

New!
**Influenza Vaccine Requirement for Childcare Attendance for Children
6 months of age or older**

Updated December 22, 2020

Beginning in the fall of 2020, influenza vaccine will be required for all children attending childcare who are 6 months of age or older. Influenza vaccine is always important to receive to reduce the risk of getting sick with the influenza, reduce the severity of disease if one does get sick (including the risk of hospitalization) due to influenza, as well as preventing the spread of influenza to others. During the COVID-19 pandemic, influenza vaccine will be especially critical to reduce the overall impact of respiratory illness on the population, protect vulnerable populations from severe illness, and decrease the overall burden on the healthcare system.

Which children need to receive influenza vaccine?

All children attending childcare who are 6 months of age or older will be required to receive influenza vaccine for the current influenza season for childcare attendance unless they have a medical or religious exemption.

When do children need to receive influenza vaccine?

Children must receive influenza vaccine for the current flu season (i.e., school year 2020-2021) by February 28, 2021.

Are there any exemptions to receiving influenza vaccine?

Medical and religious exemptions are allowable in the state of Massachusetts. Medical exemptions must be renewed annually and include a statement from a physician stating that the vaccine is medically contraindicated for the student.

What type of influenza vaccine can children receive?

Any age-appropriate licensed influenza vaccine for the current season fulfills the requirement. Influenza vaccine is not recommended or licensed for children less than 6 months of age.

Should children without a documented dose of seasonal influenza vaccine be excluded from childcare on January 1st?

Address questions about enforcement of immunization requirements with your legal counsel. We encourage childcare providers to work with families and healthcare providers to satisfy the requirements for children who are not compliant on January 1st. For the 2020-2021 school year **only**, influenza vaccine must be received by February 28, 2021.

Post-secondary institutions are encouraged to work with families and healthcare providers to satisfy the vaccination requirements for students who are not compliant by March 1, 2021.

What about children who enroll after December 31?

Children who enroll before March 31 must have a documented dose of influenza vaccine for the current influenza season (along with all other required vaccinations) when they start childcare.

What about children who enroll later in the spring?

Children enrolling after March 31 are not required to have a dose of influenza vaccine for enrollment.

Will my program have to report the number of children who received influenza vaccine in the preschool/childcare immunization survey?

Yes, there will be a survey to report influenza vaccination rates for children in childcare. The timing and details of the survey are still being developed. More information will be available soon.

Will influenza vaccine be required every year?

Influenza vaccine is now a required vaccine for childcare attendance and will be required as of December 31 for all children 6 months of age or older attending childcare each year. For school year 2020-2021 **only**, seasonal influenza vaccine must be received by February 28, 2021.

Are 2 doses of influenza vaccine required for some children, according to ACIP guidelines?

Children younger than 9 may need two doses of influenza vaccine depending on the number of influenza vaccines they've received in the past. Children should be vaccinated according to ACIP recommendations but only one dose of influenza vaccine is required for childcare attendance.

Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements 2020-2021[§]

Massachusetts school immunization requirements are created under authority of [105 CMR 220.000 Immunization of Students Before Admission to School](#)

Requirements apply to all students including individuals from another country attending or visiting classes or educational programs as part of an academic visitation or exchange program. Requirements apply to all students, even if over 18 years of age.

Childcare/Preschool^{¶†}

Attendees <2 years should be immunized for their age according to the [ACIP Recommended Immunization Schedule](#). Requirements listed in the table below apply to all attendees ≥2 years. These requirements also apply to children in preschool classes called KO or K1.

Hib	1-4 doses; the number of doses is determined by vaccine product and age the series begins
DTaP	4 doses
Polio	3 doses
Hepatitis B	3 doses; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
MMR	1 dose; must be given on or after the 1 st birthday; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
Varicella	1 dose; must be given on or after the 1 st birthday; a reliable history of chickenpox* or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable

NEW – Influenza Requirement

Influenza	1 dose; seasonal influenza vaccine for the current flu season (July-June) must be received annually for anyone 6 months of age or older by December 31 st . For school year 2020-2021, seasonal influenza vaccine must be received for anyone 6 months of age or older by February 28, 2021. New students entering before March 31 st must have received a dose of vaccine for the current flu season for entry. Depending on the child’s flu vaccination history, ACIP may recommend a second dose of flu vaccine in the same season. In these cases, the second dose is recommended but is not
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[§] Address questions about enforcement with your legal counsel.

[¶] Meningococcal vaccine requirements (see Grades 7-10 and 11-12) also apply to residential students in Grades Pre-K through 8 if the school combines these grades in the same school as students in Grades 9-12.

[†]Medical exemptions (statement from a physician stating that a vaccine is medically contraindicated for a student) must be renewed annually at the start of the school year and religious exemptions (statement from a student, or parent/guardian if the student is <18 years of age, stating that a vaccine is against sincerely held religious beliefs) should be renewed annually at the start of the school year.

* A reliable history of chickenpox includes a diagnosis of chickenpox, or interpretation of parent/guardian description of chickenpox, by a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or designee.

See following pages for Grades K-6, 7-10, Grades 11-12, and College (Postsecondary Institutions)

Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements 2020-2021[§]

Grades Kindergarten – 6^{¶†}

In ungraded classrooms, Kindergarten requirements apply to all students ≥5 years.

DTaP	5 doses; 4 doses are acceptable if the fourth dose is given on or after the 4 th birthday. DT is only acceptable with a letter stating a medical contraindication to DTaP
Polio	4 doses; fourth dose must be given on or after the 4 th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose, or a fifth dose is required. 3 doses are acceptable if the third dose is given on or after the 4 th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose
Hepatitis B	3 doses; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
MMR	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
Varicella	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; a reliable history of chickenpox* or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable

NEW – Influenza Requirement

Influenza	<p>1 dose; seasonal influenza vaccine for the current flu season (July-June) must be received annually by December 31st. For school year 2020-2021, seasonal influenza vaccine must be received by February 28, 2021. New students entering before March 31st must have received a dose of vaccine for the current flu season for entry.</p> <p>Depending on the child’s flu vaccination history, ACIP may recommend a second dose of flu vaccine in the same season. In these cases, the second dose is recommended but is not required for school entry.</p>
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[§] Address questions about enforcement with your legal counsel. School requirements are enforced at the local level.

[¶] Meningococcal vaccine requirements (see Grades 7-10 and 11-12) also apply to residential students in Grades Pre-K through 8 if the school combines these grades in the same school as students in Grades 9-12.

[†]Medical exemptions (statement from a physician stating that a vaccine is medically contraindicated for a student) must be renewed annually at the start of the school year and religious exemptions (statement from a student, or parent/guardian if the student is <18 years of age, stating that a vaccine is against sincerely held religious beliefs) should be renewed annually at the start of the school year.

* A reliable history of chickenpox includes a diagnosis of chickenpox, or interpretation of parent/guardian description of chickenpox, by a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or designee.

See following pages for Grades 7-10, Grades 11-12, and College (Postsecondary Institutions)

Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements 2020-2021[§]

Requirements apply to all students including individuals from another country attending or visiting classes or educational programs as part of an academic visitation or exchange program. Requirements apply to all students, even if over 18 years of age.

Grades 7 – 12[†]

In ungraded classrooms, Grade 7 requirements apply to all students ≥12 years.

Tdap	1 dose; and history of DTaP primary series or age appropriate catch-up vaccination. Tdap given at ≥7 years may be counted, but a dose at age 11-12 is recommended if Tdap was given earlier as part of a catch-up schedule. Td or Tdap should be given if it has been ≥10 years since last Tdap
Polio	4 doses; fourth dose must be given on or after the 4 th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose, or a fifth dose is required. 3 doses are acceptable if the third dose is given on or after the 4 th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose
Hepatitis B	3 doses; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable. 2 doses of Heplisav-B given on or after 18 years of age are acceptable
MMR	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
Varicella	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; a reliable history of chickenpox* or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable

NEW – Influenza Requirement

Influenza	1 dose; seasonal influenza vaccine for the current flu season (July-June) must be received annually by December 31 st . For school year 2020-2021, seasonal influenza vaccine must be received by February 28, 2021. New students entering before March 31 st must have received a dose of vaccine for the current flu season for entry.
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NEW – Meningococcal Requirements

Grade 7	1 dose; 1 dose MenACWY (formerly MCV4) required. Meningococcal B vaccine is not required and does not meet this requirement.
Grade 11 [‡]	2 doses; second dose MenACWY (formerly MCV4) must be given on or after the 16th birthday and ≥ 8 weeks after the previous dose. 1 dose is acceptable if it was given on or after the 16th birthday. Meningococcal B vaccine is not required and does not meet this requirement.

Meningococcal Vaccine Phase-In Schedule

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
1 Dose MenACWY	Grade 7	Grades 7-8	Grades 7-9	Grades 7-10
2 Doses MenACWY	Grade 11	Grades 11-12	Grades 11-12	Grades 11-12

[§] Address questions about enforcement with your legal counsel. School requirements are enforced at the local level.

[†]Medical exemptions (statement from a physician stating that a vaccine is medically contraindicated for a student) must be renewed annually at the start of the school year and religious exemptions (statement from a student, or parent/guardian if the student is <18 years of age, stating that a vaccine is against sincerely held religious beliefs) should be renewed annually at the start of the school year.

* A reliable history of chickenpox includes a diagnosis of chickenpox, or interpretation of parent/guardian description of chickenpox, by a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or designee.

[‡] Students who are 15 years old in grade 11 are in compliance until they turn 16 years old.

Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements 2020-2021[§]

Requirements apply to all students including individuals from another country attending or visiting classes or educational programs as part of an academic visitation or exchange program. Requirements apply to all students, even if over 18 years of age.

College (Postsecondary Institutions)**†

Requirements apply to all full-time undergraduate and graduate students under 30 years of age and all full- and part-time health science students. Meningococcal requirements apply to the group specified in the table below.

Tdap	1 dose; and history of a DTaP primary series or age appropriate catch-up vaccination. Tdap given at ≥7 years may be counted, but a dose at age 11-12 is recommended if Tdap was given earlier as part of a catch-up schedule. Td or Tdap should be given if it has been ≥10 years since Tdap.
Hepatitis B	3 doses; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable; 2 doses of Heplisav-B given on or after 18 years of age are acceptable
MMR	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable. Birth in the U.S. before 1957 acceptable only for non-health science students
Varicella	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; a reliable history of chickenpox* or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable. Birth in the U.S. before 1980 acceptable only for non-health science students
Meningococcal	1 dose; 1 dose MenACWY (formerly MCV4) required for all full-time students 21 years of age or younger. The dose of MenACWY vaccine must have been received on or after the student’s 16 th birthday. Doses received at younger ages do not count towards this requirement. Students may decline MenACWY vaccine after they have read and signed the MDPH Meningococcal Information and Waiver Form provided by their institution. Meningococcal B vaccine is not required and does not meet this requirement

NEW – Influenza Requirement

Influenza	1 dose; seasonal influenza vaccine for the current flu season (July-June) must be received annually by December 31 st . For school year 2020-2021, seasonal influenza vaccine must be received by February 28, 2021. New students entering before March 31 st must have received a dose of vaccine for the current flu season for entry.
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§ Address questions about enforcement with your legal counsel. School requirements are enforced at the local level.

** The immunization requirements apply to all students who attend any classes or activities on campus, even once. If all instruction and activities are remote and the student will never be on campus in person, the requirements would not apply. Should a student physically return to campus, they would need comply with this requirement

†Medical exemptions (statement from a physician stating that a vaccine is medically contraindicated for a student) must be renewed annually at the start of the school year and religious exemptions (statement from a student, or parent/guardian if the student is <18 years of age, stating that a vaccine is against sincerely held religious beliefs) should be renewed annually at the start of the school year.

* A reliable history of chickenpox includes a diagnosis of chickenpox, or interpretation of parent/guardian description of chickenpox, by a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or designee.

Influenza Vaccine Requirement for Attendance at Post-Secondary Institutions

Updated December 22, 2020

Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, influenza vaccine will be required for all full-time undergraduate and graduate students under 30 years of age and all full- and part-time health science students at post-secondary institutions. Influenza vaccine is always important to receive to reduce the risk of getting sick with influenza, reduce the severity of disease if one does get sick (including the risk of hospitalization) due to influenza, as well as preventing the spread of influenza to others. During the COVID-19 pandemic, influenza vaccine will be especially critical to reduce the overall impact of respiratory illness on the population, protect vulnerable populations from severe illness, and decrease the overall burden on the healthcare system.

Which students need to receive influenza vaccine?

Requirements apply to all full-time undergraduate and graduate students under 30 years of age and all full- and part-time health science students. Student may have a medical or religious exemption.

When do students need to receive influenza vaccine?

Students must receive influenza vaccine for the current season (i.e., school year 2020-2021) by February 28, 2021. New students entering school before March 31, 2021 must have received a dose of vaccine for the current flu season for entry.

Are there any exemptions to receiving influenza vaccine?

Medical and religious exemptions are allowable in the state of Massachusetts. Medical exemptions must be renewed annually and include a statement from a physician stating that the vaccine is medically contraindicated for the student.

What type of influenza vaccine can students receive?

Any age-appropriate licensed influenza vaccine for the current season fulfills the requirement. This includes injectable and nasal spray vaccine types.

Should students without a documented dose of seasonal influenza vaccine be excluded on January 1st?

Enforcement of immunization requirements is determined at the local level. We encourage post-secondary institutions to work with families and healthcare providers to satisfy the requirements for students who are not compliant on January 1st. For the 2020-2021 school year **only**, influenza vaccine must be received by February 28, 2021. Post-secondary institutions are encouraged to work with families and healthcare providers to satisfy the

vaccination requirements for students who are not compliant by March 1, 2021.

What about students who enroll after December 31?

Students who enroll before March 31 must have a documented dose of influenza vaccine for the current influenza season (along with all other required vaccinations) when they start school.

What about students who enroll later in the spring?

Students enrolling after March 31 are not required to have a dose of influenza vaccine until they enroll in the Fall 2021 semester.

Will my institution have to report on influenza vaccine in the college immunization survey?

Yes—the surveys will be open as usual during the fall to input information on other required vaccines. There will also be a survey to report influenza vaccination rates for students at post-secondary institutions. The timing and details of the survey are still being developed. More information will be available soon.

Will influenza vaccine be required every year or just for the 2020-2021 school year?

Influenza vaccine is now a required vaccine for attendance at a post-secondary institution in Massachusetts and will be required annually as of December 31 for **all** students who will be on campus for any reason and are subject to immunization requirements. For school year 2020-2021 **only**, seasonal influenza vaccine must be received by February 28, 2021.

If my school will be providing instruction remotely, will students still need to meet immunization requirements?

The immunization requirements apply to all students who attend any classes or activities on campus, even once. If all instruction and activities are conducted remotely and the student will never be on campus in person, the requirements would not apply. If the first part of the year will be conducted remotely but later portions may be in person, we recommend collecting immunization records as early as possible to ensure all records are in place prior to students attending classes or activities in person.

Influenza Vaccine Requirement for School Attendance: Kindergarten through Grade 12

Updated December 22, 2020

Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, influenza vaccine will be required for all students. Influenza vaccine is always important to receive to reduce the risk of getting sick with influenza, reduce the severity of disease if one does get sick (including the risk of hospitalization) due to influenza, as well as preventing the spread of influenza to others. During the COVID-19 pandemic, influenza vaccine will be especially critical to reduce the overall impact of respiratory illness on the population, protect vulnerable populations from severe illness, and decrease the overall burden on the healthcare system.

Which students need to receive influenza vaccine?

Students in Kindergarten – Grade 12 will be required to receive influenza vaccine for the current influenza season for school attendance unless they have a medical or religious exemption.

When do students need to receive influenza vaccine?

Students must receive influenza vaccine for the current season (i.e., school year 2020-2021) by February 28, 2021. New students entering school before March 31, 2021 must have received a dose of vaccine for the current flu season for entry.

Are there any exemptions to receiving influenza vaccine?

Medical and religious exemptions are allowable in the state of Massachusetts. Medical exemptions must be renewed annually and include a statement from a physician stating that the vaccine is medically contraindicated for the student.

What type of influenza vaccine can students receive?

Any age-appropriate licensed influenza vaccine for the current season fulfills the requirement. This includes injectable and nasal spray vaccine types.

Should students without a documented dose of seasonal influenza vaccine be excluded from school on January 1st?

Enforcement of school immunization requirements is determined at the local level. We encourage school communities to work with families and healthcare providers to satisfy the requirements for students who are not compliant on January 1st. For the 2020-2021 school year **only**, influenza vaccine must be received by February 28, 2021. Post-secondary institutions are encouraged to work with families and healthcare providers to satisfy the vaccination requirements for students who are not compliant by March 1, 2021.

What about students who enroll after December 31?

Students who enroll before March 31 must have a documented dose of influenza vaccine for the current influenza season (along with all other required vaccinations) when they start school.

What about students who enroll later in the spring?

Students enrolling after March 31 are not required to have a dose of influenza vaccine for the current school year.

Will my school have to report on influenza vaccine in the Kindergarten and Grade 7 school immunization surveys?

Yes—the surveys will be open as usual during the fall to input information on other vaccines. By January 2021, a new section of the survey may be completed to report influenza vaccination rates for students enrolled in Kindergarten and Grade 7. We anticipate both parts of the survey, the traditional school immunization survey and the influenza component, will be due by the end of January 2021.

Will my school have to report the number of students who received influenza vaccine in the Grade 11 school immunization survey?

Yes—the Grade 11 survey will open in early 2021 and will include the influenza question with the survey. More information on the timeline for the Grade 11 survey will be available in the future.

Will my school have to report the number of students who received influenza vaccine for students in all grades?

While the influenza vaccine requirement exists for every grade, you will be asked to complete school immunization surveys for Kindergarten, Grade 7, and Grade 11.

Will influenza vaccine be required every year or just for the 2020-2021 school year?

Influenza vaccine is now a required vaccine for school attendance and will be required as of December 31 for all students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 each school year. For school year 2020-2021 only, seasonal influenza vaccine must be received by February 28, 2021.

Do younger students require 2 doses according to ACIP guidelines?

Children younger than 9 may need two doses of influenza vaccine depending on the number of influenza vaccines they have received in the past. Children should be vaccinated according to ACIP recommendations but only one dose of influenza vaccine is required for school attendance.

If my school will be providing instruction remotely, will students still need to meet immunization requirements?

The school immunization requirements, including the requirement for seasonal influenza vaccine, apply to all Massachusetts students enrolled in Kindergarten through Grade 12, regardless of whether the district is providing instruction in-person, or using a hybrid or remote learning model.

Do the flu immunization requirements apply to students that are home schooled?

Immunization requirements, including the flu immunization requirement, do not apply to home schooled students unless the student will ever need to access the school building for sports, after school activities or any other reason.