



# **South Carolina Required Standards Of Immunization For Child Day Care Attendance**

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**If you have questions about immunizations or immunization certificates,  
call your Regional Immunization Program Manager  
or contact the Immunization Division at 800-277-4687.**



## **South Carolina State Law**

In April 1993, the South Carolina General Assembly passed an amendment to Section 44-29-180 of the 1976 State Code of Laws. The law went into effect on October 20, 1993, and was phased in over a four-month period. This law was a major step forward for the health of children in South Carolina, and was passed in an effort to increase the number of young children who receive proper and timely immunizations. By increasing the percentage of young children receiving proper and timely immunizations, the percentage of children developing serious, and sometimes fatal, childhood illnesses decreases.

According to Section 44-29-180 of the South Carolina State Law, “no owner or operator of a public or private childcare facility . . . may . . . enroll or retain a child or person who cannot produce satisfactory evidence of having been vaccinated or immunized so often as directed by the Department of Health and Environmental Control. . . . The Department of Health and Environmental Control shall monitor the immunization status of each child who is enrolled or retained in a licensed child day care facility or a registered church or religious child day care facility. The monitoring of day care facilities shall consist of a review of the immunization or vaccination records to insure that required immunizations are complete as recommended and routinely provided by the Department of Health and Environmental Control for all infants and children.” The Required Standards of Immunization for Day Care Attendance and the Required Standards of Immunization for School Attendance will be published and distributed by DHEC annually to health care providers.

- Children enrolled in Pre K or 4K programs and younger must meet day care requirements, even if attendance is in a school setting.
- Children enrolled in grades 5K or greater who also attend a day care facility (e.g., after school and/or summer programs) must meet school immunization requirements.

Registered Family Day Care Homes are the only day care providers exempt from this law, although DHEC recommends that they follow the same procedures as required by other day care providers.

## **Children Subject To South Carolina Law**

The South Carolina Certificate of Immunization is the official form to document childhood immunization compliance with SC Day Care Requirements. Parents of children enrolled in a day care facility must provide a valid South Carolina Certificate of Immunization to the day care provider if:

- The child is at least 3 months of age
- The child attends on a full-time or part-time basis
- The child attends on a drop-in basis

All children at least 3 months of age who attend daycare must have a South Carolina Certificate of Immunization on file. Photocopies of the certificate are acceptable. The day care provider should contact the Regional DHEC representative for assistance regarding the validity of any questionable certificates.

## **Exemptions**

Parents of children enrolled in a child day care facility are not required to provide a South Carolina Certificate of Immunization if:

- The child is less than three (3) months of age.
- The child has been enrolled less than thirty (30) calendar days. An exception may be made for children displaced by a natural disaster and other homeless children for whom immunization records are not available or accessible. For children impacted by such events, DHEC should be consulted for recommendations on obtaining appropriate immunizations.
- The parent/guardian presents a valid South Carolina Certificate of Religious Exemption to the child day care provider. The South Carolina Certificate of Religious Exemption must be obtained by the parent/guardian from the local health department.
- The child is exempt under federal law.

## **Procedures for Enrolling New Children**

Parents of children who are new to your day care facility may be allowed a 30 day grace period to submit the required certificate of immunization for that child. By the 30th calendar day of enrollment, the parent must present the day care with a South Carolina Certificate of Immunization. If the parent does not present the required certificate within this timeframe, day care provider is not permitted to continue the child's enrollment. If a parent brings a child back to the day care facility after the grace period has passed and does not provide a certificate, under penalty of law, the day care provider must not allow the child to attend.

## **Monitoring Visits**

Immunization certificates of enrolled children at least three (3) months of age and older will be monitored during unannounced yearly visits by DHEC representatives. Immunization certificates must be available for review at this visit.

Daycare staff must make certificates available to the DHEC representative. Certificates and a roster of enrolled children must be accessible at the time of the monitoring visit. This roster should include the name as it appears on the certificate as well as the date of birth of the child.

If certificates are acceptable upon follow up, the DHEC representative will give the day care facility a letter indicating the facility is in compliance with state immunization law. If the DHEC representative does not receive all immunization certificates by mail or fax from the day care facility within 30 calendar days of the initial monitoring visit, the DHEC representative will return to the facility 30-45 calendar days after the initial monitoring visit for a follow-up visit. Immunization certificates must be valid at the time of the follow-up. If invalid certificates are found, the DHEC representative must report the findings to the DHEC Immunization Division Director or designee. Daycares in public schools are not allowed to mail or fax any student- identifying information; follow up, if needed, will be done on-site. to forty-five (30-45) calendar days after the initial monitoring visit was attempted. Immunization certificates must be valid at the time of the return visit; if invalid certificates are found, the DHEC representative must report the findings to the DHEC Legal Office and the Department of Social Services for appropriate regulatory action.

## **Day Care Provider Penalties**

In addition to any action taken by the Department of Social Services (DSS) Division of Child Day Care Licensing and Regulatory Services, penalties for non-compliance exist under Section 44-29-190 of the South Carolina Code of Laws. This law states that owners and operators of day care facilities who violate Section 44-29-180 are “guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, may be fined not more than \$200.00 or imprisoned for not more than 30 days.”

Non-compliance is defined as follows:

- No certificate of immunization on file OR
- Lack of required documentation, including:
  - Child’s name and date of birth;
  - Expiration date for next immunization due (if necessary) (or necessary expiration date is expired);
  - Immunization history;
  - Day care and/or school certification, as applicable;
  - Physician name, Authorized Representative name (if applicable), or signature of person completing certificate (Physician or Authorized Representative).

Each incident of non-compliance with the state law and regulation is a separate incident of violation. Each certificate is a separate violation and each day is a separate violation. For certificates found to be out of compliance during the initial monitoring visit, day care providers must correct all deficiencies within the time frame specified by the DHEC representative. Day care facilities failing to rectify all deficiencies within the specified time period will be deemed in violation of Section 44-19-180, and subject to penalties for non-compliance under Section 44-29-190.

## **Acceptable Certificates Of Immunization**

Child day care facilities must maintain a valid certificate of immunization for all enrolled children at least 3 months of age and older.

Children enrolled in pre K and 4K programs or younger must meet the Required Standards of Immunization for Day Care Attendance. These children should present a South Carolina Certificate of Immunization with the following certification status marked, as applicable:

- **“Meets Day Care Requirements”**: If child has received all required immunizations for day care attendance.
- **“Certificate Expires”**: If child has not yet received all required immunizations for day care attendance.
  - The date written should correspond to the date the next immunization is due.
  - The child may attend day care for no more than one month from the date indicated.
- **Meets Day Care Requirements AND Requirements for 5K-6th grade**: Children enrolled in pre K and 4K programs or younger may present an immunization certificate with the following certification status:
  - Example: A child attending a 4K program receives vaccines at age 4 years that are appropriate for age, but not required for day care attendance. If the vaccines administered complete the immunization requirements for grades 5K-6th grade, a certificate with “Meets Day Care Requirements AND Requirements for 5K-6th grade” may be provided by the parent.
  - If a valid certificate marked “Meets Day Care Requirements AND Requirements for 5K-6th grade” has been provided to the day care facility for a child enrolled in a pre K or 4K program, a duplicate certificate will not need to be provided to the day care for this child when enrolling in 5K AND attending a child day care facility (e.g., after school and/or summer program)

Children enrolled in 5K or greater AND attending a child day care facility (e.g., after school and/or summer program) must meet the Required Standards of Immunization for School Attendance (immunization requirements appropriate for school grade level). These children should present a South Carolina Certificate of Immunization with any of the following certification status (as applicable):

- **“Meets Day Care Requirements AND Requirements for 5K-6th grade”**
- **“Meets Requirements for 5K-6th grade”**
- **“Meets the Requirements for 7th-12th grade”** (if applicable):
  - Example: A child in the third grade is up-to-date on all immunizations required for grade level, but has also received a dose of Tdap vaccine (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) after the seventh birthday which meets the immunization requirements for 7th grade.
- **“Certificate Expires”**: This box should be checked if the enrolled child has not yet received all required immunizations for school grade level (“catching up”).
  - The date written should correspond to the date the next immunization is due.
  - The child may attend day care for no more than 30 days from the date indicated.

Enrolled children who are unable to receive timely immunizations due to medical reasons should present a South Carolina Certificate of Immunization with the “Medical Exemption” box checked and the “Medical Exemption” section completed by the medical provider.

- A child with a **permanent medical exemption** will not receive future doses of the listed vaccine(s).
- A child receiving a **temporary medical exemption** from a healthcare provider will be due for the listed vaccines when the date documented for the temporary exemption has expired.
  - The child may attend day care for no more than 30 days from the expiration date for the temporary exemption noted in the “Medical Exemption” section of the immunization certificate.

The Certificate of Immunization must contain the name and date of birth of the enrolled child. If the certificate does not contain the name of the child and the child’s date of birth, the certificate is considered invalid. The Certificate of Immunization must also include the signature of the person completing the certificate (physician or authorized representative) and date of issue.

## **Immunizations Required For Day Care Attendance**

<b>What Required Shots Should Children Have?</b>						
<b>By This Age:</b>	<b>3 months</b>	<b>5 months</b>	<b>7 months</b>	<b>16 months</b>	<b>19 months</b>	<b>4+ Years</b>
<b>Hep B</b>	1 dose	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses	3 doses	3 doses
<b>Polio</b>	1 dose	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses	3 doses	3+ doses
<b>DTaP</b>	1 dose	2 doses	3 doses	3 doses	4 doses	4+ dose
<b>Hib</b>	1 dose	2 doses	2+ doses	3+ doses	3+ doses	3+ doses
<b>MMR</b>				1 dose	1 dose	1+ doses
<b>Var</b>				1 dose	1 dose	1+ doses
<b>PCV</b>	1 dose	2 doses	3 doses	4 doses	4 doses	4 doses

**Hep B (Hepatitis B)** The third dose of Hepatitis B vaccine must administered after 24 weeks of age.

**Polio** Polio may be written as either OPV or IPV. Children who receive the third dose of polio after age 4 do not need a fourth dose. A dose on or after the 4th birthday may be required for a school-aged child attending day care. (See Required Standards of Immunization for School Attendance)

**DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus and Acellular Pertussis)** Children who receive the fourth dose of DTaP after age 4 do not need a fifth dose. A dose on or after the 4th birthday is required for a child in grade 5K and greater. (See Required Standards of Immunization for School Attendance)

**Hib (*Haemophilus Influenza type b*)** Children should receive up to 3-4 doses of Hib vaccine, depending on the brand administered. Children starting late may not need the entire 3 or 4 dose series. Hib is not required for children 5 years of age and older.

The following examples meet the requirement:

- Children who receive 1-2 doses before the 1st birthday AND 1 dose after the 1st birthday
- Children who receive the first dose of Hib on or after 15 months of age
- If the child does not have the number of doses as listed above and has an expiration date on the certificate or if the certificate is marked as “meets day care”, the child does need additional shots and must not be allowed to stay in day care for more than 30 days past the expiration date.

**MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella)** MMR should not be given before the first birthday. The second dose is required for all school grade levels (5K – 12th grade).

**Var (Varicella or chickenpox)** Varicella vaccine should not be given before the first birthday. A second dose is required for specific school grade levels (5K – 3rd grade). *A healthcare provider diagnosis or verification of chickenpox disease, laboratory evidence of immunity, or laboratory confirmation of chickenpox disease meets this requirement.*

**PCV (Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine)** Children starting late may not need the entire 4 dose series. PCV is not required for children 5 years of age and older.

The following examples meet the requirement:

- Children who receive 2-3 doses before 1st birthday AND 1 dose after 1st birthday
- Children who receive 2 doses after 1st birthday (with 8 weeks between doses)
- Children who receive the first dose of PCV on or after 24 months of age
- If the child does not have the number of doses as listed above and has an expiration date on the certificate or if the certificate is marked as “meets day care”, the child does need additional shots and must not be allowed to stay in day care for more than 30 days past the expiration date.





