

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

TEL: 905-825-6000 • TOLL FREE: 1-866-442-5866 • FAX: 905-825-1444

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

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

DATE: February 6, 2025

RE: ISPA school suspension on February 13th for secondary students born 2007 - 2010

QUICK FACTS

- Halton Region Public Health is enforcing the *Immunization of School Pupils Act* (ISPA) for students born in 2007 to 2012 and 2017 (students in Grades 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12). Students in these cohorts may be suspended from school if their immunization records remain incomplete.
- Public Health has notified parents/students in the affected cohorts several times of the plan to suspend, starting in the fall of 2024.
- The suspension period for **secondary students** with incomplete immunization records will begin on **February 13, 2025**.
- The suspension period for **elementary students** with incomplete immunization records will begin on **March 27, 2025**.
- Physician practices can continue to order school-based vaccines in larger quantities using the [School-Based Vaccine Ordering and Reporting Form](#).

KEY MESSAGES FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

- Your office may experience an increase in immunization-related requests as parents respond to letters from Public Health related to ISPA enforcement. Public Health run clinics are now near capacity.
- Patients with incomplete immunizations, 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.
- Students born 2010 or later require two doses of varicella vaccine. Students with a history of disease (clinical diagnosis or immunity by serology) require a completed [Statement of Medical Exemption form](#).
- Remind families to promptly report their records to public health, especially at the time of immunization, by going to halton.ca/immunize or calling 311.

- Students who are unable to be immunized or report their immunizations prior to the suspension date, should call 311 to determine how best to move forward to avoid suspension.

KEY MESSAGES FOR PATIENTS

- Take action **now** to avoid suspension. Call 311 if you need assistance.
- 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.
- 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 receive a Vaccine Education Certificate and complete a Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief form. Visit 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.