

Immunization for Licensed Childcare Centres

Immunization ensures that children have the best protection possible against diseases that can be very serious or even fatal. Immunization protects your staff and the children in your care and helps to prevent outbreaks at your childcare centre.

Which immunizations are required?

The Medical Officer of Health has deemed the following immunizations as required for children who attend licensed childcare centres in Huron and Perth counties:

- diphtheria
- haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)
- measles
- meningococcal disease
- mumps
- pertussis (whooping cough)
- pneumococcal disease
- polio
- rubella
- tetanus
- varicella (chickenpox)

To work or volunteer in a licensed childcare centre, the required vaccines are as follows:

- diphtheria
- measles
- mumps
- pertussis (whooping cough)
- rubella
- tetanus
- varicella (chickenpox)

Under what authority are these required?

These vaccines are required by the local Medical Officer of Health under the authority of the *Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)*.

What do parents need to do?

- Keep their child's immunizations up to date.
- Provide the childcare centre with a copy of their child's immunization record **BEFORE** the child attends the centre.
- Keep a record of their child's immunizations and notify the Health Unit each time their child receives an immunization. For ways to report immunizations to Huron Perth Public Health go to the Immunization Records and Reporting website (www.hpph.ca/icon).

What do employees need to do?

All staff members and volunteers are required to provide immunization information to the childcare centre upon hire. It is the responsibility of the staff members and volunteers to maintain their immunization records and update their employer as necessary.

What does the childcare centre need to do?

- Collect a completed immunization history on each child, staff member and volunteer **prior to admission or upon hire**.
- Ensure that copies of staff and volunteer immunization records are available to the Health Unit, if requested.
- Forward any child immunization updates received, to the Health Unit.

What does the health unit need to do?

- Assess each child, immunization record and inform the childcare operators and families when immunization records are incomplete.
- Assist the childcare operator in obtaining information from parents if required.

Immunization policy for children, employees and volunteers

According to the *Child Care and Early Years Act*, the operator of the childcare centre must ensure that, before admission or the start of employment or service, proof of the following immunizations have been provided to the operator.

Children

Vaccine Required	Schedule
Diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio and Haemophilus influenzae type b (Pediace/Pentace)	Primary vaccine series of three doses (usually given at 2, 4 and 6 months), plus booster dose at 18 months.
Pneumococcal Conjugate	Primary series of three doses usually given at 2, 4 and 12 months.
Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)	One dose on or after the first birthday.
Meningococcal conjugate-C	One dose on or after the first birthday.
Varicella (chickenpox)	Two doses required. One dose after the first birthday (recommended at 15 months). Second dose at least three months after first, provided with MMRV at 4-6 year booster OR bloodwork showing immunity.
Measles, mumps, rubella, varicella (MMRV)	One dose given at 4-6 years of age.
Diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio (Adace-Polio)	One dose given at 4-6 years of age.

Staff and Volunteers

Vaccine Required	Documentation
Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)	Fulfil one of the following criteria: • two doses of MMR vaccine • proof of immunity (blood test) • born in 1969 or earlier (assumed to have immunity)
Varicella (chickenpox)	Fulfil one of the following criteria: • two doses of varicella vaccine • proof of immunity to varicella (blood test) • 50 years of age and older • self-reported chickenpox before a routine one-dose varicella immunization program was introduced where you lived (before 2004 in Ontario)
Tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap)	One dose of Tdap in adulthood, then one Td booster vaccination every 10 years.

Additional considerations for staff and volunteers (strongly recommended)

Vaccine Recommended	Schedule
COVID-19	Doses as recommended by current <i>Ministry of Health COVID-19 Guidance</i>
Influenza	Annual influenza vaccination for those providing regular childcare to children less than 60 months of age as per the <i>National Advisory Committee on Immunization</i> .
Hepatitis B	For those who may be exposed to blood or blood products or who may be at increased risk of sharps injury, bites or penetrating injuries.
Tuberculosis Skin Test	For staff and volunteers unless they have a record of significant TB skin test reaction.

Exemptions:

If someone declines immunization, either due to a medical contraindication or for conscience or religious reasons, they may submit an exemption as follows:

Medical exemption:

A physician or nurse practitioner needs to complete a Statement of Medical Exemption (<https://forms.mgcs.gov.on.ca/en/dataset/010-3041>), outlining which immunization(s) should not be given.

Conscience or religious exemption:

The parent or staff must obtain a properly commissioned Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief (<https://forms.mgcs.gov.on.ca/en/dataset/010-3042>) affidavit. This exemption would apply for the time the individual is attending a licensed childcare setting.

If a parent wants to exempt their child from only a **specific** vaccine (but continue to receive others), complete the *Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief for Child* Affidavit, and the portion of the CCEYA Exemption Letter, titled Partial Exemption Request. Return the completed forms to your childcare centre.

For more information, contact the HPPH Immunization Team at 1-888-221-2133, Ext. 3558.