

Immunization Frequently asked Questions from School Nurses 2020-2021

- 1. Do students in virtual school need a certificate on file?** Yes, all students enrolled or admitted in public or private schools in South Carolina must have a valid immunization certificate on file.
- 2. Do students who participate in online learning need to meet all the yearly immunization requirements?** Yes, all students who are enrolled or admitted in public or private schools in South Carolina must meet currently published immunization requirements.
- 3. Do students enrolled in online learning or virtual school need to be included in the 45-day report data?** Yes, all students enrolled in public or private schools in South Carolina must be included in the 45-day report.
- 4. How do we exclude students from online learning if we do not have an updated certificate on file and the 30 day grace period has expired?** School administrators will need to ensure that they have an up to date school roster and have immunization status of their students available for DHEC review upon request. School administrators must be compliant with the law. It is necessary that if a student does not comply with having a valid certificate or exemption on file, that the school administrator discontinue access to the online learning environment until a valid certificate or exemption is on file for the student.
- 5. Does the 30 day exemption apply to an online student?** Due to COVID-19 and associated potential vaccine access issues, all students may be granted a 30-day grace period to receive all required vaccines only for the 2020-21 school year. This includes in person and virtual learning.
- 6. What do we do with immunization certificates that come from a provider office marked incorrectly?** This should be handled on a case by case basis. If you are a school nurse who is covered under the MOA with DHEC to issue certificates, you may consider issuing another certificate. Otherwise, the parent must acquire an accurate, up to date certificate from their provider.
- 7. Can schools issue more than one 30-day exemption due to COVID19?** The grace period is for 30 days only in order to assist with vaccine access issues.
- 8. Will there be an extended grace period for those who cannot get appointments and need immunizations?** The Immunization Division is not considering extensions beyond the initial 30-day grace period as this should be sufficient to obtain access to vaccines.
- 9. If a child is excluded due to medical reasons beyond the 30-day grace period, are they still required to have an updated certificate?** Yes, all children in school or childcare must have a valid immunization certificate or exemption on file within 30 days of the first day of school. Students excluded beyond the 30-day grace period, must have a valid certificate or exemption on file upon returning to school or childcare. See [section 44-29-180](#), of the South Carolina Code of laws for additional guidance.
- 10. Should a school/childcare administrator exclude a child from a school/childcare who does not have a valid up to date certificate or exemption on file?** Yes, according to [DHEC Regulation 61-8](#), no child should be admitted into school or childcare without a valid immunization certificate or exemption on file.