

Vaccination Requirements to Attend School in Ontario

Information for Parents and Guardians

Algoma Public Health (APH) is currently reviewing student immunization records to assist parents in ensuring their children meet requirements under the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA) for the 2025–2026 school year.

Childcare and school settings are common places for vaccine preventable diseases to spread if immunization rates are low. To protect kids, Ontario law requires certain immunizations for daycare and school attendance. This letter outlines the steps in this process.

What is the Immunization of School Pupils Act?

The **Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA), R.S.O. 1990**, is an Ontario law that requires students to be up to date on certain vaccinations - or have a valid exemption for medical reasons or conscience/religious beliefs - in order to attend school.

Under ISPA, students who do not meet these requirements may be suspended from school. Required vaccines include those for: **diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, meningococcal disease, and pertussis (whooping cough)**.

In addition, children born on or after **January 1, 2010**, must also be vaccinated against **varicella (chickenpox)**.

APH will send immunization reminders and will issue orders to school principals to suspend students if records are incomplete after the deadline.

Who is responsible for reporting immunizations to Algoma Public Health?

Parents/guardians are responsible for reporting their child's immunizations to APH. To meet the requirements, follow these steps:

- Check with their health care provider to ensure their child's immunization record is up to date.
- Share your child's immunization record with Algoma Public Health

Parents/guardians of students 15 and under can update immunization records at www.algomapublichealth.com/icon. Students 16 and older can update their own records at the same site.

When I registered my child for school, I gave a copy of their immunization card to the school. Why do I need to report the vaccinations to APH?

When a child is registered at school, the school may send us their immunization record. Parents/guardians must report any new vaccinations to keep the child's record up to date.

How can I report my child's vaccinations to Algoma Public Health?

- **Online:** the online reporting tool is available at www.algomapublichealth.com/icon
- **In person:** bring a copy of your child's immunization record to any of our locations during regular business hours www.algomapublichealth.com/contact-us
- **By phone, fax or mail:** contact numbers for APH offices are listed on the first page.
- **Email:** records@algomapublichealth.com (Please include child's name and date of birth in email). If you are sending personal information by email, be aware that electronic communication is not always secure and can be vulnerable to interception.

Where can my child receive vaccinations?

You can book an appointment with your health care provider. If you do not have a health care provider, you can view a list of walk-in clinics providing immunizations on our website as well as upcoming community catch-up clinics throughout Algoma:

www.algomapublichealth.com/ISPA

Can my child be exempted from vaccination?

For details on exemptions, please refer to the attached '**Request for Immunization Information**' page.

How long can my child be suspended?

The suspension will last up to 20 days until up-to-date vaccine records are submitted and the school is notified that the student can return to class. If the information is not received, the suspension may be extended for another 20 days.



What's new for the 2025/2026 school year?

APH has been working closely with families and community partners to get student immunization information up to date. In previous years, students who had an upcoming immunization appointment booked were able to return to school during the suspension period. For the 2025/2026 school year, students must have proof of immunization submitted to APH and reviewed by a Public Health Nurse prior to being able to return to

school. Suspensions will begin in spring 2026, so parents are encouraged to update immunization records early to ensure any outstanding immunizations can be completed in time.

Who can parents and guardians speak to for more information?

Please call the APH office closest to you:

Blind River – 705-356-2551

Sault Ste. Marie - 705-759-5409

Elliot Lake – 705-848-2314

Wawa – 705-856-7208