

Immunization and Health Checkup - *CalEdFacts*

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California law requires children to be immunized. Children are exempt from immunization requirements if (1) their parents sign a statement indicating that such immunization is contrary to their beliefs; or (2) the parents submit a statement from a physician indicating that immunization is not considered safe for the child. An exemption may be temporary or permanent and may be for specific vaccines or all vaccines.

The federal [McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#) requires schools to enroll new students who are homeless even if their immunization records are missing or unavailable at the time of enrollment. California law requires schools to immediately enroll foster children transferring to their school even if a foster child is unable to produce immunization records normally required for school entry. Once a homeless student or a foster child is enrolled, school staff should work with the school or foster family where the student was transferred from to obtain the student's immunization records quickly. The school staff person should also work with local health departments to ensure these students receive any vaccinations they may need.

State law also requires each child's family to provide, within 90 days of entrance into the first grade, a certificate documenting that the child has received a health checkup within the previous 18 months. Parents may waive the health checkup requirement because they do not want to or are unable to obtain a health screening for their child. If the waiver indicates that the parents were unable to obtain such services, the reasons must be included in the waiver. School districts must exclude any first-grader for up to five days if the child has neither a health examination certificate nor a parental waiver 90 days after entering the first grade.

Some children may be eligible for a state-paid examination. Referrals to doctors and clinics are provided on request by the Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program coordinator of the local health department. Children through age eighteen may receive a free checkup funded by CHDP if their families meet specific income guidelines. Most county health departments have a CHDP coordinator who can advise parents regarding eligibility.

All children under eighteen years of age that enter a California public or private elementary or secondary school for the first time or transfer between schools must present a written immunization record that includes at least the month and year of receipt of each dose of required vaccines (or an exemption to the immunization requirements). Otherwise, the child will not be allowed to attend school.

To meet California's school entry requirements, children entering kindergarten will need the following immunizations:

Immunization	Dosage
Diphtheria, Pertussis, and Tetanus (DPT)	Five (5) doses
Polio	Four (4) doses
Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR)	Two (2) doses
Hepatitis B	Three (3) doses
Varicella (chickenpox)	One (1) dose

Students entering grade seven must show proof of the following immunizations:

Immunization	Dosage
Tetanus, reduced Diphtheria, and acellular Pertussis (Tdap)	One (1) doses
Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR)	Two (2) doses

All students from out of state must show proof of varicella (chickenpox) immunization.

Contact [local county health departments](#) for more specific information on requirements relating to the number of vaccine doses and the ages at which vaccines are to be given. In some cases, in addition to the month and year of the immunization, the day is also required. Some counties now require that students entering school at specific grade levels show the results of tuberculosis skin tests.

For more information regarding immunization and health checkup requirements, please contact your school district, county office of education, or county health department. Additional information is available from the California Department of Public Health Immunization Branch's [Shots for School](#).

Questions: Coordinated School Health and Safety Office | 916-319-0914

