

Changes in School Immunization Requirements for 2023-24

Effective April 14, 2023, DC Health will change the definition of compliance with the school immunization requirement and the grades in which compliance should be enforced. These changes are meant to simplify and streamline enforcement of this requirement.

Revised Compliance Definition and Enforcement Policy

The District of Columbia follows the immunization recommendations of the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). As soon as children are old enough that a vaccine is recommended, that vaccine is considered “due”. DC’s Immunization Information System (DOCIIS) provides information about which vaccines are due, as well as when vaccines will be due in the future.

Starting April 14, 2023, once a student is due for a vaccine, that student will be considered non-compliant with DC’s school immunization mandate. DC Health and the Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE) will no longer differentiate between “due” and “overdue” in the determination of compliance.

Enforcement of the new compliance definition in the 2023-24 school year will apply only to students in PreK3, Kindergarten, 7th, and 11th grades. These grades were selected because they occur soon *after* age bands in which vaccines are first recommended. Most children in these grades will not “age into” non-compliance during the school year. **Only children in these four grades will be eligible for exclusion from school if they are considered non-compliant.**

Example

ACIP recommends that children receive their first dose of MenACWY at 11 or 12 years of age; in this age range, children are considered “due” for this vaccine. Previously children were considered non-compliant only after reaching their 13th birthday, which is when the vaccine would be marked as “overdue”. Starting April 14, 2023, children who have not received this vaccine will be considered non-compliant when they reach their 11th birthday. However, most children reach their 11th birthday during 5th or 6th grade. These children must receive this vaccine only before entering 7th grade.

Implications

The number of students considered non-compliant with [DC’s school immunization requirements](#) will initially increase. However, the number of children at risk for exclusion from school for non-compliance will decrease by approximately one-half. These changes will simplify enforcement by school officials and bring DC into closer alignment with policies of other jurisdictions.

If you have questions about this change in policy, contact doh.immunization@dc.gov.