COLORADO
Department of Public Health & Environment

Advancing Colorado's health and protecting the places we live, learn, work, and play

Dear families of students attending Colorado child cares and preschools for the 2026-2027 school year:

This letter includes important information and other resources about Colorado's immunization requirements to attend child care or preschool. There's nothing more important than making sure your child stays healthy and learning all year long. Routine vaccination can prevent the spread of diseases like measles, mumps, varicella (chickenpox), whooping cough, and others, so kids can just be kids. The vast majority of Colorado families choose to protect their children through vaccination.

Colorado law requires children attending a licensed child care or preschool to be vaccinated against many diseases, unless a certificate of exemption is filed. For more information, visit cdphe.colorado.gov/immunization-policy-and-board-health-rules. Before your child's first day of child care, you are responsible for providing at least one of the following to each child care or preschool your child attends:

1. An up-to-date immunization record.
2. An in-process plan (example).
3. A Certificate of Medical or Nonmedical Exemption for any missing doses of school-required vaccine(s).

Colorado follows recommendations set by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) for the number and spacing of doses of the required vaccines. View the AAP recommended vaccine schedule for children from birth through 6 years of age.

Vaccines required for child care and preschool
To attend child care or preschool, your child must be vaccinated against:

- Hepatitis B (HepB)
- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTaP)*
- *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib)
- Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)*
- Pneumococcal disease (PCV)
- Polio (IPV)*
- Varicella (chickenpox)*

*Colorado law requires children between the ages of 4 and 6 years to receive their final doses of DTaP, IPV, MMR, and chickenpox vaccines **before** kindergarten.

There are other vaccines that are not required for child care and preschool but recommended, including: COVID-19, hepatitis A (HepA), influenza (flu), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and rotavirus (RV).

Vaccination records
Share your child's updated Certificate of Immunization with their child care or preschool every time they receive a vaccine. Need to find your child's vaccine record? Visit the finding a student's immunization records for school webpage or COVaxRecords.org for more information.

Exclusion from child care and preschool
If there is an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease at your child's child care, and your child has not received the vaccine for that disease, they may be required to stay home for many days. That could mean lost learning time for them and lost work and wages for you. For example, if your child has not received an MMR vaccine, they may need to stay home from child care for at least 21 days after someone at the preschool or child care gets sick with measles.

Exemptions from one or more school-required vaccines
Medical Exemption. If your health care provider has determined that your child cannot get a vaccine for medical reasons, you must submit a Certificate of Medical Exemption to your school.

Nonmedical Exemption. If you choose not to have your child vaccinated for nonmedical reasons, you must submit a Certificate of Nonmedical Exemption to your school. There are two ways to obtain a nonmedical exemption:

1. Submit the Certificate of Nonmedical Exemption signed by an advanced practice nurse (APN), pharmacist, physician (MD or DO), physician assistant (PA), or registered nurse (RN), licensed in Colorado, or
2. Submit the Certificate of Nonmedical Exemption you will be able to access after completing Colorado's Online Immunization Education Module.

Nonmedical exemptions expire when vaccines are due or when the child enrolls in kindergarten. Find more information about exemptions at cdphe.colorado.gov/exemptions-to-school-required-vaccines.

Have questions?
Talk with a health care provider or your local public health agency to ask questions and find out which vaccines your child needs. Read about the benefits and importance of vaccines at childvaccineco.org, HealthyChildren.org, and cdphe.colorado.gov/immunization-education.

Finding and paying for vaccinations
Find a vaccine provider at cdphe.colorado.gov/get-vaccinated. If you need help finding free or low-cost vaccines, go to COVax4Kids.org or dial 2-1-1 for information on Health First Colorado (Medicaid) and vaccine clinics in your area.

How is your child care or preschool doing on vaccinations?
Annually, schools and child cares must report immunization and exemption numbers (but not student names or birth dates) to the state health department. Colorado law established the Vaccinated Children Standard of 95% for all school-required vaccines, described in §25-4-911, CRS, and schools do not control their specific immunization and exemption rates.

Your child care or preschool's immunization rates from the 2024-2025 school year.
(Find 2024-2025 school year and prior years' data at COVaxRates.org).

Child care or preschool name	2024-2025 MMR immunization rate (required)	2024-2025 MMR exemption rate (required)

Schools may choose to include rates for other school-required vaccines below.

2024-2025 HepB immunization rate	2024-2025 HepB exemption rate
2024-2025 DTaP immunization rate	2024-2025 DTaP exemption rate
2024-2025 Hib immunization rate	2024-2025 Hib exemption rate

2024-2025 PCV immunization rate	2024-2025 PCV exemption rate
2024-2025 IPV immunization rate	2024-2025 IPV exemption rate
2024-2025 chickenpox immunization rate	2024-2025 chickenpox exemption rate