

HALTON REGION PUBLIC HEALTH • Office of the Medical Officer of Health

TEL: 905-825-6000 • TOLL FREE: 1-866-442-5866 • FAX: 905-825-1444

TO: Halton Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Emergency Departments

FROM: Dr. Joanna Oda, Associate Medical Officer of Health

DATE: March 21, 2024

RE: Enforcement of the *Immunization of School Pupils Act* March 27, 2024

QUICK FACTS

- Suspension day for students born in 2006 and 2007 (grades 11 and 12) has been changed from March 21, 2024 to March 27, 2024 to support families and give them an additional amount of time to get their records in and vaccines up to date.
- Students with incomplete immunization records will be suspended from school starting **March 27, until April 19, 2024**, or until Public Health receives the required information.
- Under the ISPA, students are required to have up to date immunization records, or a valid medical or non-medical exemption on file with Public Health to attend school.
- Public Health is holding [Community Immunization Clinics](#) for students born in 2006 and 2007 from **Thursday, March 21 to Thursday, March 28**. Clinics are **walk-in only, as capacity allows**. These clinics are prioritized for students who are unable to receive the required vaccines through their regular healthcare provider.

KEY MESSAGES FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

- Public Health expects that many students who are suspended will seek urgent resolution of their immunization records as of March 27, 2024.
- Public Health recognizes that healthcare providers also face capacity concerns.
 - Clients who book an appointment with their primary care provider after March 27, 2024, will be given a temporary exemption and will not be suspended provided they inform Public Health that they have an appointment scheduled to update their immunizations.
 - If you book an appointment after March 27 for a client who is suspended, **please direct the parent to update Public Health by calling 311**.
- Ensure you have an adequate supply of routine childhood vaccines to provide to your patients that require these immunizations, especially those born in 2006 and 2007.
- **Immunize your patients whenever possible** and assist in providing records and necessary medical exemptions. Please ask families to bring their suspension letter with them to your office for any vaccine appointments. **Encourage parents to report any vaccine their child receives to Public Health by visiting halton.ca/immunize or calling 311**.
- Some students may be eligible for medical exemptions based on serologic immunity, clinical diagnosis of disease or a true vaccine contraindication. The [Statement of Medical Exemption form](#) must be filled out by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

- For families who decline or refuse one more of the vaccines required under the ISPA, information on how to access a non-medical exemption is available at halton.ca/immunize.
- Healthcare providers can call 311 and ask to speak to an Immunization Nurse if they have questions about student immunization records or medical exemptions.

KEY MESSAGES FOR PATIENTS

- Immunization is the best way to protect your child, family, and community from life-threatening diseases.
- Parents/guardians must report all vaccines administered by a primary healthcare provider to Halton Region Public Health. The ISPA requires that students have up to date immunization records to attend school.
- Students may have already received the required vaccines during childhood, and the records only need to be reported to Public Health (the student may not need any additional immunizations).
- Families who object to immunization due to personal choice must obtain a [non-medical vaccine exemption](#).
- Parents/guardians and students can visit halton.ca/immunize or call 311 to report immunization records, to get more information about vaccine exemptions, or to view the Public Health Community Immunization Clinic schedule.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Publicly Funded Immunization Schedules for Ontario](#)
- [ISPA Resource Guide for Healthcare Professionals](#)
- [Ordering Vaccines through Public Health](#)

Please report all suspected/confirmed cases of [Diseases of Public Health Significance](#) (only report COVID-19 cases occurring in high-risk settings) to Public Health immediately by calling 311, 905-825-6000 or toll free at 1-866-442-5866.

PLEASE PROVIDE A COPY TO ALL PHYSICIANS IN YOUR OFFICE AND/OR POST IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS AND PHYSICIAN LOUNGES. IF YOU HAVE ANY ISSUES WITH THIS ATTACHMENT, PLEASE EMAIL DOCTORS@HALTON.CA.

