

MIECHV Immunization Guidance

The MIECHV team has assembled important information for home visiting programs as a “one-stop-shop” for information programs may need as they navigate these challenging times with families. Please review the information and resources for Illinois and beyond below and share information with families during virtual visits, social media and other communications. Specifically, you may be very interested in the information included towards the bottom of this message on communicating with parents who are “vaccine hesitant” from the Immunization Action Coalition.

Important Immunization Information for Illinois Home Visiting Program

As many of you know, childhood vaccination rates remain low throughout Illinois. As the world waits anxiously for a COVID-19 vaccine, the number of children receiving non-flu immunizations has fallen significantly in many states. The pandemic has led many people to defer routine care, including vaccinations.

Immunizations, also known as vaccines, are one of our greatest defenses against many serious illnesses. However, as parents around the country and across Illinois canceled well-child checkups to avoid coronavirus exposure, public health and Medicaid health plans experts feared that inadvertently the seeds of another health crisis were being sown.

According to the CDC, since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic there has been as much as a 50% decline in routine vaccinations for children aged 24 months or under. The alarming decline in routine childhood vaccinations could result in vaccine-preventable outbreaks. For example, if measles vaccination coverage of 90%–95% (the level needed to establish herd immunity) is not achieved, measles outbreaks can occur.

Illinois State Law, Resources

Illinois State law requires certain immunizations for children and adults enrolled in child care, school, or college. To learn more, see the right-hand column of the [Fall 2020 School Immunization Requirements](#).

[Certificate of Religious Exemption Form](#)

[Certificate of Child Health Examination](#)

[Certificate of Child Health Examination \(En Español\)](#)

[Certificate of Child Health Exam Memo](#)

Laws & Rules

[Public Act 099-0249 - Religious Exemption Amendment to School Code](#)

[K-12 Immunization Requirements](#)

[College Immunization Requirements](#)

[Mercury-Free Vaccine Act](#)

[Mercury-Free Vaccine Act Exemption Declaration \(2019\)](#)

[Healthcare Employee Vaccination Code](#)

[Illinois Guidelines for Needle Disposal](#)

[VFC Program Manual for Illinois VFC Providers](#)

IAMHP Immunization and Well-Child Webinar Series

The Illinois Association of Medicaid Health Plans (IAMHP) put together a complimentary 3-part webinar series tackling issues and barriers to immunization that IAMHP and its member health plans were seeing. [Click here to view the recorded series.](#)

Highlights of the Lessons Learned:

- Tracking efforts, data, and outreach to providers and members are vital.
- Contact families to schedule missed vaccinations. Use member electronic health records and immunization information to identify children who have missed recommended vaccinations and work with families to schedule in-person appointments.
- Communicate your infection control practices with parents. Fear of crowded waiting rooms is a real concern for most, so make sure members know there are strict procedures and processes in place to ensure their safety.
- Dedicate specific clinics, buildings, or rooms for sick and wellness visits. Separate sick and well members into different locations or areas of the clinic. For providers with limited space, consider collaborating with community organizations to identify separate locations.
- Create mobile vaccination sites to limit in-person contact. Similar to many COVID-19 testing sites, allow members to check-in by phone but receive the vaccine in their vehicle.

Immunization Action Coalition

Talking about Vaccines: Responding to Concerns About Vaccines

The purpose of the following information/links from the Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) is to provide medical professionals and others with background information and practical resources that will help them discuss immunization with concerned parents or patients. Because people question vaccination for different reasons, the section is divided into different topics.

→ [Adjuvants and Ingredients](#)

→ [Alternative Medicine](#)

→ [Alternative Schedules](#)

→ [Autism](#)

→ [Importance of Vaccines](#)

→ [MMR Vaccine](#)

→ [Religious Concerns](#)

→ [Responding to Parents](#)

→ [Thimerosal](#)

→ [Too Many Vaccines?](#)

→ [Vaccine Safety](#)

Background

The Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) works to increase immunization rates and prevent disease by creating and distributing educational materials for healthcare professionals and the public that enhance the delivery of safe and effective immunization services. The Coalition also facilitates communication about the safety, efficacy, and use of vaccines within the broad immunization community of patients, parents, healthcare organizations, and government health agencies.

For more than two decades, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has worked in concert with and provided financial support to IAC for the purpose of educating healthcare professionals about U.S. vaccine recommendations. CDC recognized IAC accomplishments in 1997 by awarding it the prestigious Partners in Public Health Award for efforts "instrumental in achieving high levels of routine infant hepatitis B immunization."

[IAC Express](#)

Currently emailed free of charge to more than 50,000 opt-in subscribers every Wednesday, *IAC Express* provides up-to-date information about new CDC vaccine recommendations, FDA vaccine approvals, newly released Vaccine Information Statements, new immunization resources and current events, and journal articles. Frontline healthcare professionals, as well as local and state health departments, rely on *IAC Express* for the critical information they need in their day-to-day work. The current issue as well as the more than 1,440 issues published since *IAC Express*' inception in 1997 are available online at www.immunize.org/express.

[Ask the Experts](#)

Ask the Experts is a recurring feature of *IAC Express* and www.immunize.org in which IAC experts answer challenging and timely questions about vaccines and their administration. More than 1,000 Q&As are available online at www.immunize.org/askexperts.

[Handouts \(Educational Materials for Staff and Patients\)](#)

IAC is the most relied-upon source of immunization education materials for healthcare professionals and their patients, providing more than 5 million downloads annually. IAC creates, updates, and distributes more than 250 separate educational pieces, some in several languages, including such widely used and reprinted items as follow:

- Summary of Recommendations for Child/Teen Immunization (age birth through 18 years)
- Summary of Recommendations for Adult Immunization (age 19 years and older)
- Screening Checklist for Contraindications to Vaccines for Children and Teens
- Screening Checklist for Contraindications to Vaccines for Adults
- How to Administer Intramuscular and Subcutaneous Vaccine Injections
- Immunizations for Babies – A Guide for Parents
- When Do Children and Teens Need Vaccinations?
- Vaccine Administration Record for Children and Teens
- Vaccinations for Adults – You're Never Too Old to Get Vaccinated!
- Administering Vaccines: Dose, Route, Site, and Needle Size

All educational materials are available online free of charge at www.immunize.org/handouts. IAC has translated many of its patient/parent pieces into Spanish and some into the following six additional languages: Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Russian, Arabic, and French.

