

## HALTON REGION PUBLIC HEALTH • Office of the Medical Officer of Health

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TO: Halton Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Emergency Departments, other Healthcare Providers

FROM: Dr. Joanna Oda, Associate Medical Officer of Health

DATE: October 31, 2024

RE: Enforcement of the Immunization of School Pupils Act and Ordering School-based Vaccines

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### QUICK FACTS

- This year, Halton Region Public Health is enforcing the *Immunization of School Pupils Act* (ISPA) for students born in 2007-2012 and 2017 (students in Grades 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12). Students born in 2007 to 2012 and 2017, may be suspended from school in early 2025 if their immunization records remain incomplete.
- Public Health will be mailing out letters to impacted families this month.
- There is a new, more efficient process for ordering Men-C-ACYW-135, Hepatitis B, and HPV-9, for students in grades 7-12.
- The [School-Based Vaccine Ordering and Reporting Form](#) can be used to order school-based vaccines. As of November 28, facilities will not be able to order patient-specific school-based vaccines through the online vaccine ordering system.

### KEY MESSAGES FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

#### Immunization of School Pupils Act

- Your office may experience an increase in immunization-related requests as parents respond to letters from Public Health related to ISPA enforcement.
- Patients with incomplete immunization or lacking adequate documentation of immunization should be considered unimmunized and started on an immunization schedule appropriate for their age and risk factors. Refer to Catch-up Schedule 2: Children Starting Immunization between 7-17 Years in [Publicly Funded Immunization Schedules for Ontario – June 2022](#).
- If you have questions about a student's record, refer to our [ISPA Resource Guide for Healthcare Professionals](#) or call 311 and ask to speak to an Immunization Nurse.
- Some students may be eligible for medical exemptions based on serologic immunity, clinical diagnosis of disease or a true vaccine contraindication. The [Statement of Medical Exemption form](#) must be filled out by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.
- Remind families to report their records to public health, especially at the time of immunization, by going to [halton.ca/immunize](https://halton.ca/immunize).

## Ordering School-based Vaccines

- In June 2024, Public Health introduced a new process for ordering order Men-C-ACYW-135, Hepatitis B, and HPV-9 vaccines that will be administered to students in grades 7-12 as part of the routine vaccine program.
- Feedback from primary care providers is that the new ordering process is easy to use and provides more convenient and accessible immunization for patients. Therefore, the old process for ordering school-based vaccines is being phased out. All offices will need to transition to new process for ordering school-based vaccines by the end of November.
- Under the new process, healthcare providers should report doses of school-based vaccines that they have administered to Public Health. This information helps Public Health staff know about any previous doses of school-based vaccines that have been administered if the student presents at an in-school immunization clinic. Healthcare providers can report school-based vaccine doses that they have administered by completing and faxing the last page of the [School-Based Vaccine Ordering and Reporting Form](#) to 905-465-3403 with their next school-based vaccine order.
- Men-C-ACYW-135, Hepatitis B, and HPV-9 vaccines that will be administered as part of the high-risk vaccine program, must continue to be ordered through the [online vaccine ordering form](#) as a high-risk vaccine order.

## KEY MESSAGES FOR PATIENTS

- Parents or guardians are responsible for reporting all their child's immunizations to Public Health, including any school-based vaccines that were not given by Public Health, by visiting [halton.ca/immunize](http://halton.ca/immunize).
- Students may have already received the required vaccines during childhood, and the records only need to be reported to Public Health (the student may not need any additional immunizations).
- Families seeking a vaccine exemption due to personal choice must complete a Vaccine Education Session and a Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief form. Visit [halton.ca/immunize](http://halton.ca/immunize) for more information.
- Immunization is the best way to protect your child, family, and community from life-threatening diseases.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Vaccine Information for Physicians](#), Halton Region Public Health
- [Publicly Funded Immunization Schedules for Ontario June 2022](#)
- [ISPA Resource Guide for Healthcare Professionals](#)
- [Ordering School-Based Vaccines](#)

Please report all suspected/confirmed cases of [Diseases of Public Health Significance](#) (only report COVID-19 cases occurring in high-risk settings) to Public Health immediately by calling 311, 905-825-6000 or toll free at 1-866-442-5866.

PLEASE PROVIDE A COPY TO ALL PHYSICIANS IN YOUR OFFICE AND/OR POST IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS AND PHYSICIAN LOUNGES. IF YOU HAVE ANY ISSUES WITH THIS ATTACHMENT, PLEASE EMAIL [DOCTORS@HALTON.CA](mailto:DOCTORS@HALTON.CA).