

Student Immunizations

In 2010, the Tennessee Department of Health updated the immunization requirements. Two doses of varicella vaccine remain required for all new students enrolling in a Tennessee school for the first time at any grade. Those already enrolled in a Tennessee school should have been vaccinated with two doses of the varicella vaccine prior to kindergarten or have a history of the disease. In addition, **all students entering 7th grade** must provide school officials with the *Official Immunization Certificate* showing they have received a tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis booster (**Tdap**) prior to their first day of school.

Parents and guardians must get a signed certificate from a health department or healthcare provider licensed in Tennessee and present that to their child's school office prior to school. Students may be kept out of class if they do not meet these requirements. Exemptions are allowed only for religious or medical reasons and must be signed at the Cocke County School System's Central Office. Physicians/Health Care Providers are authorized to indicate specific vaccines medically exempt (because of risk or harm) on the certificate but other vaccines remain required. A religious exemption requires a signed statement by Parent/Guardian that vaccination conflicts with their religious tenets or practices.

In addition, doctors *recommend* two vaccines for all pre-teens, beginning at age 11: the first meningitis vaccine (a second is needed at age 16) and the HPV cancer vaccine (2 doses). The Tennessee Department of Health also recommends an annual flu vaccine.