

IMMUNIZATION OF STUDENTS

All students who enroll in the school unit schools are required by Maine law to present a certificate of immunization or evidence of immunization, as outlined in Maine state law (Chapter 126) found at <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/immunization/family/rules.html>.

A student who is enrolled in a distance education program offered by a school and who does not physically attend any classes or programs at a school facility, including a campus, center or site of that school, or other facility of another school, are exempt from these requirements.

Non-immunized students shall not be permitted to enroll in school, or to attend school or school activities unless one of the following conditions are met:

- A. The parents/guardians provide to the school written assurance that the child will be immunized within 90 days of enrolling in school or their first attendance in classes, whichever date is earlier. This option is available only once to each student during their school career; or
- B. The parents/guardians provide a written statement from a licensed physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant each year that, in that individual's professional judgment, immunization against one or more diseases may be medically inadvisable; or
- C. A student covered by an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) on September 1, 2021, who had an exemption based on their sincere religious belief or for philosophical reasons on or before September 1, 2021 pursuant to the law in effect prior to that date may continue to attend school under that student's existing exemption as long as:
 - 1. The parents/guardians of the student provide a statement from a licensed physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant that they have consulted with the parents/guardians and has made the parents/guardians aware of the risks and benefits associated with immunization; or
 - 2. If the student is 18 years of age or older, the student provides a statement from a licensed physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant that they have consulted with that student and has made that student aware of the risks and benefits associated with immunization.

The Superintendent shall exclude from school any non-immunized student when a public health official has reason to believe that the student's continued presence in school presents a clear danger to the health of others. Any such student shall be excluded during the period of danger (as defined by health officials) or until the student receives the necessary immunization.

The Superintendent may also exclude from school: 1) a student who presents a public health threat in accordance with applicable laws or 2) a student who has been exposed to a communicable disease, upon the direction of a physician who has consulted with the Bureau of Health.

Arrangements shall be made for students who are excluded from school to receive and complete school assignments if possible, and to make up missed examinations and other work within a reasonable time upon their return to school. The rules only require educational arrangements to be made after 10 days' absence, but in our view, it makes sense to treat these absences like any other and allow students to complete and make up work.

The Superintendent/designee is directed to develop such administrative procedures as are necessary to carry out this policy and comply with statutory requirements.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA §§ 6301; 6352-6359
Chapter 126 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rules)

Cross Reference: JLCC- Communicable/Infectious Diseases

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