contact your administrator."

IRIS now has a password reset feature, allowing you to reset your own password. To reset your password, click on the "Forgot Password?" button in the left-hand menu when you go to the IRIS login screen. For additional assistance with logging into IRIS, e-mail the IRIS Help Desk at iris@dhw.idaho.gov.

4. I heard the Idaho Immunization Program will enter student immunization records into IRIS at no cost to my school – is this true?

Yes. Schools may fax student immunization records to the IRIS Help Desk at (208) 334-6590 to have the record entered into IRIS. Basic demographic information is needed to add students that are not already in IRIS. NOTE: It can take up to 28 days for healthcare providers to enter shot records into IRIS. Therefore, the Idaho Immunization Program cannot update records for children who received their shots within the past 28 days.

5. I am using IRIS to figure out which students have already gotten a dose of the Tdap booster and Meningococcal vaccine. Some parents have told me their children received Tdap, but I don't see this listed in IRIS. What do I do?

In IRIS, Tdap is listed separately as Td and Pertussis (which likely explains why you couldn't find Tdap on the child's record). When using IRIS to determine whether a student has received Tdap, look to see if a dose of Pertussis is listed in the History section of the IRIS record. If it is, Pertussis should also display as "Complete" in the Vaccines Recommended by Selected Tracking Schedule section at the bottom of the screen. Remember, Td alone does not meet the 7th grade Tdap requirement.

IMMUNIZATION RECORD REVIEW

1. A parent has a partial record and/or statement signed by a physician stating, "All doses received," "Complete," "Up To Date," "Primary series complete," or other similar statements. Can this be accepted as proof of immunization?

No. Statements regarding immunizations which do not contain complete dates for all doses received are NOT adequate for attendance. The parent should contact their health care provider and request a new record documenting all vaccinations and dates administered.

2. What criteria are used to determine if a student is in compliance with Idaho's school immunization requirements?

In order to determine if a child meets the Idaho school immunization requirements, the following must be considered:

- a) the student's age;



- b) whether the student’s immunization history indicates:
 - I. verification by a medical provider (healthcare provider signature, health clinic stamp, IRIS record).
 - II. month, day, and year each vaccine was administered.
 - III. sufficient spacing intervals between doses.

These variables make it difficult to describe all possible situations which a school might encounter in its efforts to maintain compliance with the regulations and limit the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases. If you have specific questions which cannot be answered by this guide, please contact the Idaho Immunization Program at (208) 334-6994.

3. A parent is adamant that his/her child has been vaccinated, but cannot provide written documentation. Can the child be admitted into school?

No. Children without immunization records cannot be admitted. It is the parent/guardian’s responsibility to have written documentation of each child’s immunization status. If the record cannot be located by the parent (or after checking IRIS), the child should be vaccinated in an age-appropriate manner with one dose of each required vaccine. The child may be “conditionally admitted,” and the facility has the responsibility to follow up to ensure that written records or additional vaccines are received according to schedule.

4. If a student already had 5 doses of DTaP before the age of 7 years, does he still need the Tdap booster required for 7th grade?

Yes, all students entering the 7th grade must receive the Tdap booster. Since some children in the 7th grade were born on or before September 1, 1999, they were only required to have 4 doses of DTaP for school entry in Idaho. Therefore, it is a common misconception that adolescents don’t need the Tdap booster if they received a 5th dose of DTaP before turning 7 years old.

5. What if a student already received a dose of Td, does s/he still need to receive the Tdap booster to meet the 7th grade requirement?

Yes, the student must still receive the Tdap booster. Td vaccine, invented before Tdap, protects persons 7 years and older against tetanus and diphtheria. Td vaccine does not protect against pertussis and so does not meet the 7th grade school Tdap requirement.

6. What if a child received a pertussis shot (Tdap or DTaP) before their 7th birthday?

Immunization before the 7th birthday does not fulfill the 7th grade school requirement for Tdap, even if given immediately before the 7th birthday.

7. Does the vaccine abbreviation or trade name on the student's record meet the Tdap requirement?

Meets 7 th Grade Requirements	Vaccine	When Given?
YES , meets the requirement	Tdap Adacel Boostrix DTaP or DTP*	Given on or after the 7 th birthday <i>*DTaP or DTP licensed and recommended for children younger than 7 years of age</i>
NO , does not meet the requirement	Td DT DTaP or DTP given before the 7 th birthday (usual age limit)	



8. What is the four-day grace period?

This time frame allows schools reviewing student records to apply a four-day grace period for a student who received doses of a vaccine too early. Four days is the limit – vaccine doses given up to four days before the minimum interval or age can be counted as valid. Doses given five days or earlier should not be counted as valid and should be repeated. The four-day grace period is not to be used to schedule future doses of vaccine. It is to be used with discretion and with the understanding it is for auditing purposes only.

9. When should immunization records be reviewed to determine those students who are not in compliance?

The time to first assess a child's immunization status is upon entry into a school. At that time, a "log" could be established to serve as a reminder about children needing additional doses of vaccine at a later date. This would provide the facility with an easy method to determine those students "not-in-compliance" based on their own system. IRIS also provides reports of those who need immunizations.

10. Why must vaccines be repeated if received before the minimum age or interval?

Children who receive vaccines before the minimum age or interval may not develop an adequate antibody response to the immunization. Therefore, even though a child physically received a "shot," it may have been ineffective in protecting the child against disease. By consistently maintaining the minimum age and interval requirements for all vaccines, children are more likely to develop adequate immunity.

11. What if a vaccine dose is considered invalid but the parent or healthcare provider insists the child is up-to-date?

Check IRIS to confirm that the dose is considered invalid. If so, schools may use the Notification of Invalid Vaccination form to notify parents that doses are invalid. This form gives healthcare providers the option to:

- a) revaccinate the child;
- b) provide laboratory proof of immunity; or
- c) sign a waiver that according to the physician's medical judgment, the invalid doses do not need to be repeated.

If this option is selected, the form must be signed by a physician and include a medical license number.

If any of these options are selected, the child may be considered as meeting school entry requirements for the invalid vaccine dose if a physician has completed and signed the Notification of Invalid Vaccination form. Maintain the completed form with the child's immunization record.

12. How does Idaho determine the required immunization schedule?

Idaho's school immunization requirements are based upon the "Recommended Childhood Immunization Schedule" published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This schedule is developed from the recommendations of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). The ACIP includes representatives from both the public health and the private medical sectors, including the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP).

13. Where can I order blue student health folders?

The Idaho Immunization Program supplies the blue student health folders at no cost to all schools. You may place a resource order online by visiting ImmunizeIdahoSchools.com and following these steps:

- a) Select "Resource Order Form" under Quick Links on the right-hand side of the screen.
- b) Select School & Childcare Resources and indicate the quantity of blue student folders you would like to order.
- c) Click Next. Complete the IIP Shipping Information form and click Submit.



EXEMPTIONS

1. Are there any allowable exemptions?

Idaho law allows a parent/guardian to claim an exemption from immunization requirements for their child for medical, religious, or other reasons. A medical exemption requires the signature of a licensed physician and certification that the child has a medical condition which prevents him or her from receiving required vaccinations. It is recommended that exemptions for religious or other reasons be documented on the form provided for school use by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Immunization Program and available at www.ImmunizeIdahoSchools.com. Parents may also claim a school immunization exemption by providing a signed written statement to school officials. Schools should maintain an up-to-date list of pupils with exemptions so they can be excluded quickly if an outbreak occurs.

2. What happens to exempted or incomplete children in the event of a disease outbreak?

In the event of a disease outbreak, unimmunized children are excluded from school until the outbreak is over, both for their own protection and for the protection of others. No exceptions are made during an outbreak, regardless of circumstances.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Contact the Idaho Immunization Program at (208) 334-6994 or visit ImmunizeIdahoSchools.com.

