

Date: July 20, 2021

To: Superintendents and Admitting Officials for Iowa Schools  
From: Bethany Kintigh RN, BSN, Immunization Program Manager  
RE: School Immunization Requirements and Audit Timeframe

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 Public Health 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.

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)). The timeframe to conduct audits for the 2021-22 school year will be adjusted to align with the requirements in Iowa Code, Chapter 139a.8(6). Iowa Code requires local board of health to submit to the Department, within 60 days after the first official day of school, evidence that each person enrolled in any elementary or secondary school has been immunized as required. The audits for the 2021-2022 school year must be completed and reported to the Iowa Department of Public Health by **Friday, October 29, 2021**.

The Immunization Program recognizes the uncertainty of disease trends for the upcoming school year to include COVID-19, influenza, and other vaccine preventable diseases. Many students have delayed routine health care because of the COVID-19 pandemic. A fully immunized student population is critical to prevent the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases in schools. This adjusted school audit timeframe ensures compliance with Iowa Code and will help assure student immunization records are audited earlier in the school year, reducing the potential for non-compliant students to attend school. Thank you for your continued work to assure students are compliant with Iowa immunization requirements.

Links to Iowa Code, chapter 139A.8, Iowa Administrative Code, and certificates of immunization are available at <http://idph.iowa.gov/immtb/immunization/laws>.

Please direct questions regarding immunization requirements to Shelly Jensen, Iowa Department of Public Health Nurse Consultant 800-831-6293 or [Shelly.Jensen@idph.iowa.gov](mailto:Shelly.Jensen@idph.iowa.gov).