



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH • Secretary

ELIZABETH TILSON, MD, MPH • State Health Director

MARK BENTON • Assistant Secretary for Public Health, Division of
Public Health

September 24, 2021

TO: NC Schools and Child Care Facilities

FROM: Elizabeth Tilson, MD, MPH
State Health Director

RE: Temporary Suspension of Immunization and School Health Assessment Requirements due to the
COVID-19 Pandemic

This letter serves as notification to inform you of a temporary suspension of immunization requirements specified in 10A NCAC 41A .0401 through October 31, 2021 as set forth below. This will facilitate additional time for families to meet the immunization and school health assessment requirements due to the disruptions caused by the high rate of spread of the Delta variant of SARS-CoV2 resulting in increased cases and illness and burdening our health care system. Higher rates of illness due to COVID-19 and other viruses, in addition to staffing and vaccine shortages, is resulting in the lack of availability of timely appointments with healthcare providers for immunizations and well child visits. This temporary suspension of the immunization deadline is being issued pursuant to 10A N.C. Admin Code 41A .0401(c). Consistent with this temporary suspension:

Additional Time to Complete Immunizations Under G.S. 130A-155(a)

The time period for the temporary suspension, from August 1, 2021 through October 31, 2021, inclusive, will not count towards the 30 calendar days following a child's first date of school or child care facility attendance that a parent, guardian, or responsible person has to submit a certificate of immunization, provided that the parent, guardian, or responsible person of that child submits to the school or child care facility proof of an appointment to secure immunizations required by G.S. 130A-152 by October 8, 2021. The requirement to submit a certificate of immunization will be reinstated on November 1, 2021 with a grace period until November 30, 2021 or 30 calendar days from the child's first day of attendance, whichever is later.

Additional Time to Complete Health Assessment Under G.S. 130A-440(a)

Pursuant to Executive Order 234, the requirements for presentation of the school health assessment for every NC child entering kindergarten or higher grade in public schools for the first time will align with the presentation of the certification of immunization. Therefore, the time period from August 1, 2021 through October 31, 2021, inclusive, will not count towards the 30 calendar days following a child's first date of school attendance that the parent, guardian, or person standing in loco parentis has to submit proof of a health assessment, provided that the parent, guardian, or person standing in loco parentis of that child submits to the school proof of an appointment to secure the required school health assessment by October 8, 2021. The requirement to submit a school health assessment will be reinstated on November 1, 2021 with a grace period until November 30, 2021 or 30 calendar days from the child's first day of attendance, whichever is later.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

LOCATION: 5605 Six Forks Road, Building 3, Raleigh, NC 27609
MAILING ADDRESS: 1931 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1931
www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-707-5000 • FAX: 919-870-4829

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Additional Time to Submit Reports Under G.S. 130A-155 and 130A-441

NCDHHS understands that the temporary suspension of these requirements may result in delayed submission of annual reports in accordance with G.S. 130A-155(c) and 130A-441(c). Given the situation, NCDHHS will accept submissions until January 15, 2022, pursuant to Executive Order 234.

Proof of Appointment

Children currently excluded due to the above requirements should be allowed to return to school, pending fulfillment of these requirements or submission of proof of an upcoming appointment by October 8, 2021, as set out in this memo. The following shall constitute proof of appointment:

- A written statement from a parent or guardian indicating the date and time of the appointment(s) to fulfill outstanding requirements; or
- A written letter or other documentation from a healthcare provider indicating the date and time of the appointment(s) to fulfill outstanding requirements.

Although the temporary suspension may provide additional time for families experiencing difficulty accessing the required immunizations and health assessments for schools in communities experiencing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we encourage all children to obtain the needed immunizations in accordance with G.S. 130A-152 and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices as early as possible. We also urge everyone who is eligible for COVID-19 vaccine to get vaccinated or reach out to your provider if you have questions, so that we can protect each other and our loved ones, decrease the burden on the health care system, and end this pandemic.

If you have any questions, please contact the on-call nurse for the Immunization Branch at 919-707-5575 or your school nurse consultant.