



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



TO: Superintendents of Schools
School Medical Advisors
School Nurses and Supervisors

FROM: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner
Connecticut State Department of Education

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Connecticut Department of Public Health

DATE: May 2, 2024

SUBJECT: Measles

There has been a concerning rise in the number of measles cases reported in the United States and abroad starting in late 2023. As of April 26, 2024, [reported measles cases](#) have risen to 128 in 19 states and New York City. This is especially concerning given that measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccination rates have been decreasing in kindergarten students nationally. In Connecticut, through the work and support of school leaders, school nurses, and laws that promote public health, MMR vaccination rates among kindergarteners have risen to more than 97 percent. A measles outbreak is less likely to occur at schools where high numbers of students are immunized.

Importantly, to achieve herd immunity for measles, 95 percent of the population must be vaccinated or have had the disease. Despite Connecticut's high overall MMR vaccination rates, there are still some schools with a rate under 95 percent among kindergarteners. More information on school immunization compliance and exemption rates, as measured by the annual immunization survey, are available on the Department of Public Health's (DPH) web site at: <https://data.ct.gov/stories/s/n5kk-6ext>. This page contains a summary of the results from the 2022-2023 school year. At the bottom of this page are searchable tables with immunization rates for kindergarten and seventh grade. You can utilize the "search in table" feature to look for a specific town or school. Additionally, this data is available for download and analysis here:

[2022-23 Kindergarten School-Level Data](#)

[2022-23 Seventh Grade School-Level Data](#)

[2022-23 Vaccine Exemptions School-Level Data – All Grades](#)

Understanding the risk for measles cases is higher when the disease is circulating more broadly, as it has been this year, we are urging school leaders to review the following information to prepare for a possible exposure:

- Review the immunization status of students to ensure that all are up to date on their MMR vaccines. For non-exempt students in kindergarten through grade 12, two doses of MMR vaccine are required; one dose of MMR is required for non-exempt students in preschool.
- Engage parents and caregivers of children who are not up to date, to encourage them to schedule appointments with their health care provider as soon as possible.
- Encourage parents to contact the school nurse supervisor or School Based Health Centers (if available) for guidance or administration of vaccines.
- Connect and coordinate with local health directors/districts regarding municipal action plans in cases of exposure or outbreak.
- Develop or review your existing communication plans.
- Proactively communicate with parents and caregivers about measles disease, including the possible actions the district may take in the case of a measles exposure or outbreak. This could include a recommendation from public health that all students who are not up to date with MMR vaccines be excluded from school for as many as 21 days. DPH will offer guidance and can provide a template letter for schools to use for general communication.

State of Connecticut regulations ([R.C.S.A. §§ 10-204a-1—10-204a-4](#)) detail the specific immunizations and number of doses that are required for all students prior to school entrance (a simplified version of the requirements is available [here](#)).

There are no work-related vaccine requirements for staff. However, adults who do not have presumptive evidence of immunity to measles should get at least one dose of MMR vaccine (for most people evidence of immunity means having written documentation of having received at least one MMR dose or birth before 1957). MMR recommendations for adults can be found [here](#).

Each year the DPH Immunization Program works with school health administrators statewide to increase awareness of current immunization related issues, including updates to regulations, the school immunization survey, and best practices. We also work with schools to support disease control activities related to cases of vaccine preventable disease when they occur.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has engaged the Yale School of Public Health to provide consultation to districts on school policies and practices related to indoor air quality, environmental health, and infectious disease prevention and mitigation that support optimal school learning environments. The Yale team has specific expertise in the development and implementation of policies and practices on infection risk and control of transmission including highlighting the importance of vaccination when available. School leaders are encouraged to contact them directly at: sten.vermund@yale.edu. There is no cost to districts for this consultation, which can include building visits and walk-throughs.

Thank you for all you do to educate Connecticut's children and your continued partnership to ensure their health and safety. If you have questions, you may contact the DPH Immunization Program at (860) 509-7929 or email at dph.immunizations@ct.gov, or the CSDE School Health and Family Services Unit Manager, Chlo-Anne Bobrowski at chlo-anne.bobrowski@ct.gov.