

Dept. of Health Services: Announces immunization updates for children in child care centers and schools

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The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) has announced [updates to the immunizations needed for children in child care centers and schools](#). The changes include updated requirements related to meningitis and whooping cough immunizations, and that past chickenpox infection must be documented by a qualified medical professional. There is no change to existing exemption options for medical, religious, or philosophical reasons. Seasonal flu vaccination or COVID-19 vaccination are not required, but remain strongly recommended.

Child care centers will need to begin working with parents now to ensure children have proper varicella (chickenpox) vaccine documentation, and schools will implement these changes for the 2023-2024 school year. The update is part of changes made to Wisconsin's immunization of students regulation (Wis. Admin. Code DHS 144) effective February 1, 2023, and is in alignment with the administrative rulemaking process. DHS will work with its partners to ensure those affected by this change have a smooth implementation.

"Each of these vaccines is already recommended for children, and today's update improves that protection. Parents who choose to keep their children up to date on vaccinations are not only protecting their own child's health but are making a choice that protects the people who live and work in their communities," said DHS Deputy Secretary Deb Standridge. "Vaccines are safe and effective and are one of the strongest tools we have to prevent getting sick from diseases. Some diseases can be deadly, especially to young children. DHS encourages all parents to work with their child's health care provider to ensure their child is up to date on immunizations."