



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM

TO: Superintendents of Schools
School Medical Advisors
School Nurse Supervisors
Local Directors of Health
Health Care Providers

FROM: Vincent Sacco, MS
Immunization Program Manager

DATE: November 15, 2011

SUBJECT: Immunization Grace Period and Waiver Requests

The purpose of this communication is to define and clarify the grace period allowed on immunizations, and to notify you that the process of requesting a waiver for vaccines administered during the grace period is no longer necessary.

The following is an excerpt from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP), *General Recommendations on Immunization*, January 2011, page 5, "In clinical practice, vaccine doses occasionally are administered at intervals less than the minimum interval or at ages younger than the minimum age. Doses administered too close together or at too young an age can lead to a suboptimal immune response. However, administering a dose a few days earlier than the minimum interval or age is unlikely to have a substantially negative effect on the immune response to that dose. Vaccine doses administered ≤ 4 days before the minimum interval or age are considered valid... (Day 1 is the day before the day that marks the minimum age or minimum interval for a vaccine.) **Doses of any vaccine administered ≥ 5 days earlier than the minimum interval or age should not be counted as valid doses and should be repeated as age appropriate.** The repeat dose should be spaced after the invalid dose by the recommended minimum interval... If the first dose in a series is given ≥ 5 days before the recommended minimum age, the dose should be repeated on or after the date when the child reaches at least the minimum age. If the vaccine is a live vaccine, ensuring that a minimum interval of 28 days has elapsed from the invalid dose is recommended."

The Department of Public Health has formerly recognized this 4 day grace period, but has had a waiver application process at the Immunization Program for individual students vaccinated during the grace period. However, due to the significant burden this process places on health care providers and school nursing staff, we will no longer be supporting the waiver application process. **Doses administered to students during the 4 day grace period should be counted as valid and no further action is necessary. However, doses administered 5 or more days prior to the minimum age or interval will not be counted as valid shots and will need to be repeated for school entry.** This policy change does not impact or alter the recommended minimum age and/or intervals and should not be viewed as a change in practice.

The minimum age and intervals between immunization doses can be found in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's *Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine Preventable Diseases* (also known as *The Pink Book*), Appendix A at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/A/age-interval-table.pdf>.

If you have any questions, please contact the Immunization Program at 860-509-7929.