



Catherine B. Templeton, Director

January 30, 2015

*Promoting and protecting the health of the public and the environment*

Dear Immunization Provider:

In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 44-29-180, and South Carolina Regulation 61-8, the 2015-2016 "Required Standards of Immunization for School Attendance" and the "Required Standards of Immunization for Day Care Attendance" are enclosed. These requirements are effective for the 2015-2016 school year.

#### Changes for the 2015-2016 School Year

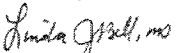
- 11th grade has been added to the requirement for four (4) doses of diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis.
- 1st grade has been added to the requirement for (2) doses of Varicella. A child with a positive history of the disease is considered immune and is exempt from this requirement.
- 3rd grade has been added to the requirement for three (3) doses of oral and/or inactivated Polio vaccine **with at least one (1) dose received on or after the fourth birthday.**
- 9th grade has been added to the requirement for (1) Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) booster. Tdap is routinely administered at 11-12 years of age; however, a dose administered on or after the seventh birthday will meet this requirement.
- A hepatitis B third dose minimum age and interval has been added to school attendance minimum requirements (third dose received  $\geq 24$  weeks of age and at least 16 weeks after the first dose).
- Doses documented on the immunization certificate must be valid doses according to accepted practice standards for the minimum age(s) and intervals. The "Minimum Ages and Intervals Between Doses of Routinely Recommended Vaccines" table is enclosed for your reference.

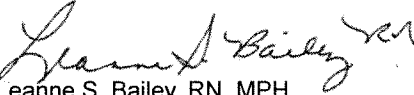
#### General Guidance Points

- On the day of an office visit, if a child cannot obtain all age-eligible vaccine(s) required for day care and/or school for a **medical reason**, a *medical exemption* (temporary or permanent as determined by the clinician) must be issued for the certificate to be valid. DHEC supports the provision of all Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended vaccines according to the ACIP schedule.
- **SC State Law only allows the following exemptions to vaccine requirements:**
  - Medical Exemption: A valid SC Certificate of Immunization (DHEC 2740) which includes all administered vaccines to date and notes a documented medical exemption (temporary or permanent) for vaccines which are not administered for a medical reason. For temporary medical exemptions, an expiration date in the future is noted when next immunizations are due to be obtained. **THIS IS THE ONLY EXEMPTION AN IMMUNIZATION PROVIDER CAN AUTHORIZE.**
  - Religious Exemption: A religious exemption certificate is issued by a DHEC Health Department. The parent or guardian must sign the DHEC form in the presence of a notary.
  - Special Exemption: A special exemption certificate may be issued by the school to a student that has been unable to secure immunizations or documentation of immunizations already received. This exemption is only valid for 30 calendar days for the current enrollment and may be issued only once.
- A valid South Carolina Certificate of Immunization for all enrolled children, **3 months of age and older**, must be maintained by public and private childcare facilities (as defined in Section 63-13-20 of SC Code of Laws); public, private, and parochial schools, grades kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade; and child development programs under the control of the Department of Education.
- Children enrolled in PreK or 4K programs and younger must meet Day Care Requirements, even if attendance is in a school setting.
- Children enrolled in 5-year-old kindergarten through Grade 12 must meet School Requirements.
- Children enrolled in grades 5K or greater who also attend a childcare facility (e.g., after school and/or summer program) must meet School Requirements and have a valid South Carolina Certificate of Immunization on file at both day care and school.

DHEC appreciates your continuing efforts to protect South Carolina children from vaccine-preventable diseases. Please advise your patients to receive all age-appropriate vaccines as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Procedural and other questions may be directed to DHEC's Immunization Division at 803-898-0460 or 1-800-277-4687 (1-800-27-SHOTS), or immunize@dhec.sc.gov.

Sincerely,

  
Linda J. Bell, M.D.  
State Epidemiologist

  
Leanne S. Bailey, RN, MPH  
Director, Division of Immunization